

# BURLINGTON DOG TASK FORCE QUARTERLY REPORT

to Burlington City Council, Parks, Arts, and Culture Committee  
Report No. 2 - Thurs Feb 2, 2023

---

## Membership Updates

- The full dog task force meets monthly; subcommittees meet outside of those meetings.
- Maria Karunungan is now chairing the Dog Task Force.
- Yusuf Abdi is the new BPD representative on the task force.
- A community member who is also a member of the Conservation Board has joined the off-leash subcommittee and has been attending the larger meetings (Kyle Tansley).

## Updates on Dog Task Force Scope of Work

- Review current city programs and policies including other dog task force work.
    - Current city ordinances have been reviewed & changes drafted by the ordinances subcommittee; the draft changes will be reviewed by the full Dog Task Force in February & March. Final recommendations are partially dependent on a review of data from police (procuring detailed data on dog/cat incidents has been a struggle).
    - A review of prior task force work in 2013 & 1998 revealed that the proposed designation of additional off-leash spaces was never completed. The off-leash subcommittee has updated proposed spaces based on current program usage, and a [survey](#) is now currently collecting feedback on these before piloting and testing new areas.
    - See below for other city programs, licensing, and education.
  - Conduct an educational campaign regarding off-leash dogs, dog attacks, dog feces not being picked up, and dog barking.
    - We have created and shared the following public service announcements: [Poop Clean Up \(spring\)](#), [Leash Your Dog \(Off leash dogs' impact on wildlife/plants & conservation efforts\)](#), and most recently, [Barking](#)
    - We have drafted an annual calendar of monthly topics to go out on various City of Burlington departments' social media, Front Porch Forum (see [Appendix A](#)); a final draft will be reviewed by the Dog Task Force prior to inclusion in the final report of recommendations.
-

- 
- See [Appendix B](#) for additional working ideas
  - Review licensing rules and make recommendations
    - We have initiated conversation with the CAO on reallocating/sharing of new growth in licensing programs to support the Dog Task Force work
    - The City of Burlington has modernized the process by creating an online option for licensing.
    - We have reviewed information from the City of South Burlington regarding cats and they do license cats; Dog Task Force will be discussing at Feb 27 meeting
    - Another area that has become clear is the need to incentivize licensing; we suspect that Burlington is severely under-licensed:
      - 1255 dogs licensed in FY2012 (per off-leash 2013 report, in which the Humane Society had also estimated the number of dogs in Burlington was closer to 7000)
      - 826 licensed in FY2022 (per City Clerk)
      - We have learned that not licensing an animal is not enforced because when incidents occur it is not currently part of Burlington PD operating procedures to find out if an animal is licensed.
  - Review compliance and policy enforcement and make recommendations
    - It has taken more time than anticipated to receive information from the PD about current practices regarding responses to incidents.
    - Questions about reporting have emerged. Nothing is segmented for dogs in online incident report or See Click Fix;
    - Open question of whether the “victim” has to know the name of the attacking dog’s owner in order for the PD to investigate.
    - Review of stray dog policy is forthcoming
  - Generate a final report to be presented to the City Council
    - We will set a goal for the final report at our February or March meeting
  - Plan Pet/Dog Events, Activities and Celebrations, i.e., National Pet Day or National Dog Day Celebration - See Appendix A
  - Review current funding allocated to our municipal dog/pet resources and make recommendations - See above regarding education, licensing, off-leash areas

---

## Appendix A - Proposed Annual Education Calendar

- January
  - Barking PSA
- February
  - Dog License Due (campaign/drive)
- March
  - Dog License Due (campaign/drive)
- April
  - Off-Leash PSA (Impact to wildlife/wildflowers that develop in spring)
  - Picking up poop PSA)
- May
  - Don't leave your dog in the car PSA
- June
  - Keep your dog cool PSA
  - Don't leave your dog in the car PSA
- July
  - Dog Days (event)
  - Church Street tie-in for pet friendly shopping areas (other shopping areas? SEABA, Farmer's Market, North Street?)
- August
- September
  - Wag the Waterfront 9/9/2023 - Switchback/Texaco Dog Beach
    - Demonstration booth, ask the trainer
    - Community health (humane society)
- October
  - Halloween parade?
- November
  - (a week after leaf pick up) PSA Even through winter need to scoop poop all year round
- December

---

Appendix B - Additional areas of education for the community include:

- Education on preventing dog attacks & conflicts with other dogs & people
  - We will be reviewing responses to incident reports (and how education can be incorporated into these responses), and making recommendations on educational approaches.
- Resource for new arrivals (either new residents of Burlington who have dogs, or current residents who get a new dog)
- How to report incidents
- Guidelines for behavior of dogs in designated off-leash areas
- Education/information that can be distributed on the cards that accompany dog license tags
- Curriculum for community justice center, should a restorative justice approach be adopted for resolving violations of dog policies & ordinances.