

**Contact: Georja Umano Jones**  
Phone 310.581.0888

P.O. Box 328  
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Email:  
georja@unleashthebeach.org

**UNLEASH THE  
BEACH**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **DOG BEACH ADVOCATES DIG UP DOG FRIENDLY CANDIDATES**

Unleash The Beach, Santa Monica dog beach advocacy group, announces its “Pick of the Litter” among Santa Monica City Council candidates: Bobby Shriver. Shriver has enthusiastically supported the concept of the off leash dog zone on the beach, and as a Santa Monica City Councilmember, as well as the California State Parks and Recreation Commission Chairperson (a position he already holds), he has promised he would be the candidate most able and willing to shepherd the project through all necessary channels. (Currently the state supervisors are not open to the idea of the dog park, although it is an amenity which is shared on at least 58 other California beaches, and in all other coastal counties and cities.) Shriver comments, as do many of the other candidates, that in order for the program to be a success, it will be paramount for dog owner/guardians to clean up after their pets.

Georja Umano Jones, founder of Unleash The Beach, says dog lovers are hoping to be able to implement a pilot project within the coming months, where dogs would be allowed off leash on a designated underused stretch of beach, approximately 4.8 acres, between lifeguard stands 11 and 12. “Other beaches have been able to pass environmental tests, and Santa Monica has many responsible and conscientious dog and beach lovers who will help to monitor the beach”, explains Jones.

All the candidates were sent a questionnaire which was later scrutinized by Unleash the Beach supporters at a meeting. Almost all of the candidates responded favorably to the questions, gaining for themselves a rating of “Dog Friendly.” These include, in alphabetical order, Leticia Anderson, Linda Armstrong, Bill Bauer, Richard Bloom, Dave Cole, Matt Dinolfo, Mike Feinstein, Ken Genser, Patricia Hoffman, Herb Katz, Jon Mann, and Kathryn Morea. One candidates—Maria Loya -- did not respond at all, resulting in a rating “Missed The Gravy Train.” Ms. Morea got

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her ballot late and was previously given this title erroneously. Ms. Loya has now responded that she too agrees with the following concerns.

All the Dog Friendly candidates felt that once environmental concerns were addressed, Santa Monica residents should be able to implement a pilot program this winter to try out a dog park on the beach. All of them said they would be willing to negotiate with the state on residents' behalf. All felt that dog parks deserve the same amount of maintenance that other Santa Monica parks get.

Most candidates provided additional comments to show their support had teeth: Herb Katz is an "avid supporter" and together with his wife recently took their dogs on a vacation so they could "run free and enjoy the ocean" at Port Hueneme and it was a "great experience." Mike Feinstein feels that "it is just as much (a dog's) birthright as it is for humans to be with other humans, for dogs to have a space to run free and exercise their bodies and spirits as they were born to...and to enjoy socialization within their own species." Kathryn Morea says, "we need to find ways to safely share a part of the beach with our dogs."

Dave Cole thinks "the City should have at least 6 dog parks. They should be within walking distance of all Santa Monica dogs." Linda Armstrong believes dogs should be allowed "off leash at various times all over the beach." Patricia Hoffman has a "ten pound cat that runs the household, people and dogs included." Ken Genser believes "dog parks build and enhance a sense of community among our residents." Richard Bloom says, "as part of a Council direction on the issue", he "would be an effective spokesperson for this project" and believes that , assuming the cost is not significant, "providing the amenity ( of bags for feces pickup) would lead to cleaner conditions." Jon Mann believes "this is a no brainer issue" that all support a dog beach now, but that AFTER the election it might be a different story. He asks all dog owners to ask themselves what else is important in this election and "which candidates have no obligations to any special interests except those of the residents."