



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Parks & Community Services
505 Market Street, Suite A, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Jason Filan, Park Operations Manager
Jennifer Schroder, Director, Parks & Community Services

Date: May 29, 2009

Subject: Draft response letter to Mr. Mac McKeown RE: Dog Waste Bags

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize Mayor James Lauinger to sign a letter as presented or modified responding to Mr. Mac McKeown.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

On April 15, 2009, a letter (Attachment 1) was received at the City, addressed to the Kirkland City Council, and authored by Mr. Mac McKeown. In the letter, Mr. McKeown expresses concerns about pet waste in Kirkland parks.

For the City Council consideration is the draft response letter to Mr. McKeown (Attachment 2)

Attachment 1: Letter from Mac KcKeown, 4/15/09
Attachment 2: Draft City Council Response

Mac Mckeown

RECEIVED

4-15-09

MAY 18 2009

James L. Lauinger

CITY OF KIRKLAND
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

123 5th avenue

Kirkland, WA.

98033

Dear Mayor James L. Lauinger

My problem is that dog owners don't look after their dogs and pick up their waste. On many occasions I have stepped in dog waste. And on some occasions I was wearing my nice shoes. For example on April 1st I was playing soccer with some of my friends. My team had the ball and we where about to score, but someone didn't pick up their dogs waste, so my friend had to dodge the waste but he lost the ball and the other team scored.

Maybe if the city could afford it, we could get more of those dog bag stations around the local parks. The city could also get more citizens to buy more leashes with the baggies attached to the leash. Hopefully you could make this happen by summer when the amount of people walking around the park is at its highest point.

An idea for a first offence for not picking up your dog's waste should be a warning ticket, second offence, should be a \$50.00 fine, and a third offence a \$300.00 fine and community poop scoop patrol (picking up other peoples dog poop) for 5 days at a 4 hour shift.

So if you bundle up enough taxpayer dollars, you could afford it. But if you don't do this I will be very unhappy. And other people will be very unhappy and patches of grass will die from too many bacteria.

So, if you install more dog waste stations around the town our town will be a better place.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

Mac Mckeown

June 17, 2009

DRAFT

Mr. Mac McKeown
6th Grader
Peter Kirk Elementary School

Dear Mac,

Thank you for your letter dated April 15th to the Kirkland City Council regarding pet owners not properly disposing dog waste. We're sorry to hear that by avoiding the dog waste your friend lost the soccer ball and the other team scored.

Approximately 10 years ago, the City of Kirkland started a pilot program that provided Mutt Mitt dispensers in a few of our busier parks to address the very point you bring up with pet waste. The program was a success and upon citizen request, we expanded the availability of the dog waste bags to other parks in the City. Over the years, our Parks Department has continued to receive more requests for dispensers which have been installed in many of our 40 parks. There are up to three dispensers in some of the busier parks, like Juanita Beach and Heritage Parks. A Mutt Mitt is enclosed in this letter that you might want to show your classmates.

I hope find the following facts about the Mutt Mitt program interesting:

- On average, each dispenser uses about \$450 worth of baggies per year.
- The City spends \$10,000-\$12,000 a year to purchase dog waste bags.
- There are currently 27 dispensers at 20 different park sites.
- About 400 dog waste bags are used each day.\

The City is facing tough budget issues and many City departments are having to cut back on spending money on certain programs. As part of the Parks Department's efforts to save money, it is possible that the Mutt Mitt Program will be cut beginning in 2010.

In the coming months, the City's Public Works Department will begin a public education program that will encourage pet owners to become "Super Scoopers" by properly disposing of pet waste. Please contact Betsy Adams, Education/Outreach Specialist, at (425) 587-3858 or badams@ci.kirkland.wa.us to learn more.

The City has found public education helps to change people's behavior. Sgt. Chris Meyers, Off Leash Enhancement Officer, often makes contacts with pet owners at some our park to educate them on proper pet waste disposal. It's possible that the City could ticket someone but rarely is it witnessed when a pet owner doesn't clean up after his/her pet.

The Kirkland City Council appreciates your thoughts and concerns. It's refreshing to know that the youth of the Kirkland community cares about the health of our parks and public places.

If you have any questions and or need any assistance feel free to contact Jason Filan, Park Operations Manager, at (425) 587-3341 or jfilan@ci.kirkland.wa.us.

Sincerely,
Kirkland City Council

By: James L. Lauinger, Mayor