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HPRN Has Gone to the Dogs  
Or dog park advocates, at least.

As regular readers of the local press know, a few months ago the Chicago Park District revised its requirements for installing a dog park – or Dog Friendly Area (DFA), as they are officially called – to include requiring the local community to come up with ½ the cost of installing the park. For the South Loop Dog P.A.C., the outfit working for a dog park in the South Loop, that means figuring out how to raise approximately \$75,000. This, in addition to conducting the site use surveys, petition drives, and community meetings that fulfill the other CPD requirements.

Advice to South Loop Dog P.A.C from other community dog park efforts about their fundraising efforts was clear: get nonprofit status to make the task easier (being that nonprofit status allows contributions to be tax-deductible). Although the Dog P.A.C. group considered incorporating itself as a 501(c)(3) organization, other advice included: find a community organization that will 'adopt' you as a standing committee. And this is how the proposition came to be put before the HPRN Board of Directors, which voted last month to provide an organizational home to the Dog P.A.C. Welcome to HPRN, Dog P.A.C.!

With nonprofit status secured, the P.A.C. has undertaken to benefit still again from the experience of those dog park groups that have gone before: sell memberships. At the Dog Park Community Meeting on Tuesday, 22 April, the Dog P.A.C. launched its membership drive, to establish a base of paid memberships. \$30/year supports the efforts to establish a dog park in the South Loop, and as a membership premium, Central Bark Chicago dog service company, is providing two free dog-walks to new members. (\$30/year is a household membership; business memberships are also available.)

It is said that the South Loop has the highest per capita dog population of any Chicago community. Even if that is true, and even if the Dog P.A.C. is very successful in recruiting members, there still is much more money to be raised to meet the \$75,000 goal. A flurry of fundraising ideas was generated at the Community Meeting, backed up with volunteers to get them off the ground. Ideas included: a K9 9K (dog walk with pledges), commemorative or memorial brick sales (engraved bricks to be laid at park site), a dog wash (outdoor dog baths provided by volunteers), soliciting business sponsorship from dog-friendly businesses (including local dog-friendly hotels and developers), fundraiser event at a restaurant with silent auction.

Other Community Meeting business including brainstorming names for the park-to-be. The creative juices flowed as ideas built on the dog and Chicago connections: South Poop Park, Grant Bark Park, Grant Park Bark, Grrrrrant Park, Canine Hollow, BowWowVille, Critters Row, and One Wag Mile were just some of the many names that will be considered. Dog P.A.C. membership buys voting rights when it comes time to choosing the name. So, join the P.A.C.! Plus, if you buy memberships in both HPRN and the P.A.C., you get a discount.

Contact Gail Merritt, [gailmerritt@yahoo.com](mailto:gailmerritt@yahoo.com), to offer your dog park name or fundraising ideas, to volunteer, or for more information. Visit [www.southloopdogs.com](http://www.southloopdogs.com) to learn more about South Loop Dog P.A.C.