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## Breckenridge Dog Park project receives over \$35,000 in donations

By Audra Anderson • Daily News

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It only took a month and a half for the Active Living Committee to surpass their \$30,000 fundraising goal.

Courtesy Breckenridge Active Living Committee

The Breckenridge, Minnesota, Active Living Committee has surpassed their fundraising goal for a city dog park expected to be built in 2021 at a location by the Breckenridge Family Community Center. The committee received \$35,018.97 in grants and donations for the

project.

Area doctors Lucy and Vartan Malkasian donated \$30,000 to the project, City Administrator Renae Smith said. Richland-Wilkin Community Foundation awarded the Active Living Committee a \$4,243.97 grant and the remaining donations have come from various community donors.

The active living committee began fundraising efforts in October, with a goal of raising \$30,000 for the park. Lori Gefre, city billing clerk and committee member, created a GoFundMe to streamline donations. The fundraiser had collected \$805 as of Dec. 9.

“This is very exciting,” Gefre said in Wednesday’s Active Living Committee meeting.

Gefre said the Malkasians were not interested in much recognition for their generous donation, but they did mention having a plaque on site at the future dog park.

Meanwhile, the committee is still accepting donations for the park. Committee Member Evie Fox created treat bags for anyone who donates more than \$15 to the dog park. The bags include items for humans and canines, with numerous types of dog treats and a sunscreen lip balm from West Central Initiative.

“We’ll just keep accepting the donations because there will be some things we will need to continue to buy,” Gefre said. “Obviously, the project’s not done ... We can purchase things to go in there whether it be another bench, whether it be a new water station, or little toys and accessories.”

Next, the committee needs to decide signage and rules for the park. Patrick Hollister, active living planner for Partnership 4 Health, said the organization can fund wayfinding signage for the park but they would not be able to help with the official dog park sign. Hollister said Partnership 4 Health can also fund a bike rack for the park.

The committee members will discuss the details at their next meeting in January 2021, Gefre said.

Audra Anderson