

# **New Bedford's Captain Jack Peterson Memorial Dog Park opens**

Mayor Jon Mitchell, City officials, dogs, dog owners, and community members formally opened the Captain Jack Peterson Memorial Dog Park on Friday, May 4, 2018, on Hathaway Boulevard between Greenwood Street and Ruggles Street.

The dog park design and installation is funded entirely through a grant that the Stanton Foundation awarded to the City of New Bedford. New Bedford applied for and received \$21,940 for the design phase and \$222,472.00 for construction. The Stanton Foundation was created by long time CBS president, Frank Stanton, and has canine welfare and the strengthening of the dog-human bond as one of its core missions. It has supported the construction of seven dog parks in Massachusetts with several more under construction including this park in New Bedford.

"The Captain Jack Peterson Memorial Dog Park is a great new asset to dogs and dog owners in New Bedford, and to the complement of parks and recreation areas we have across the City," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. The Mayor was joined by members of the City Council, Park Board, and Lynne Peterson, Jack's widow.

A formal off-leash space for dogs has been a desire of the New Bedford community for some time. It was not until 2014, under Mayor Mitchell's leadership, that a site for the park was ultimately identified. The City hosted public information sessions, solicited ideas for reuse of the land and ultimately presented the dog park proposal to the community. The neighborhood also agreed that a dog park would be the best

reuse option for the parcels. The City then solicited input regarding design and best practices through meetings with city dog park advocates. City departments also reviewed the proposed use of the site and supported the development of a dog park in this location. The dog park is managed by the Department of Parks, Recreation & Beaches and maintained by the Department of Public Infrastructure. In 2008, the City Council established a Special Committee on the Feasibility of Creating a Dog Park and has since recommended criteria for the operation of such a park.

The Captain Jack Peterson Memorial Dog Park is an enclosed area safe for canines to play, socialize, and learn off-leash. The dog park is accessed via a "swipe card". Swipe cards will be available to owners of neutered, licensed dogs, with all vaccinations up to date, for an annual fee paid to the City.

An information kiosk provides park rules with contact information for the animal control officer. Owners are responsible to clean up after their dogs. The annual fee is \$25, and is applicable to dog owners whose dogs are licensed in New Bedford, and can be obtained in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 133 William Street; the office telephone number 508-979-1450.

The park is named for longtime local media personality Joel "Captain Jack Peterson" Polonsky, who died in 2014. Peterson was a radio host in New Bedford on WNBH and WBSM and he and his wife, Lynne, had long been involved in charities that contribute to the protection and welfare of animals. A native of Lynn, Peterson attended the Leland Powers School for Radio and started at WNBH in 1980; his career in New Bedford spanned more than three decades.

The park includes:

- Black-vinyl coated chain link fencing to enclose the dog park

- Double gated swing entrance/exit
- Two distinct play areas: one small dog area and one large dog area
- Canine agility elements: balance beam, climbing areas, and a sand pit
- Dog water station/fountain
- Seating areas
- Trash and recycling receptacles, dog waste bag dispensers
- On-site parking with walkway to the enclosure
- Shade tree(s)
- Swipe card access system
- Informational kiosk and signage

More information about the dog park is available on the Parks, Recreation & Beaches website:  
<http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/parks-recreation-beaches/>.