

Dear Ossipee Valley Community,

After several years of attempting to structure Ossipee so that we could include dogs in our festival family, we regret to announce that they will no longer be allowed to attend either the string camp or the festival. This is a decision that has been several years in the making, and is the final decision from our board of directors.

The festival is on a very small piece of ground, and has become crowded in recent years. There were over 200 dogs in attendance last year. Such a packed space is difficult to navigate even for the best behaved dog. We have had several incidents with injuries, and many incidents with complaints because of extreme barking, and running off leash. We have had to ask people to leave, and have once had to call in our on site medic. We are a volunteer run organization without the resources to provide adequate policing of the animals, and our insurance company refuses to cover dog related injuries, meaning that an injury would lead to not only the festival ending, but also the board of directors being liable in any ensuing lawsuit.

All members of the board are dog people, many of us have dogs at home, and have brought them to the festival, and would like to still allow dogs to attend. That is why this decision has been extremely difficult for us, and why we have taken such a long time to try to come up with other solutions, to no avail. We know that many people will be frustrated, and that some may not be able to continue to attend the festival. However, please note that there are several kennels in the area that are very reputable, and that you will find them listed on our new dog page. If you are traveling with a service or support animal, we will be posting a page with information on what paperwork you need to submit to bring your animal to the festival. If your animal is not a support animal, we will be posting a list of kennels in the area. We recommend that you book as soon as possible to ensure that your dog gets a spot.

Again, this was an extremely painful, multi-year decision making process. We hope that even if you do not agree with the decision, that you will, as a member of our family, understand why we had to come to this decision. We are, as always, committed to creating a wonderful, safe, community and family oriented event, which celebrates music, art, sustainability and inclusion, we hope you that you will join us in our 20th annual festival.

Thank you for your understanding,

The Board of Directors,
North Atlantic Arts Alliance &
The Ossipee Valley Music Festival and String Camp