

June 2023

Dear Bark Park Members,

We, the current members of the Butler Farm Dog Park Committee & the Friends of the Butler Farm Dog Park, Inc., are writing to ask for your help. We need some folks to step up and get involved. The moment is crucial. Without your involvement, the park will have to drastically cut its hours or close.



The dog park was established in 2013 as a volunteer-run organization, which it remains today. While the land the dog park is on is owned by the Town of Millbury, all maintenance and operating costs are managed by volunteers on the Dog Park Committee and the Friends of Butler Farm. Funds are raised by selling dog membership tags, by donations, and by fundraising efforts like the ever-popular Dog Swim. The Town does not provide regular financial or staff support.

We pay a summer worker 4 hours a week to help maintain the dog park. Other regular expenses include mutt mitt poop and trash bags, gas for the mower, weekly emptying of the dumpster, and capital expenses such as a lawnmower, a wheelbarrow, brooms, etc.

We have made several significant capital investments in recent years, including a mower for about \$3,000 and \$10,000 for stormwater improvements. We have a very limited budget for additional costs, equipment and repairs. Our main source of income is from selling membership tags. We sell around 200 tags each year at \$20 a tag. That's not enough.

We were very fortunate to receive over \$100,000 in funding from the Stanton Foundation in 2013 to help construct the park. A condition of the Stanton donation required there must be a committee to serve as a governing body to set and enforce rules, mediate incidences, and oversee income and expenses.

For the last 10 years, the Butler Farm Dog Park Committee has worked to manage and grow the park. However, we have been faced with a shortage of people willing to help and serve on the Dog Park Committee and Friends Group. We are now looking to the membership and beyond for anyone interested in helping to maintain and care for our beloved park!

The Dog Park Committee is a five member board and currently has two openings with a third and possibly fourth seat opening later this year. These positions must be filled for

the Committee to sustain and keep the Dog Park open. We are asking anyone interested to please consider joining the Committee!

What is expected of a Committee member? You must be a resident of Millbury to serve on the Committee. The groups meet 6-8 times a year, usually for less than one hour and usually remote. You are expected to attend 80% of the meetings and participate in at least one fundraiser per year. If you do fulfill those requirements, your dog tag membership will be free for the following year.

The Friends of the Butler Farm Dog Park, Inc. was formed as a nonprofit fundraising body for the park. It currently has only two active members and because of that it cannot elect directors or appoint officers, and cannot effectively operate. You do not need to be a member or a resident of Millbury to be on the Friends, and the obligations are minimal, even for officers and directors.

Both groups are on the brink of extinction. Without a governing body and fundraising, the park will need to close. We have over 200 members and over 400 followers on Facebook. We are asking those that are able to please step up! We welcome fresh minds, excitement, and participation. We love our community and want to see it sustained and grow to new heights!

You will find an application for the committee attached to this email. Please consider joining and email the application to Stephanie at SCollins@millburyma.gov. To become a member of the Friends, please email Greg at millburybarkpark@gmail.com. We are happy to talk with you about any level of interest you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Butler Farm Dog Park Committee

Mary Wright, Chair

Susan Ainsleigh, Vice Chair

Christine Kelley, Clerk

Friends of the Butler Farm Dog Park, Inc.

Gregory William

Mike LaTour