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Council Shuts Down Tybee Island Dog Park

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TYBEE ISLAND, GA (WTOC) - Their faces are so cute and cuddly, they don't bother anyone so why is Tybee Island getting rid of their place to play, the Tybee Island Dog Park?

"I wish somebody would be able to answer that for us," said Deb Barreiro, the backbone behind the dog park, "I think the community deserves to know why we're being asked to move."

Barreiro isn't the only one disappointed in the council's decision. Friday everyone in the park was talking about it, whether they're from Tybee Island or not. "It's disappointing," said Renae French of Atlanta, "If they don't have a park like this then they're going to have more people with their dogs off leash in areas that they probably don't want them."

"It's pretty sad," said Michelle Hodges of Whitmarsh Island, "There's hardly any places around Savannah that you have available to take your dogs."

"Were they being vindictive?" asked former Tybee Council member Mallory Pearce.

They're not getting answers. Are the dogs a nuisance? Well Pearce who lives right next door says no. "They're good neighbors, they keep it clean, it's quite good."

And enough people are using it; Barreiro said in the past 30 days more than 700 people used the park.

They may never know why they have to leave, all they know is now their dogs can no longer run, play and socialize without a leash. Which Barreiro says takes away from dogs being able to play, "On a leash there's a lot of different issues that get set up. They're protecting the person on the other end of the leash, they're protecting territory. Dogs generally aren't as friendly on a leash."

The city told them they have thirty days to remove fence at the park. Barreiro and others have not decided whether they will wait the 30 days or do it sooner than expected.

Tybee Island Mayor Jason Buelterman was not at Thursday's vote; he's out of town and has been unavailable to return our calls. Some dog owners are hoping he can do something to fix this when he returns.

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