



For Immediate Release
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Parks and Recreation Announces Opening of Dog Park

Harrisonburg, VA – The Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Department, along with Happy Dogs Unleashed, is pleased to announce the opening of the Smithland Road Dog Park.

On **September 17, at 10:00 a.m.** city staff, volunteers, donors, supporters, and their dogs will join together to officially open the newest park facility in Harrisonburg.

The 2.2 acre dog park, which is located at 1646 Smithland Road, has been the most recent and quite successful example of a public-private partnership that started with support from the community in October 2011.

The local grass roots organization, Happy Dogs Unleashed, raised approximately \$17,500 in donations, \$16,000 of which will be transferred toward this project. The remainder will be used to purchase extra amenities for the dog park. The Community Foundation was also instrumental in this project by accepting the donations for the organization.

Many businesses and volunteers also made “in-kind” donations of their time by volunteering and donating building materials to help develop this park.

Project Partners:

- Happy Dogs Unleashed
- Nielsen Builders
- A & J Development and Excavation
- Contracting Unlimited
- The Community Foundation
- Engineering Solutions
- Superior Concrete
- Valley Building Supply
- Rodamer’s Landscaping

-More -

“This was a vision of many community members and through hard work and generous donations, they were able to turn their vision in to reality,” said Lee Foerster, Director of Parks and Recreation. “The organizations involved worked so well with one another and this project is something for everyone in the community to be proud of.”

The dog park includes two fenced in areas for dogs to play, a shelter with picnic tables, four stations to clean up after the dogs, an informational kiosk and plenty of space for dogs to run and play. At its opening, the dog park will not have potable water but this feature will be added by late winter or early spring.

“We are so excited to have partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department and The Community Foundation throughout this project,” said D.D. Dawson, volunteer with Happy Dogs Unleashed. “This is just one example of how generous and creative our community can be and we look forward to opening the gates to this brand new facility.”

The dog park will be open every day, except Christmas Day, from 8:00 a.m. until dark. Additional information and rules to the park can be found at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/dog-park.

Due to this event being outside, if the weather does not cooperate the ceremony will be pushed back until September 17 at 2:00 p.m. or September 18 at 10:00 a.m. Information will be distributed to the local media outlets and posted on the [city’s website](#) and [social media sites](#).

Members of the community are invited to bring their dogs (on a leash) to celebrate this grand opening.

The Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Department manages 10 parks, a playground, bike trails, soccer complex, softball and baseball fields, a dog park and two pools. The largest park in the City of Harrisonburg is Hillendale Park that encompasses 74 acres. More information about the parks can be found online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/parks-recreation.

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