

FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 12, 2025

SPEAKER: David Morgan, Arlington Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent, & Kate Davies, Tufts University Lecturer, Urban & Environment Policy & Planning “Arlington’s Plan Integrating Nature and Community”

INTRODUCTIONS: Karen Grossman, Leslie Bennett, Jerry Yu, Diana Maggini, Fred Moses, Adrienne Landry, Sally Hempstead, Marshall McCloskey, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Susan Saw, Aung Lynn, Jenny Babon, Colin Blair, Liz Blumenthal, William Stalcup, David Morgan, Lally Stowell, Sharon Green, Jim Benn, Kate Davies

DECEMBER 1 MEETING MINUTES ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS: accepted as presented.

2024 ANNUAL FSPP TREASURER’S REPORT, 2025 BUDGET: Susan Saw

Friends of Spy Pond Park - 2024 Financial Report as of December 31, 2024

Treasurer's Report

2024 INCOME	TOTAL
Dues & Donations (Checks) - Solicitations, Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days	\$9,270.03
Dues & Donations – Network for Good (NFG)	\$1,985.00
Plant Grants & Donations	\$591.00
T Shirt Sales - Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days	\$300.00
CD Interest	\$1,046.54
Total Income	\$13,192.57

Friends of Spy Pond Park 2025 Budget	
Projected Income	
Dues and donations	\$7,500.00
Merchandise Sales	\$200.00
CD Interest	\$350.00
Miscellaneous	\$100.00
Total Projected Income	\$8,150.00

Projected Expenses	
Park maintenance expense (\$1,500 for a contract)	\$(3,000.00)
Fun Day expenses	\$(350.00)
Outreach booths (Town Day & Feast of East)	\$(150.00)
Portable toilet	\$(1,000.00)
Solicitations	\$(500.00)
Newsletters	\$(1,200.00)
Annual meeting notice	\$(100.00)
Website	\$(400.00)
Miscellaneous fees	\$(350.00)
Total Projected Expenses	\$(7,050.00)
Net Estimated Income	\$1,100.00

2024 EXPENSE	TOTAL
Newsletters printing (Winter/Spring, Summer, Fall/Winter 2024)	\$(1,068.43)
Annual Meeting Notice	\$(80.41)
Solicitation letters printing	\$(137.82)
Website / Domain Name / Software License	\$(364.80)
Postal fees and processing expense	\$(344.35)
Annual compliance filing fees	\$(35.82)
Beautification tools & supplies	\$(493.15)
Portable toilet rental fees (paid to Town of Arlington)	\$(416.50)
Work Days & Fun Day Supplies & Posters	\$(448.24)
Plant purchase expense paid by Arlington Land Trust, Inc.	\$(450.59)
Plant purchase expense reimbursement	\$(513.35)
Total Expenses	\$(4,353.46)
Total Newsletters	\$(1,148.84)
Total Solicitations	\$(137.82)
Total Income	\$13,192.57
Net Income (Expense)	\$8,839.11

Assets	End of 2023	End 2024
Cash Box	\$50.00	\$50.00
In-kind Donations (Ice Business Booklets)	\$200.00	\$200.00
Checking accounts	\$17,202.24	\$17,207.24
Certificates of Deposit ¹	\$20,758.13.00	\$21,804.67
Net Increase in Assets		\$6,716.26
Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments		\$(2,122.85)
<i>Dues and donations (included in 2023 and deposited in 2024)</i>		\$1,447.00
<i>Outstanding checks (included in 2023 and withdrew in 2024)</i>		\$(2,067.60)
<i>Dues and donations (deposited in 2025)</i>		\$(1,918.75)
<i>Portable toilet rental fee (outstanding check)</i>		\$(416.50)
Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments		\$(2,122.85)

¹During the annual year-ended December 31, 2024, the Certificates of Deposits have accrued the total interest of \$1,046.54.

t-shirt and tool inventory (Lally Stowell) completed-adequate supply of t-shirts for 2025.

GOOD CITIZEN AWARD:

Citation

For 25 dedicated years as a

FSPF involved member:

*Showing up to contribute 2-3 Work Day hours or going on your own
on daily walks cleaning up SPP, picking up litter carelessly left
by park visitors after picnicking or just passing through,*

*Monitoring the status of all SPP equipment, reporting problems
to FSPF President, seeking remediation plans for DPW repairs,*

*Attending Park Commission and FSPF meetings to keep current
concerning our endeavors and giving supportive input,*

*Receiving the call from the Beautification Committee turned
Stewardship Team to perform a job no one else wanted /could do,*

*Roaming through the planting beds after park renovation
searching for poison ivy amidst healthy, natural growth,*

*Attacking the unwanted plants mentioned above,
pulling/cutting them down with unrelenting courage and determination,
rendering them unable to infect FSPF's worthy volunteers
dealing with other less virulent intruders,*

*Enabling prolific native growth in our beloved planting beds-
native shrubs or flowers flourishing along the water's edge,*

*And finally, accepting FSPF grateful thanks for your
consistent Super Volunteer response to our calls of need,*

Friends of Spy Pond Park

is proud to present this

Good Citizen Award

to

Lisa Reynolds

January 12, 2025

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR:

President – Karen L. Grossman

General Vice-President – Open

Recording Secretary – Megan Chrisman

Treasurer – Susan Saw, possible assistant Mrinmayee Kale

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

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 – Mark Sandman, Fred Moses

2024 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) The 2024 report we sent to the Conservation Commission:

Friends of Spy Pond Park (FSPP)

The earlier part of 2024 Spring and Summer's rainy weather and the following sunshine was great for the 10 shrubs, two flowering plants, and 1 tree that FSPP volunteers planted. The volunteers, totaling 77 all year, also worked 1/mo. to treat and pull invasive plants along the shoreline to encourage better native plant growth, and reduce erosion. They also groomed the park and playground, keeping them litter free April-November, keeping some park debris from polluting the pond. It has been a challenge to keep leaves from decaying at the edge of Linwood Beach and mixing with miscellaneous debris.

Since 2021, volunteers for FSPP have planted fragrant sumac, winterberry red sprite, buttonbush, yarrow, viburnum dentatum (arrowwood), red-twig dogwood, bearberry, asters, chokeberry, and rosa virginiana. In total, they have planted 53 plants: 38 shrubs and 18 flowering plants. Not all have made it, but most have. FSPP has learned that the flowering plants do not seem to have as much stamina to stand up to the elements as do the shrubs. Shrubs have woody stems that will make it through the winter and grow larger each year. The four rosa virginiana shrubs planted last year are blooming now. A chart is available on the FSPP website with details, also accessed via the QR code on the four Revegetation signs in the planting beds in the park : [Spy Pond Park Shoreline Plantings 2021-2024](#). FSPP will continue these efforts in 2025 and hope to have additional assistance in doing so via contractual agreement with the Town.

All plants, native and invasive, have grown precipitously this year because of heavy rains in April and May. On April 19, the Boston Globe reported "Over the last 30 days, Boston, Providence, and parts of coastal Maine have had 200% of the normal precipitation, about double the average."

FSPP was involved in other activities. To educate the public, they published a newsletter 3 times again this year, distributed them online and in the Arlington libraries. More than 40 volunteers held a Fun Day for approximately 400 participants to increase awareness of our wonderful park. FSPP wants to encourage families to enjoy and understand the importance of respecting the environment and to enjoy nature around Spy Pond. Their Annual Meeting speakers in January 2024 and 2025 address these goals in their presentations.

2025 Work and Fun Days TBD including a new Nov. date: April 9-11 am, May 9-11 am, June 9-11 am, July 8-10 am, Aug. 8-10 am, Sept. 9-11 am, Oct. 9-11am, Nov. 9-11am, Fun Day Sept. 10am-1pm

The DPW installed the bike racks in the spring of 2024 that were donated by Richard Norcross, longtime FSPP member in honor of his wife, Ruth. We dedicated them during Fun Day last September.

WEBSITE:

Julie McBride has kept postings up to date for newsletters, minutes, Stewardship Team and Fun Day updates. Daniel Jalkut has kept the database and Mailchimp list up to date for interested recipients and solicitations (fewer people (105) donated significantly more money in 2024 than the previous year.

OUTREACH:

- Worked with Coalition to Save the Mugar Wetlands, publicizing their meetings; wrote support for some environmental bills in the MA State House and a letter to the Pesticide Board last month supporting a petition to suspend anticoagulant rodenticides in the state.
- This year we launched the FSPP Instagram page in September - Thanks to David! David, please check if I have the correct date and other Instagram info you would like to report. We have 14 followers so far.
- Georgia volunteered to be part of Outreach team and designed 2024 Fun Day poster
 - Successful publicity of Work and Fun Days (Facebook page, volunteer group mailing lists, yourarlington.com for Fun Day)
 - Shared links to FSPP newsletter on Facebook page for wider reach
 - Facebook page report: 822 views from Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2024; posts reached 1,400 users with most content interactions in September (coincides with Fun Day)
- Worked with FSPP team and Town of Arlington for 2 more Revegetation Area Signs with QR code link to FSPP website
- Successful Fun Day with approximately 400 attendees and 40+ volunteers (Betsy). More volunteers are needed in 2025.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Archive maintenance & publications including YourArlington.org for publicity

FSPP Standing Annual Goals Attained all

1. Increase *active* membership by enlarging the core group of volunteers.
2. Maintain the park, as necessary.
3. Have Town Day, EcoFest, & Feast of the East outreach. Not Feast of the East
4. Send bi-monthly meeting announcements & agendas.
5. Sell more t-shirts and report on end-of-year-inventory. (1 more-19)
6. File annual report and PC report to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
7. Have a library display, as 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

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 2024. Not done investigate for 2026 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. Not done 2024 contact Public Art
6. Monitor the Town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds. Undertaken by FSPP temporary signage. Jenny will check if the QR code is working.
7. Put up a sign near the rain gardens explaining its environmental purpose and added fencing. Not done
8. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP.
9. Explore publicizing ArMI's mission before and during our Work Days. (2024) Not done

OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING DATE: March 2, 2025, 6 PM via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Chrisman
Recording Secretary

2025 FSPP Officers and Committee Members

Jenny Aurielle Babon moved to Arlington in 2015 and has been a Massachusetts resident since 2004. Born and raised in Cebu, Philippines, she came to the US for a PhD in Biomedical Sciences and is now works in R&D for a pharmaceutical company. Spy Pond Park is her favorite spot in town, and she enjoys taking walks, impromptu picnics and viewing sunsets with her family in the park. Her other interests include singing with the Boston College Filipino Community church choir, running, cycling, amateur photography and trying out different cuisines (both cooking and eating). Jenny served as Publicity Chair for FSPP in February 2019 and assumed the role of VP Co-Chair of Outreach and Communication in May 2024.

Megan Chrisman grew up in Southern California but still managed to become enthralled with the seasons when she moved to Boston as a college freshman and has stayed in the area ever since. She is happy to now be an Arlington resident and considers Spy Pond one of her favorite walking destinations. In addition to serving as the FSPP Recording Secretary beginning in 2021, Megan works in educational technology. Her interests include reading, languages, and slowly learning the electric bass guitar.

Jamie Ciocco has run Trendy.com, a technical consulting and software design company, since 1999. He programs interactive museum installations and designs custom software for clients across the country, including The Smithsonian, McGraw-Hill, the JFK Library and Museum, Hubbell Lighting, Inc., Waters, Inc., and the Georgia Aquarium. Prior to 1999, he was Lead Multimedia Programmer at SilverPlatter Education, where he programmed award-winning educational CD-ROMs and wrote pioneering eLearning software for the web. Jamie received his BA in English & American Literature from Harvard in 1994. He returned to Harvard from 1997 to 2004 to act as Assistant Senior Tutor and Drama Tutor in Residence, running a 90-seat theatre and publishing the House Facebook. While at Harvard, he also programmed an early online Facebook that was referenced in the movie The Social Network. He has been a FSPP VP for Communications and Outreach since 2008 doing newsletter design and layout.

Anna Doctor was born in Boston but spent most of her childhood in Nashville, TN. She earned her degree in Art History in 2018 from Colorado College, an institution that practices “the block system” or taking one class at a time. In between classes, Anna had the opportunity to explore the state and surrounding area through backpacking trips which developed her deep love and admiration for the outdoors. After graduating from college and thru hiking the Colorado Trail, Anna worked in curation at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. She moved to Massachusetts the fall of 2021 to live closer to her family, all residents in eastern Massachusetts. She also returned to school and received a certificate in Graphic Design from Boston University in May 2023. Anna currently lives near Alewife station and loves to bike to Spy Pond Park on the Minuteman Trail. When she is not enjoying the surrounding green areas, Anna does communications work for a small creative business, climbs, and captains two ultimate frisbee teams. She has served FSPP as the Bulk-Mailing Coordinator since November 2023.

Karen L. Grossman is from a small-town northeast of Pittsburgh, PA. She earned a B.S. from Syracuse University, an M.Ed. from Boston University and worked for 35 years as a speech and language pathologist in the Wilmington, MA Public Schools with children in preschool through high school. Karen has lived in Arlington since 1974 and currently resides on the shore of Spy Pond near the park. She enjoys her view of the pond every day and has been involved with the FSPP since 1992. She's been President of the organization since she retired from full time employment in 2004 and served on the Mystic River Watershed Association Board for 10 years beginning in 2009. Karen presently serves on their Development and Herring Run and Paddle Committees. Karen's other interests include singing with the Mystic Chorale and Temple Shir Tikvah, reading, the arts, exercising daily, and traveling the world.

Daniel Jalkut is a California native who has lived in the Boston area since 2005, and since 2011 in East Arlington with his wife and two young boys. He is a self-employed software developer who focuses on consumer-focused applications for Apple platforms including the Mac and iOS. He serves as an Arlington Town Meeting Member. In addition to his interest in technology and civic duties, he enjoys practicing guitar, piano, and singing. He is an avid runner who enjoys Arlington's many open spaces, particularly the bike path and Spy Pond Park. Daniel assumed the position of Membership Secretary doing database entry in June 2017.

Adrienne Landry grew up in Wakefield, Massachusetts, and graduated high school there. In 1971, she left her hometown and moved to Montreal for the adventure of living in another country and expanding her horizons. She learned of programs for older students to enter college and began her educational journey which culminated in a B.F.A. in 1978. She is now a practicing artist and worked for 24 years as an art teacher in Belmont. Adrienne has lived in Arlington since 1990. Her interest in invasive plants began on Monhegan Island, Maine, when, during a five-week painting trip, she decided to give back to the community and get involved with the Monhegan Associates, the local environmental group. Her task was to cut down barberry which grows heartily there. When she returned home, she began noticing and learning about the many invasive plants on the local bike path and began to cut them down. Learning that white vinegar was a natural herbicide, she devised a method for eradicating the plants while not letting the vinegar harm anything else. As part of the StewardshipTeam/Beautification Committee for FSPP, she is removing invasive plants. In 2021, along with others, she started planting native plants in their place

Betsy Leondar-Wright, a longtime activist for social justice, is an Associate Professor of sociology at Lasell College. She is the author of *Missing Class: Strengthening Social Movement Groups by Seeing Class Cultures* (Cornell University Press 2014) and *Class Matters: Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists* (2005). From 2010 to 2015 she served as the Program Director of Class Action (www.classism.org) where she is still on the board, and has taught sociology courses at Tufts, Harvard, and Boston College. She first participated in environmental advocacy during the nuclear power movement in the 1970s. Betsy worked as a community organizer in low-income communities for a decade, including running youth programs at an urban community garden. Betsy has been active in the FSPP since 1997, is a past President and now focuses on children's activities and public education through performance and art serving as FSPP Chair for Park Events.

Diana Maggini moved to Arlington in November 2023 to babysit her granddaughter. She was born in Belgium, raised in France, and moved to New York to study English. Diana retired after teaching French for thirty-two years in Louisiana. She loves the outdoors and exercising in the water. Her favorite place here definitely is Spy Pond Park. Diana assumed a position on the FSPP Outreach and Communications Committee in May 2024 and joined the Stewardship Team in 2025.

Julie McBride is currently a web developer at Harvard University where she works on a team developing the university's new web platforms and design system. She previously worked for a research and consulting firm for 14 years on website and software development for a range of clients, including many projects for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Julie has maintained the FSPP website since 2019 and redeveloped it in 2021. She visits Spy Pond often and enjoys birdwatching.

Fred Moses has been Boston area photographer with over 25 years of experience. He has made both images and computer aided design tools for jewelers. Travel and travel photography are Fred's special loves; environmental portraits of people working, marketplaces, and extremes are favorites. He has taken photos for Spy Pond Park's newsletter and website gallery since 2005. Fred's work is held in private collections internationally and has appeared in juried exhibits at the ACA and the Fuller Craft Museum. Also, he builds commercial websites and was the FSPP Webmaster 2005-2019. He has made marbled paper and silk scarves. During his five-decade technical career, Fred has held management and individual contributor positions in software engineering. Fred has a B.S. & M.S. in Engineering Science.

David Nejezchleba moved to the Boston area in 2023 and has lived in Massachusetts since 2018. He completed his undergraduate career at Mount Holyoke College in 2022 and is currently finishing his master's degree in philosophy at Brandeis University. Spy Pond is his go-to walking destination and he was excited to assume a role on the Publicity Committee in September 2024, initiating FSPP's presence on Instagram.

Susan Saw was born in Myanmar and moved to the US in 2000. She earned a dual Masters' degree for accounting and business administration from Northeastern University in 2008. Susan works in the finance department at an investment and asset management firm in Boston, enjoys traveling, eating new foods, and trying new experiences. Her favorite season is fall in New England. She joined the FSPP in June 2022 and continues supporting the FSPP as its Treasurer since September 2022.

Lally Stowell has worked with inner city youth in NYC and Cambridge and with preschool children in Head Start programs. She taught child development and parenting for many years at Watertown High School and then switched to teaching ESL in Cambridge, first at Centro Presente and then at the Cambridge Community Learning Center where she has been teaching an ESL Family Literacy class since 1993. Lally has also tutored day care providers through ABCD in Boston, mentored/tutored high school students through the Posse Foundation and volunteered at the Food Project. She has been active in helping to eliminate invasive species in the planting beds in Spy Pond Park, coordinating the Stewardship Team/Beautification Committee and was Publicity Co-Chair for the FSPP January 2010-2014. Lally maintains our Memory Books, the record of our community outreach efforts since the beginning of the FSPP.