

LOCALNEWS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
This is “Rose,” whose companion Jodi Larson brought the pup to learn how to be friends with other dogs.

A place to run free

Temporary dog park offers off-leash play

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Everyone needs a place to get outside, smell the air and stretch their legs.

And now, Borderland dogs can do just that at a temporary dog park set up at the Eighth Street rink in International Falls.

Used for hockey in the winter, the boards that line the rink keep dogs contained allowing their human companions to release them from the leash.

Local animal lover Cindy Meyer contacted International Falls Street Commissioner Dennis Jonson to ask about using the skating rink in the summer as a dog park, since there is no other venue that allows for off-leash exercise and play.

Jonson told The Journal this week that use of the rink will be allowed, provided users maintain the area by picking up poop and keeping the area clean.

“She begged and pleaded, and I said we’d give it a try, but only if it’s kept up,” said Jonson. “The second it becomes a mess and there are issues — that will be the end of it.”

He said the rink works well for off-leash exercise because of the boards that serve to “fence in” the dogs.

Jonson said he’d monitor the area to ensure there are no troubles. “I’ve been watching it and so far it’s been fine,” he said.

The city established a dog park on Riverside Drive near the Rainy River, but Jonson said dogs must be leashed in that area and it’s set up more for an area to walk dogs.

To use the park, Meyers said dogs should be wearing proper identification and be vaccinated.

The city has provided a picnic table and trash can within the rink for use by the human companions.

But more importantly, poop bags have been provided at the rink by dog lovers and Meyers said it’s imperative they be used when a dog does its businesses inside and outside of the rink.

Meyers said dog-lover Michelle Boeckerman has placed a bin filled with toys, poop bags, water and water dishes at the park for public use.

“Michelle and I with others will be monitoring it on a daily basis to make sure the garbage and fecal is picked up,” Meyers said.

The temporary dog park is a great addition to the city, said Meyers.

“The dogs are happy that they now have a playground, too, to play in along with the two-legged kids on the other side of the fence,” she said.

More information about the Eighth Street rink park can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/713181935418478/> (Dog Party), notes Meyers.

Meyers said off-leash play offers great exercise and socialization for dogs and people.

The Facebook page, said Meyers, “is a place where people can go and let everyone know when they are going on an outing with their dogs if they want to join in. Great avenue for socializing your pet.”

Board of Equalization meets Tuesday

Board hears concerns about property valuation, classification

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

Koochiching County Board of Equalization is scheduled to convene at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday in the courthouse boardroom.

The Board of Equalization meeting is conducted each year to determine whether valuation and classification of property in the county was applied correctly, consistently and fairly. The county board serves as the equalization board.

Koochiching County property owners received yellow, mailed notices in April from the Koochiching County Assessor’s Office about valuation and classifications of their property. The notices provide information about the value and classification of property for assessment year 2014. The property taxes paid in 2015 are based on the 2014 valuation and classification.

Appointments with property owners who have questions or concerns about the valuation and classification of their property will be taken Tuesday following a report from county Assessor Len Peterson.

Koochiching County’s Board of Equalization meeting is scheduled to open at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday and continue, if needed, at 6 p.m. June 24. Property owners with questions about their notices, or the classification or value of their property, are encouraged to contact

the Assessor’s Office at 283-1122. Many times, concerns can be resolved prior to the Board of Equalization meeting.

Koochiching County sends notices to the owners of the more than 19,000 parcels of property in the county.

The Board of Equalization meeting is limited to discussion on the market valuation and classification of 2014 for the 2015 taxes, Teresa Briggs, county administrative director has said.

The Board of Equalization is the last board of appeals for a property owner on market value and property classification, she noted. The next step is an appeal to the state tax court.

Property owners may sometimes confuse the Board of Equalization meetings with the meetings conducted in December of each year by the county, cities and school districts. The December meetings are hearings required to present the

next year’s budget and tax levy to the public. For example, the 2015 budgets and tax levies will be presented at December meetings this year.

These hearings are limited to discussion about the budget and tax levy; officials may only adjust the budget and levy if deemed appropriate after receiving public comment through the hearing process.

While the market value and classification assessment and budget and tax levy processes both determine what a property owner will pay in taxes, Briggs has said they are separate processes and authorities: a property owner seeking relief through valuation/property classification must discuss their issue with the assessor and/or attend a June Board of Equalization meeting; a property owner seeking relief by its taxing authorities must attend the budget/levy hearings in December.

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