



Russell Commons' Dog Park outfitted with new equipment, membership passes available

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The City of Alton Parks and Recreation Department continued announcements about new plans today unveiling six new dog park playground structures.

The structures are now found in the **Dog Park** in **Russell Commons Park** in Alton.

The Dog Park in Russell Commons Park opened in **June of 2014**. It's the largest dog park in the Metro-East consisting of four separate fenced-in areas for dogs of different sizes.

The Parks and Recreation Department obtained the new equipment through monies awarded from the **Madison County PEP Grant**. There are six new structures including a Top Dog Bridge with stairs and a ramp, Top Dog A-Frame Ramp, Triple Hoop Jump, Teeter Totter, Agility Walk, and a leash post. The equipment totals around \$5,000.

“It will definitely add to the experience of dogs and their owners,” **Michael Haynes, director of Parks and Recreation**, said. “Before, we couldn’t afford any specific equipment geared toward dogs. We did the best we could with old playground equipment. Now, we are trying to invest and make it a premier dog park. I think the popularity of it will grow too because of it. We have 120 passes sold right now and with the membership drive we are trying to get more people out there and involved for a reasonable cost.”



Haynes said the dog park is another thing not necessarily available in the Riverbend area, so again it is something that will be valued by for their pets.

“The dog park is relatively new and a lot of people still don’t know a lot about it,” Haynes said. “We are trying to make it as open as possible. Unfortunately, it is not super visible unless you go down to the park. We are trying to draw attention to it and get people to check it out.

“It is another one of those projects that enhances the quality of life because people need somewhere to take their dogs to walk them and let them run around. This gives the dog owners and the dogs an opportunity to be around other people and other dogs.”

In addition to the new equipment the Parks and Recreation Dept. is announcing a membership drive from now until the end of March 2017. For just \$15, you can get an annual pass that’s good for up to three dogs regardless of where you live. Also, to show support of those who have current memberships at the dog park, the department will allow renewals anytime next year for just \$15, as well. Passes may be purchased at **City Hall (101 E. 3rd St.)** at the **Alton Treasurer’s Office**.



