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Coronavirus Hotline: 508-358-6805  
General Help Phone Line: 508-358-7701

To: All Residents  
From: Town Administrator  
Date: April 19, 2020 at 12:00 noon  
Re: COVID-19: Leash Dogs in Public Spaces

Due to a significant increase in people and dogs on trails, the Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) contacted the Town on March 23 regarding aggressive dog behavior and incidents. On March 25, the Town through its Conservation Administrator and Town Administrator issued a joint policy with SVT requesting that dogs be leashed on trails and posted the policy at all jointly owned entrances to trails.

As COVID-19 progressed, the Town continued to experience heavy use of trails and other public spaces and received complaints of unintended close interactions due to unleashed dogs. On April 3, the Town Administrator and Recreation Director issued a temporary request that dogs be leashed in all public areas to avoid unintentional contact with others.

The Town has continued to experience heavy use of trails and other public spaces by people and dogs. By April 9, the Town Administrator had been informed of aggressive behavior by unleashed dogs on Town property and other public spaces. The Town Administrator consulted with the Dog Control Officer who also services surrounding communities. The Dog Control Officer confirmed an unusual number of aggressive dog behavior during COVID-19, resulting in a high number of dogs currently being quarantined. The Dog Control Officer indicated that Wayland's problem was worse than surrounding communities, many of which had put in place temporary leash orders and closed parking lots to the Rail Trail and other public spaces and trails.

On April 10, the Town Administrator discussed with the Board of Selectmen both issuing a temporary leash order for dogs and possibly closing parking lots. On April 10, the Board of Selectmen indicated its support for a temporary leash order.

We continue to receive complaints of unleashed dogs in public spaces: the Rail Trail, the Town Beach, fields and Conservation lands.

The following temporary order has, therefore, been issued:

**All dogs must be on a 6-foot leash when in public spaces in Wayland.** Dogs must be licensed, wear the license tag and be properly vaccinated. Public spaces include sidewalks, streets, trails, Conservation areas, fields and parking lots. Improved signage has been posted at Conservation areas and other common dog walking areas.

Social distancing is important to controlling the spread of the COVID-19 virus; unleashed dogs can lead to unintended interactions with others using the same public spaces. Keeping dogs on leashes will also reduce the amount of unintended aggressive dog behavior. Found dogs not wearing tags will be quarantined.

These are temporary restrictions while we are in a public health emergency due to the COVID-19 virus.

Please pick up after your dog. With increased usage of all Conservation trails and areas and the Rail Trail, we all need to be considerate and pick up after our dogs. Again, the Town continues to receive complaints of dog droppings, particularly along the Rail Trail.