

CH looking at ways to stop people from letting dogs off their leashes

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Options including banning dogs on weekends and creating leash-free zones were discussed by Conservation Halton staff and board members at a recent meeting in an attempt to curb the number of pooches roaming the parks unleashed.

An information report by Kevin Keith, director of conservation lands services for Conservation Halton (CH), was discussed at the October 13 Conservation Areas/Community Relations Advisory Committee meeting.

"Feedback from our park staff has identified that there has been an on-going enforcement challenge in regards to dogs off their leash," the report reads.

"It seems to be very common to have our guests once out on the trails and out of sight of our staff to unleash their dogs and let them run freely," the report continues.

Mr. Keith said there haven't been many official complaints from park visitors, but it's been a concern of staff for a while.

However, the viability of creating leash-free zones was questioned, with board members bringing up the cost as well as the fact some of the parks don't have enough space for these areas, Mr. Keith said.

For now, that option isn't a high priority, he said.

As for banning dogs on busy weekends at the parks, Mr. Keith stressed that was just an idea.

"No action has been taken on that. It's just one of the options I threw out in my report," he said.

Other options included increasing security patrol, putting up more signs to advise visitors to keep their dogs leashed, and getting the word out when visitors first enter

the parks, Mr. Keith said.

Those options will most likely be the route CH will take, Mr. Keith said.

According to the report, CH lands services staff will be working closely with CH's security department to monitor and address the situation.

Staff will also inquire as to how other conservation authorities are addressing this challenge.

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

It's play time

E.W. Foster Public School junior and senior kindergarten students (clockwise from left) Jacob Brough, Aidan Campbell, Alyssa Lane and Caitlyn Davidson try out the new and improved playground equipment following the official opening ceremony Wednesday. The project cost \$48,000 and was a joint venture between the Town of Milton and the school, which held various fundraisers over three years to raise its half of the funds.

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