

CITY OF NEWPORT

RESOLUTION

**OF THE
COUNCIL**

No. 2026-116

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO DOG RECREATION
FACILITIES, EVALUATION OF A SOUTH END DOG PARK, AND DEVELOPMENT
OF PILOT OFF-LEASH OPPORTUNITIES**

- WHEREAS,** the Newport Tree and Open Space Commission conducted a public workshop on September 16, 2024, to gather public input regarding dog parks and dogs in parks within the City of Newport; and
- WHEREAS,** the workshop included participation by residents, dog owners, city staff, commission members, and representatives of community organizations, and identified significant public interest in the availability, accessibility, and quality of recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners; and
- WHEREAS,** the Commission found that the recently established Pell Bridge Alignment Dog Park, which is located on property owned by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), provides a valuable recreational resource but currently lacks key amenities, including shade, water access, seating, accessible pathways, and other improvements necessary to meet best practices for public dog parks; and
- WHEREAS,** the Commission further found broad public support for the establishment of an additional dog park serving the southern portion of the City, citing geographic accessibility and transportation challenges associated with reaching the existing facility; and
- WHEREAS,** the Commission also identified interest in exploring designated off-leash opportunities in selected park locations while recognizing the need to balance recreational opportunities with public safety, accessibility, environmental stewardship, and the diverse uses of public parks; and
- WHEREAS,** dogs are an important part of many Newport households and contribute positively to the health, recreation, and quality of life of the City's residents; NOW,
THEREFORE, BE IT
- RESOLVED,** that the Newport City Council hereby acknowledges and accepts the recommendations of the Tree and Open Space Commission regarding dog recreation facilities and opportunities within the City; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the City Manager is hereby directed to engage with RIDOT and provide the City Council with a status update regarding the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) governing the City's use, management, maintenance, and improvement of the Pell Bridge Alignment Dog Park; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that City Administration shall work collaboratively with RIDOT to finalize and execute the MOU, or any successor agreement, to ensure the long-term viability, operation, maintenance, and enhancement of the dog park facility; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that City Administration shall evaluate potential locations for the establishment of at least a second public dog park in the City and provide a report to the City Council within six (6) months identifying:

- Potential sites;
- Preliminary development costs;
- Operational and maintenance considerations;
- Funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships and grant programs;
- Community input received regarding each site; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Recreation Department, Department of Public Services, and relevant advisory boards shall evaluate the feasibility of establishing one or more pilot off-leash programs in designated locations, including recommendations regarding hours of operation, safety measures, enforcement protocols, environmental protections, and accessibility considerations; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that any recommendations concerning off-leash activities shall prioritize public safety, protection of park resources, compatibility with existing recreational uses, and compliance with applicable local and state regulations; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that City Administration shall report its findings and recommendations to the City Council within three (3) months of the passage of this resolution, together with any proposed ordinances, policies, funding requests, or capital improvement recommendations necessary to implement the goals of this resolution.

STEPHANIE SMYTH
LYNN UNDERWOOD CEGLIE
ELLEN PINNOCK

IN COUNCIL
READ AND PASSED
JUNE 24, 2026



Laura C. Swistak, CMC
City Clerk