

Council Meeting of
April 15, 2008

Honorable Mayor and Members
Of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services and Police Department – Adopt an Ordinance Banning Dogs from Wilson Park during Certain City Sponsored Special Events.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Community Services Director, and the Chief of Police that City Council adopt the attached Ordinance Banning Dogs from Wilson Park during Certain City Sponsored Special Events. The Community Services Director further recommends that the City Council approve the attached summary of the Ordinance for publication.

Funding

None required.

BACKGROUND

Wilson Park hosts a wide variety of Special Events that are open to the public for their enjoyment. Some of the large City sponsored events include the Annual Fourth of July Celebration, bi-weekly Farmers' Markets, and Spring and Holiday Boutiques. During these events large crowds of people are drawn to the park.

Currently the Torrance Municipal Code allows dogs in City parks provided they are on leashes no longer than six (6) feet (TMC 41.1.5). In addition, the Municipal Code requires that owners clean up after their dogs promptly (TMC 41.1.7). During the last two July 4th Celebrations the Torrance Police Department and its Animal Control Officers handled several incidents including lost and/or missing dogs, dog off leash violations, defecation, and dog bites.

ANALYSIS

Over the last few years many park visitors have expressed their concerns to the Torrance Police Department that some of the dogs present were dangerous and should not have been allowed at City Special Events. In response to these complaints, the Torrance Police Department requested that the City Attorney

draft a proposed ordinance banning dogs from Wilson Park during certain City sponsored Special Events (Attachment A).

This proposed ordinance was forwarded to the Community Services Director for the approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission. It was unanimously approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission on March 12, 2008. An excerpt from the meeting minutes is attached (Attachment B). Also included is the request from Traffic and Special Events Division Commander Lieutenant Tom Stark to Community Services Director John Jones (Attachment C).

Respectfully submitted,



Jonna Smoot, Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Commission



John Jones
Community Services Director



John Neu
Chief of Police

NOTED:



LeROY J. JACKSON
City Manager

Attachments:

- A) Proposed Ordinance
- B) Excerpt of minutes from March 12, 2008, P&R Commission meeting
- C) Memo from Lt. Tom Stark, Torrance Police Department
- D) Summary of Ordinance

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ADDING SECTION 49.2.10 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO SPECIAL EVENTS AT WILSON PARK.

The City Council of the City of Torrance does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1

Section 49.2.10 of the Torrance Municipal Code is added to read in its entirety as follows:

“SECTION 49.2.10 SPECIAL EVENTS AT WILSON PARK

- a) No dogs are allowed in Wilson Park or the Wilson Park parking lot during Special Events. This prohibition will not apply to service animals.
- b) Special Events are defined as the following days: Tuesdays from 6:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m., Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m., the Fourth of July, the day of the Halloween Carnival, the day of the Spring Boutique, and the day of the Holiday Boutique.
- c) Any person who violates subsection (a) will be guilty of an infraction.”

SECTION 2

Any inconsistent provisions of the Torrance Municipal Code, or any other inconsistent ordinances of the City are repealed, to the extent of the inconsistencies.

SECTION 3

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, then the decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portion of the ordinance. The City Council declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each of its sections, subsections, sentences, clauses and phrases, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases might be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 4

This ordinance will take effect thirty days after the date of its adoption. Within fifteen days following adoption, this ordinance or a summary of this ordinance, if authorized by the City Council, will be published at least once in the Daily Breeze, a newspaper of general circulation, published and circulated in the City of Torrance.

INTRODUCED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2008.

ADOPTED and PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2008.

Mayor of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

Sue Herbers, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

JOHN L. FELLOWS III
City Attorney

By: _____
Ronald T. Pohl
Assistant City Attorney

EXCERPT OF MINUTES

Minutes Approved
 Minutes Subject to Approval

March 12, 2008

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
 TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cook, Gilbert, Hazell, McGee, Ning, Orpe, Robbins, and Chairperson Smoot.

Absent: Commissioners Numark and Taniguchi.

Also Present: Community Services Director Jones, Acting Recreation Services Manager McClelland, Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso, Senior Business Manager Minter, Park Services Manager Wilson, and Torrance Police Department Lieutenant Stark.

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to grant excused absences to Commissioners Numark and Taniguchi for the March 12, 2008 Commission meeting. Commissioner McGee seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. RECOMMENDATION OF ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING DOGS IN WILSON PARK DURING CERTAIN CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS

Chairperson Smoot noted that this item was incorrectly listed as Item 7B on the cover sheet in agenda packets and should read Item 8A.

Senior Business Manager introduced a proposed ordinance in the material of record that would prohibit dogs in Wilson Park during the Annual July 4th celebration, bi-weekly Farmers' Markets, Halloween Carnival, and Spring and Winter Craft Boutiques. He provided background and outlined current Torrance Municipal Code ordinances regarding dogs.

Lieutenant Stark discussed incidents that include lost and/or missing dogs, dog off leash violations, defecation, and dog bites. He noted that previous attempts with voluntary compliance have been unsuccessful.

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Responding to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, Lieutenant Stark provided clarification that the ordinance would be specific to the four events and that the City Attorney's office assisted in drafting the proposal.

Commissioner Robbins noted that there are already signs prohibiting dogs at Farmers' Market due to State regulations.

Lieutenant Stark stated that Community Services would post signs and distribute fliers and that the ordinance would only be enforced in posted areas and not other areas of Wilson Park.

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to approve the ordinance prohibiting dogs in Wilson Park during the Annual July 4th celebration, bi-weekly Farmers' Markets, Halloween Carnival, and Spring and Winter Craft Boutiques and to forward it to City Council for consideration. Commissioner Gilbert seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Numark and Taniguchi).

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CITY OF TORRANCE**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

TO: John Jones
Community Services Director

DATE: 1/30/2008

FROM: Lieutenant Thomas C. Stark
Traffic & Special Events Division Commander

SUBJECT: Proposed Ordinance

Currently, all dogs are allowed in City parks while on a leash. Normally this does not cause many issues except during special events when large crowds are present. For example, at the last two 4th of July Celebrations at Wilson Park, there have been several incidents involving dogs including lost dogs, dog off leash violations, defecation and occasional dog bites. Also, it is common knowledge that most dogs don't react well to fireworks causing their behavior to unpredictable.

During last year's celebration, Animal Control Officers were contacted by attendees of the Celebration who were uncomfortable with the dogs being at the park even on a leash. Animal Control Officers observed several unaltered Pit Bulls, on leash, walking with their owners. Even though they were on leash, many people are fearful of these dogs. It is the opinion of the Police Department's Animal Control office that during city sponsored events at the park, which usually draw large crowds, dogs should not be present.

Based on these issues and in an attempt to make the event more enjoyable and safer for the community, the Police Department has requested the City Attorney's Office to draft a proposed ordinance banning all dogs from Wilson Park during City sponsored events. It is requested that the attached ordinance is presented to the Parks Commission with the intent of having it eventually sent to City Council for approval.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at your convenience.

Lieutenant Thomas C. Stark
Traffic & Special Events Division Commander

ATTACHMENT D

ORDINANCE NO.

SUMMARY

On _____, the City Council of the City of Torrance adopted Ordinance No. _____, a new ordinance relating to special events at Wilson Park.

The new ordinance prohibits dogs in Wilson Park or the Wilson Park parking lot during Special Events. The prohibition does not apply to service animals. Special Events are defined as the following days: Tuesdays from 6:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m., Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m., the Fourth of July, the day of the Halloween Carnival, the day of the Spring Boutique, and the day of the Holiday Boutique . Any person who violates the ordinance is guilty of an infraction.

*****City Clerk to add a paragraph stating that copies of the ordinance are available at the City Clerk's office and stating the names of the City Council members that voted in favor and those that voted against.*****

