

Peninsula Dog PAC Questionnaire

Rebecca Eisenberg for Palo Alto City Council

Zoey for First Dog

(Jack for friend of First Dog)



1. Do you have a dog? If so, where are your favorite places to walk your dog?

We do have a dog in our family. Her name Zoey. She will turn nine on Christmas.

Zoey is from the Doodle Rescue, but she is no doodle!

According to her DNA test, Zoey is $\frac{1}{2}$ golden retriever, $\frac{1}{4}$ miniature schnauzer, $\frac{1}{4}$ shih tzu.

Zoey doesn't actually like "to walk." She is only half retriever, and her genetically dominant personality is "lap dog," which in her case means "couch dog."

But I like to walk! So, here are some places that I take her:

- Exploring neighborhoods of Palo Alto. I used to be a runner, and now am a walker, so sometimes on weekends I take Zoey on 3 hour walks from one end of Palo Alto to the other. Zoey is a great companion, even though she would rather be napping.
- To the dog park. Zoey is usually an introvert, but when she is with other dogs, she can be a social butterfly! Here are some of her favorite places to chase, but mostly be chased by, pals in Palo Alto:
 - o Peers Park: Peers now has 2 dog runs: a big one for dogs of all sizes, and a small one for small dogs. At 41 pounds, Zoey is medium-sized, but the small dogs and their companion humans always welcome her in the small dog run because Zoey is so gentle, and she may have small dog pheromones. Zoey plays well with all the other kids.
 - o Greene Middle School: this is not officially a dog park, but for years, a wonderful tight-knit community of dog people meets at Greene (formerly known as Jordan) Middle School as soon as the soccer teams are done for the afternoon – usually around 7 PM. We recognize that we technically are in violation of off-leash laws, and every now and then, a mean person threatens to turn us in for no reason whatsoever, but there has not been a problem. When on City Council, I would like to

explore making this officially legal. Sometimes people create a division between families with human kids and families with dogs. That is silly because many (most?) families in Palo Alto have both, including my own family.

- Hoover Park – both the dog run (less fun) and the big green grassy area (much more fun).
 - Bowden Park – not officially a dog park, but every now and then there is another pup there.
 - Rinconada Park – we used to hang out there quite a bit when Zoey’s older (human) brother Ari attended elementary school at Walter Hays. Not an official dog park but always dog-friendly.
 - Heritage Park – there almost always are a couple friendly dogs there, although, like most other dog parks in Palo Alto, it is not an official dog park.
 - Pardee Park – exact same situation as Heritage.
 - Mitchell Park – We are glad for the very big dog run, but for some reason, this is not Zoey’s favorite. Maybe it is the absence of grass?
- Throughout the country! Zoey has a service dog certificate, and she has flown across the country with us as both a service dog, and also as an emotional support animal. Some of Zoey’s favorite places include: Milwaukee, Wisconsin (where her grandparents live), Cooperstown NY, Copper Mountain, Colorado, Burbank, CA, Eagle River, Wisconsin, San Francisco, Durango, CO, Denver, CO, and lots of trips to Tahoe! Zoey was a season pass holder at Sugar Bowl and Royal Gorge (North Tahoe, CA) for 5 years, and although she never liked the long distance dog-friendly cross-country trails I’d take her on, she always loved playing in the snow with other dogs.

2. Palo Alto allows dogs on all trails in open space preserves except weekends and holidays at Foothill Park. Do you believe:

(a) There should be some off-leash trails.

Yes.

(b) Foothill Park should allow dog access on weekends and holidays.

Of course. If it’s fine during the weekday, why wouldn’t it be on weekends?

(b) The amount of off-leash trails (none) and on-leash is just right.

No. We need more off-leash trails. In fact, I think that all trails should be off-leash unless there is a compelling reason for them not to be.

(c) There should be no off-leash trails and fewer on-leash trails.

Please explain your choice.

No That’s silly. There are not nearly enough places that allow our dogs to do their thing legally.

3. Palo Alto has small fenced in off-leash dog areas in Greer Park, Hoover Park and Mitchell

Park: Do you believe:

- (a) Additional parks (or more area in these parks) should allow dogs off-leash.
- (b) This is the right amount of off-leash dog parks for Palo Alto
- (c) One or more of these parks should no longer allow dogs off-leash.

Please explain your choice.

Even though now Peers Park also has off-leash runs, that still is not enough. The vast majority of dogs, and dog people, in Palo Alto are considerate citizens who are respectful of others and who yield right of way. I believe that all parks (and similar situations like a street that is closed to traffic) should default to off leash, except in the case that the dog is not behaving like a good citizen and/or there is a compelling public interest not to allow dogs off leash. The latter will be rare.

4. There is a proposal to test off-leash hours at two Palo Alto parks (other than the fenced in dog run areas at Mitchell, Greer and Hoover parks). Do you support this proposal? Do you support the overall concept of limited off-leash hours at some Palo Alto parks? Please elaborate.

Yes, that is nice to test off leash hours. Given how many of us already keep our dogs with us off leash in Palo Alto at these parks without problems, I am optimistic that this test will be successful.

I support the overall concept of unlimited off-leash hours at all Palo Alto parks, unless there is a compelling public interest not to have the dogs off leash (e.g. very delicate endangered species that particular harm by dogs in particular). This compelling public interest is unlikely to exist.

To make this even more clear: I have two human kids and a dog, and I still believe in unlimited off leash hours for dogs, unless the dog is poorly behaved, or there is a compelling public interest to keep dogs on leash.

5. Do you believe there are Palo Alto parks, trails and open space that should no long permit dogs on-leash? Please elaborate.

No! I believe that every place in Palo Alto should be open to dogs. I do not understand why dogs would be prohibited when they can be on leash.

I have brought my dog everywhere with me since she joined our family at 3 months. She even went to work with me when I worked at Reddit in San Francisco. Dogs make every place and every activity better.

6. Is there anything else you would like voters to know about your position on recreational dog walking access?

As the mother of two stressed-out teenagers, and the wife of a sometimes-stressed husband, I believe that now more than ever, we need the emotional support of our companion animals. No

matter the breed or mutt, whether with or without an official 'license,' dogs provide emotional support unlike any other person or animal.

As we (hopefully) start to recover from this international pandemic, we must face the probability of a subsequent pandemic: the mental health fallout from months of social isolation. Given the existing priorities of our local elected officials (most of whom will be voted out, hopefully), it is unlikely that we will have a fraction of the mental health professionals necessary to help our communities recover emotionally. So, we will need dogs – lots and lots of dogs.

Finally, the anti-dog laws never made sense. When a dog acts badly, someone calls for help. When a dog is acting peacefully, there is no reason to write a ticket simply because that dog is off leash. Many dogs actually behave **better** when off leash.

When I serve on the Palo Alto City Council, I promise to improve the legal status of dogs in Palo Alto.

I respectfully request your support in achieving that goal.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Eisenberg

_____ . 15 Sept, 2020____
Printed Name Signature Date

Thank you for answering these questions. We plan on putting your answers on our website to make it easy for your constituents to view your positions.



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