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By Sophie Braccini

During its April 28th meeting, the Moraga Town Council will review a proposal by staff to allow off-leash dogs at Rancho Laguna only before 9:00 a.m. Canines wishing to frolic in the afternoon would have to do so on the "Back 40," a portion of the Moraga Commons Park located in the north-east corner, off Saint Mary's Road. It is the present location of two baskets of the disc golf course. Handicapped residents could present a medical note to the Town and obtain a permit to use Rancho Laguna in the late afternoon hours.

"Staff was asked by the Council on February 10th to study alternatives to Rancho Laguna," said Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram, "we do not have a lot of park land, so we looked at the staging area across from Saint Mary's College, but that's very small." Initially the "Back 40" would not be fenced and the disc golf baskets would not be moved. "This would allow us to see if the solution appeals to residents without any cost to the Town," Ingram explained.

During that initial period, off-leash dogs would be prohibited from roaming Rancho Laguna Park in the afternoon, unless their owners could prove their disability. The second phase would make the modification permanent; it would require the building of a partial fence for the Commons area and the relocation of the two disc golf baskets.

Ingram believes that the proposed solution would allow the Town to reclaim Rancho Laguna Park for recreation programming in the afternoon. Users of the disc golf course had previously declared that reconfiguring the course was impossible, but Ingram says he and his team have found a way to do it.

We will update this article after the Council meeting; go to www.lamorindaweekly.com.

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