

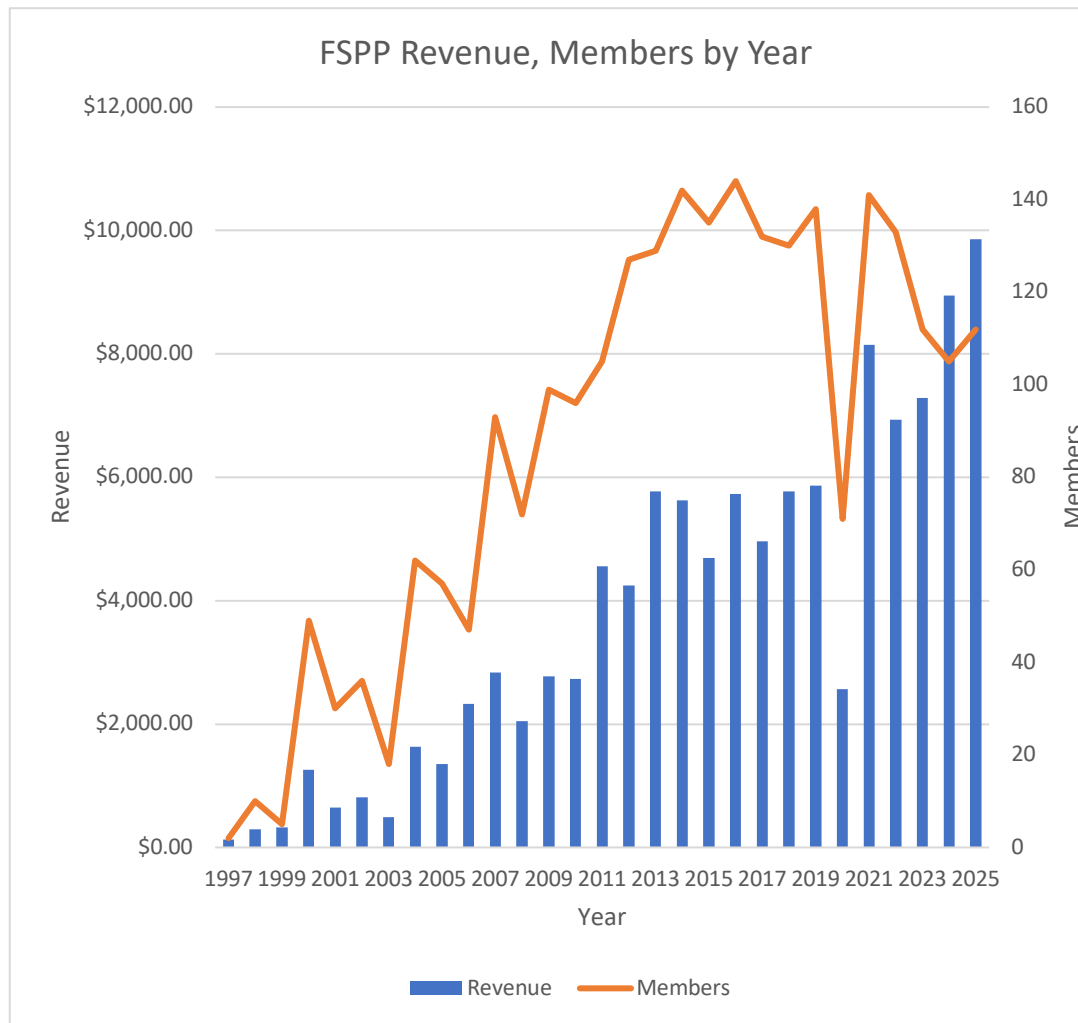
SPEAKER: David Morgan, “Spy Pond Park Garden (Shoreline) Improvements” [Presentation Link: https://www.canva.com/design/DAG-DYPPyYE/U5RXdtmd68ujSse1lGm3ig/edit](https://www.canva.com/design/DAG-DYPPyYE/U5RXdtmd68ujSse1lGm3ig/edit)

INTRODUCTIONS:

Jenny Babon, Mimi Barbera, Jacque Chakrabarty, Deepto Chakrabarty, Maya Chakrabarty, Sharon Green, Adrienne Landry, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Gail Leondar-Wright, David Morgan, Mithilesh Sharma, Lally Stowell, and Christopher Wilson

NOVEMBER 2 MEETING MINUTES ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS: The minutes were accepted as presented.

Year	Revenue	Members
1997	\$130.00	2
1998	\$290.00	10
1999	\$325.00	5
2000	\$1,255.00	49
2001	\$647.00	30
2002	\$815.00	36
2003	\$495.00	18
2004	\$1,630.00	62
2005	\$1,347.00	57
2006	\$2,326.00	47
2007	\$2,835.00	93
2008	\$2,045.00	72
2009	\$2,775.00	99
2010	\$2,735.00	96
2011	\$4,554.04	105
2012	\$4,251.00	127
2013	\$5,770.00	129
2014	\$5,622.00	142
2015	\$4,688.00	135
2016	\$5,732.00	144
2017	\$4,965.00	132
2018	\$5,773.00	130
2019	\$5,860.70	138
2020	\$2,570.00	71
2021	\$8,145.00	141
2022	\$6,935.00	133
2023	\$7,287.00	112
2024	\$8,950.03	105
2025	\$9,860.00	112



2025 ANNUAL FSPP TREASURER'S REPORT, 2026 Budget: Sandip Agarwal

Friends of Spy Pond Park - 2025 Financial Report as of December 31, 2025			
Treasurer's Report			
2025 INCOME		TOTAL	2025 EXPENSE
Dues & Donations (Checks) - Solicitations, Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days		\$7,700.03	Newsletters printing (Winter/Spring, Summer, Fall/Winter 2024)
Dues & Donations – Network for Good (NFG)		\$2,615.00	Annual Meeting Notice
T Shirt Sales - Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days		\$600.00	Solicitation letters printing
CD Interest		\$819.35	Envelopes Printing
Total Income		\$11,734.38	Website / Domain Name / Software License
Friends of Spy Pond Park Projected 2026 Budget			Postal fees and processing expense
			Annual compliance filing fees
			Beautification tools & supplies
			Portable toilet rental fees (paid to Town of Arlington)
			Work Days & Fun Day Supplies & Posters
			Plant purchase expense reimbursement
			Total Expenses
			Total Newsletters
			Total Solicitations
			Total Income
Projected Income			Net Income (Expense)
Dues and Donations		\$9,000.00	Assets
Merchandise Sales		\$400.00	End of 2024
CD Interest		\$819.35	End of 2025
Miscellaneous		\$100.00	Cash Box
Total Projected Income		\$10,319.35	In-kind Donations (Ice Business Booklets)
Projected Expenses			Checking accounts
Park maintenance expense		\$(4,500.00)	Certificates of Deposit ¹
Fun Day expenses		\$(400.00)	Tshirts
Outreach booths (Town Day & Feast of East)		\$(250.00)	USPS Bulk Mailing Amount
T-Shirt purchases		\$(730.00)	Net Increase in Assets
Portable toilet		\$(416.50)	Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments
Solicitations		\$(200.00)	<i>Dues and donations (included in 2024 and deposited in 2025)</i>
Newsletters		\$(1,500.00)	<i>Outstanding checks (included in 2024 and withdrew in 2025)</i>
Annual meeting notice		\$(100.00)	<i>Dues and donations (deposited in January 2026)</i>
Website		\$(600.00)	Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments
Miscellaneous fees		\$(100.00)	
Total Projected Expenses		\$(8,796.50)	
Net Estimated Income		\$1,522.85	

¹During the annual year-ended December 31, 2024, the Certificates of Deposits have accrued the total interest of \$819.35.

104 t-shirts are on hand; we will order 80 t-shirts to replenish our supply.

The 2026 Budget was approved unanimously.

Sold 39 this year=\$585 income; tool inventory list was compiled.

Thirteen Ice Business Booklets remain.

As for Venmo account, we need to first setup an FSPP PayPal account and link it to FSPP Citizens Bank. However, FSPP Citizens Bank already has 3 PayPal accounts linked, which is the maximum possible. I called PayPal, but they cannot tell me which PayPal accounts are linked to Citizens Bank. I also met with a Citizens Bank account representative, and again they could not tell me which PayPal accounts were linked to the Citizens Bank account.

The only possible way would be to link someone else's Bank account to the FSPP PayPal account. That person would transfer the funds to FSPP whenever donations were received, reporting to the Treasurer the amounts and for what they were paid.

GOOD CITIZEN AWARD

Congratulations to Fred Moses, recipient of the FSPP 2025 Good Citizen Award!

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR:

President – Karen L. Grossman

General Vice-President – Arnav Gupta

Recording Secretary – Megan Chrisman

Treasurer – Sandip Agarwal

Membership Secretary – Daniel Jalkut

Vice Presidents for Communication, Outreach & Publicity – Jenny Babon, Jamie Ciocco,

Outreach & Publicity Committee – Anne Ellinger, Bulletin Board Maintenance, David Nejezchleba, Instagram and Anna Doctor, Bulk Mailing Coordinator

Stewardship Team - Sharon Green, Adrienne Landry, Lally Stowell, Diana Maggini, and Christopher Wilson

Web Developer- Julie McBride

Chair for Park Events – Betsy Leondar-Wright

Fundraising Chair – Open

Videographers/Photographers – Jenny Babon, Mithilesh Sharma, and Fred Moses

Photographer's Assistant – Open

Post-processing – Fred Moses

The slate of officers was voted in with unanimous approval.

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS and 2025 GOALS

STEWARDSHIP TEAM:

The Stewardship Team of Adrienne Landry, Lally Stowell, Sharon Green, and Diana Maggini have done a great job April through November (an extra undertaking). There were 94 volunteers for work in the park, working a total of 188 hours.

We gave Certificates of Appreciation for Work Day participation to Christopher Wilson for 4 days and Maya Chakrabarty for 5 days at the Annual Meeting.

Christopher Wilson reported that the fishing line committee has not yet met and was not covered in the recent Recreation Dept. meeting.

The following is the 2025 report we sent to the Conservation Commission that incorporates the Stewardship Team's accomplishments:

Friends of Spy Pond Park (FSPP)

Since 2020, to reduce stormwater runoff into Spy Pond and stabilize the shoreline, one hundred+ FSPP volunteers have planted 43 shrubs and several flowering plants. This year, they planted two Fragrant Sumac in Bed 8, behind the stone wall and two Christmas Ferns in Bed 2. An ambitious volunteer planted many flowering native plant seeds in the planting beds choosing locations conducive to their survival. We look forward to seeing what new flowers bloom in spring and summer of 2026.

An agreement with a contractor fell through, so FSPP will plant 14 more shrubs in 2026 as agreed with \$3500-\$4,500 allotted from a larger grant by the Water Bodies Group. Most plantings over the last 5 years are doing well. For details see [Spy Pond Park Shoreline Plantings 2020-2025](#).

This year, April through October, approximately 75 volunteers worked hard to remove approximately 80% of the invasive plants. They dug out several invasive saplings, mostly mulberry, false indigo and a huge buckthorn. There was an abundance of invasive vines in almost all the beds to remove. Some of the vines were smothering plants - both invasive and native plants. This year, the most pervasive

vine in the Park was Japanese Honeysuckle (JH) that twists its way around plants and begins to strangle them.

A project involved visiting with a Girl Scout troop to talk about what we do regarding invasive plants and native plants and why we do it. We used actual clippings and slides from the invasive plants as evidence. The FSPP Stewardship Team was involved in other activities. They also groomed the park and playground, keeping them litter free April-November, limiting pond pollution. It has been a challenge to keep leaves from decaying at the edge of Linwood Beach and mixing with miscellaneous debris.

*To educate the public, FSPP published 3 newsletters, distributing them online and via hardcopies in Arlington libraries. With Fun Day (supported by 35+ volunteers for 500 participants), newsletters, and numerous activities, FSPP encourages families to understand the importance of respecting the environment and enjoying nature around Spy Pond. At the end of the Fun Day festival, a first-time volunteer said, **“This is the kind of event that gives me hope for the human race!”** Yes, a community coming together to show kids a good time, in a well-cared-for natural environment, with live musicians and with lots of volunteers and parents helping children connect with nature and crafts... What could be better?*

FSPP advocated for fishing line dispensers that the DPW installed as a pilot project, were subsequently vandalized and will be reinstalled in the spring. Discarded fishing line remains a problem to wildlife in Spy Pond and other Arlington waterbodies. The Ottoson School Green Team has posted flyers on our bulletin boards to address this issue.



At FSPP Annual Meetings, David Morgan has and will discuss above issues presenting us in '25 & '26.

Spy Pond Recommendations/Priorities for 2026

- Monitor leaf and debris accumulation at the water's edge of Spy Pond Park.
- Form a collaboration between Friends of Spy Pond Park and DPW to augment volunteer involvement in Spy Pond Park for removing invasives and restoring native vegetation.

- Work with the Town to maintain the fishing line dispensers, educate anglers and the public about: the life-threatening results of fishing line and hook entanglements on water birds and other wildlife, and provide recommendations of plantings along the shoreline to combat erosion.
- Ask the Town to monitor maintenance of the catch basins and rain gardens in Spy Pond Park and near Spy Pond that collect and filter stormwater runoff.

2026 Work and Fun Days TBD

Lally will contact Charlotte Milan to discuss invasive plant and yard waste removal procedures for 2026.

WEBSITE:

See graph above for membership numbers for 2025 entered in the database; fewer people donated more funds.

OUTREACH:

- Continued the FSPP Instagram page. Thanks to David N. for posting the Work Day schedule and Fun Day poster
- Jenny designed the 2025 Fun Day poster using Canva
- Successful publicity of Work and Fun Days (Facebook page, volunteer group and NGO's mailing lists)
- Shared links to FSPP newsletter on Facebook page for wider reach
- Facebook page report: We had 5,959 views (Jan 1-Dec 31 2025) with 261 engagements broken down as follows: 71 reactions, 18 comments and 13 shares with most engagements on the Work Day and Fun Day postings. As of the end of 2025, we have 1370 followers, 34 new ones for 2025. 74% are from Arlington, 15% from the surrounding neighborhood.
- Updated website photo gallery to include 2024 photos

Betsy Leondar-Wright reported:

Successful Fun Day with approximately 500 attendees and 35+ volunteers

As Betsy says every year, "It was great - let's do it again!"

In many ways the 2025 festival showed strength, with many returning volunteers and musicians, with varied activities and a big turnout.

However, there are holes that we might want to fill:

- It was hard to recruit transportation for the heavy materials; Belknap St neighbors came to the rescue, but who knows if they 'll be available again. It would be great if there were members of FSPP with big vehicles and with strong backs. (And in general, we regulars are aging, so it would be good to draw in some younger new people.)
- In past decades we had stations from professional organizations doing nature education: Tinkergarten (now defunct); Daryl from KidsLAHF; Habitat (remember when they brought the giant snake?) Without those activity leaders, kids get less engagement with nature. Are there other such outfits we could invite?
- It would be good to have a deeper bench of musicians, so if one of our regulars can't make it, we can still have 3 acts in the 3 hours, instead of 2 like last year.
- Find a way to once again provide boat transportation to Elizabeth Island for tours of the grounds and investigate insurance for this.

Betsy wants all the members to be aware of those holes so if you run into someone who could fill one, you'll think to invite them.

And Betsy apologizes for not making it to report in person. We'll let her know any input you have for Fun Day 2026.

Publicity via the print media has been limited lately.

COMMUNICATIONS:

In 2025 we published 3 excellent newsletters.

Other accomplishments:

- Supported the Monarch Pledge with the Town of Arlington
- Worked with Save Alewife Brook and Save Arlington Wildlife, publicizing their activities; wrote support for some environmental bills in the MA State House supporting a petition to suspend anticoagulant rodenticides in the state to protect wildlife.
- Reported to Natasha Waden, Recreation and Community Services Director, on the status of the 4 Revegetation Area Signs with QR code link to FSPP website. Natasha's response to Karen in November about her second year plans:

I will be exploring the possibility of rolling out an intro. to fishing program next spring/summer- however, this will involve some time and planning.

My hope in 2026 is to better understand and define the working relationship between the Recreation Department, Park and Recreation Commission, and Friends of Parks groups that currently exist and the newly created ones.

I plan to work with Town Counsel over the next few months to get a better understanding of the legal parameters in which Friends Groups can assist in Park oversight as well as develop a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that can clearly outline the duties, responsibilities and legal parameters between all parties. Once I develop that, I imagine our team will be looking to hold a meeting with all our Friends Groups. Given all the various responsibilities that fall under the purview of the Recreation Department, this is very important but may take a bit longer to formalize given the competing priorities in the department.

Ultimately, my goal is to help all parties clearly define roles and responsibilities, establish clear communication channels, and respond more efficiently to park concerns. I would also imagine that through the MOU we might include formalized meetings with Friends Groups at least once per year, possibly more.

FSPP Standing Annual Goals - Attained all

1. Increase *active* membership by enlarging the core group of volunteers.
2. Maintain the park, and keep the storage shed organized, as necessary.
3. Have Town Day, EcoFest, & Feast of the East outreach. **No Feast of the East, not to EcoFest**

4. Send bi-monthly meeting announcements & agendas.
5. Sell more t-shirts and report on end-of-year-inventory.
6. File annual report and PC report to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
7. Leave FSPP materials in libraries for distribution, **nonprofit organization library displays are no longer permitted**
8. Increase awareness of FSPP and park events: hold a successful park activities day for children and families, as permitted.
9. Maintain and update the FSPP database.
10. Maintain and update the FSPP website.
11. Publish 3 FSPP Newsletters.
12. Maintain archives of news items on Spy Pond Park (Memory Scrapbooks & Newsletters).
13. Create a scorecard on annual goals, and
14. Recruit two new board members from a broad range of the membership: see attached list of Board members to be posted on our website.

Goals for 2025 (2026 updates included in bold/red)

1. Monitor and influence as much as we can the Park **Director** and Commissioner's efforts re: shoreline rehab, path improvement, and tot lot play area in our best interests.
2. Coordinate with Hardy School 4th grade re: a unit for study of the Spy Pond Park environment and field day in SPP involving parents, the DPW, and Charlotte Milan from Arlington Recycle – this was done in 2018 and will be investigated for 2025. **Not done; investigate for 2027 via the Hardy PTO leader(s)**
3. Determine the need for alternatives for handling litter/trash and investigate what other towns do. **In/ out**
4. Recruit **and Integrate the General Vice-President into doing some Presidential tasks, as needed, whenever possible.**
5. Explore additional art for the park and investigate what is being done in other parks – investigate themes with connections to Arlington history and indigenous peoples. **Communicated with Kathryn Golden oak and Megan Coppock regarding a possibility for a winter installation and a Fun Day activity.**
6. Monitor the Town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds. **4 FSPP temporary signs with QR code and will discuss providing the same for rain gardens in cooperation with the maintenance contractor.**
7. Put up a sign near the rain gardens explaining its environmental purpose and purpose of added fencing. **Discuss with David Morgan and contractor, A Yard and a Half Landscaping**
8. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP: **Fred Moses and created recognition awards for Work Day volunteers- Maya Chakrabarty and Christopher Wilson**
9. **Explore publicizing ArMI's mission before and during our Work Days. (2025) Disbanded**

OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING DATE: March 22, 2026, 5 PM via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Chrisman
Recording Secretary