

FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2023

SPEAKERS: Douglas Rosner, Rosemary Burke and crew team member(s), “Arlington Belmont Crew Team: Past Present, & Future”

AB Crew is a competitive team that draws from Arlington HS, Belmont HS and Minuteman Tech HS. They compete locally, regionally, and nationally. They started in 2005 in Belmont; Rosemary credited the program as a life-changing experience for many rowers, including her daughter who was one of the founding members. They were able to sign some teachers up as coaches and workouts were held in the school gym; they acquired boats from another program. The parents built the boat racks and the team raised funds through bake sales. It took a couple years to find a permanent place for the team to row. In 2009 an Arlington business owner who was coaching a Worcester team approached them to collaborate with Arlington students who were rowing on Spy Pond, where they have rowed ever since.

AB Crew has qualified for the US Rowing Youth National Championships and medaled in Boys Lightweight Four. They are four-time MPSRA state champions and have also rowed in the Head of the Charles Regatta. Jane and Beril, two varsity girls’ team athletes, spoke about what it’s like to compete. Jane started on the novice girls’ team as a new student in the area and was happy to meet new friends, along with experiencing what it’s like to row. Beril tagged along with a friend who was doing the summer Learn to Row program for just two weeks but ended up joining the team for four years. They both appreciated how AB Crew is dedicated to the sport and the love of rowing.

The practice schedule can be intense during the 2-month training periods with 5-6 practices a week. The team has even rowed out in the snow! Covid made practices more challenging to do safely but the team bought single and double crew boats to still give athletes the ability to practice on Spy Pond, one of the only places that they could access outside of the house. Both racing seasons are around two months long with six consecutive weeks of races. Saratoga starts off the racing season in April and is a fun team trip. There are a lot of scrimmages in the spring because the races are shorter then. US Rowing Northeast and MPSRA is usually at Lowell and sometimes a boat qualifies for the US Rowing National Championship in Sarasota, as the novice boys’ team did last year. In the fall the regattas go off one at a time and teams generally row against the clock. They tend to be longer races and take place around New England in areas like Lowell, New Hampshire, and Cambridge across September and October. The team maintains a food trailer to feed the 100+ athletes.

Unlike with soccer and other sports, most would-be rowers are novices, so the team welcomes any interested new team members residing in Arlington or Belmont from the three feeder schools. The AB Crew Board has formed a DEI committee to ensure that all students have an opportunity to benefit from being a part of the rowing community. They also promote rowing in 8th grade classes and recreation centers.

The club is a self-managed 501c(3) non-profit. The operating budget runs around \$100k per season, funded by athlete fee revenue and fundraisers. Boats can be very expensive; an eight-person boat can run around \$45k. Athlete fees are \$1150/season along with travel expenses and financial aid is available.

Betsy asked if the adult rowing sessions that the AB Crew team formerly offered might come back and Doug replied that it could become a consideration in the future. Karen asked the athletes what thoughts help them get through a challenging race or training session and they replied that the coxswains encourage them to row for their teammates; it’s also inspiring to feel how fast the boat is going, especially compared to other boats. FSPP thanks the crew team for the opportunity to learn more about their history!

INTRODUCTIONS: Karen Grossman, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Jenny Babon, Lally Stowell, Lori Tsuruda, Adrienne Landry, Susan Saw, Sharon Green, Stroker Rogovin, Bill Eykamp

NOVEMBER 13 MEETING MINUTES ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS:
The November meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2023 BUDGET & GOALS

2022 Accomplishments

(All Standing Goals were reached, except increasing *active* membership, participating in Eco Week or Feast of the East, and selling more t-shirts-since the playground was closed.)

2022 Goals Attained

1. Monitor and influence as much as we can the Park Commissioner's efforts re: shoreline rehab, path improvement, and tot lot play area in our best interests.
2. Determine the need for alternatives for handling litter/trash and investigating how other towns do it.
3. Monitor the town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds.
4. Put up a sign in the rain garden explaining its environmental purpose and the added fencing (presented in plans for playground renovation).
5. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP.

2023 Goals

1. Monitor and influence, as much as we can, the Park Commissioner's efforts re: shoreline rehab, path improvement, and playground area in our best interests.
2. Coordinate with Hardy School 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 2022.
3. Determine the need for alternatives for handling litter/trash along with the DPW.
4. Recruit a General Vice-President.
5. Communicate with Public Art to explore additional art for the park and investigate what is being done in other parks and investigate themes with connections to Arlington history and indigenous peoples.
6. Monitor the town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds.
7. Put up a sign in the Linwood (and Pond Lane?) rain garden(s) and planting bed signage explaining its environmental purpose and the purpose of the end fencing.
8. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP.
9. Train a new Bulk Mailing Coordinator and other supporting board committee members.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The group discussed the annual report for 2022, prepared by Susan with Karen's help. The report showed that the organization had an income of \$8,972.50 from dues, donations, and merchandise sales, along with expenses of \$5,453.34 including park maintenance, such as new fencing, and solicitations. The net income was \$3,519.16, an increase from our previous year's net income. We also discussed the budget for the upcoming year (\$7,350) and planned to invest in some new initiatives. Karen will post the report on the FSPP website with this meeting's minutes when approved. Lally and Betsy confirmed that they received the reimbursement checks Susan sent. In terms of budget, there was a fair increase compared to last year, but we stayed within our budget forecast at the end of 2021 for 2022.

Karen and Susan suggested investing \$20,000 in a CD at Citizens Bank for 11-14 months to earn interest, as the organization would still have \$14,000 cash sitting in its account. Most cash flow comes in during the spring solicitation. Karen presented a graph of the organization's revenue and membership. The discussion touched on cash flow and the need to keep enough cash on hand to cover expenses (we tend to need around \$5,000-\$7,000 on hand at any given time throughout the year). The group decided to ask Susan to investigate and determine the best means of maximizing the \$20,000 investment over the next year and a half with Citizens Bank.

Susan mentioned that she has completed the acknowledgement letters for the 2022 contributions. Susan will work on the PC (public charities) filing using last year's Citizens Bank statements and Sarah Zadova's bi-monthly treasurer's reports to determine the required figures. Lori noted that the PC form can now be done digitally without a second signature. The annual report for 2022 is already filed. The 990 EZ federal filing has still not been done; Karen will send Susan more information and a contact for this. Susan will send Karen the final 2022 financial report.

Friends of Spy Pond Park - 2022 Financial Report as of December 31, 2022
Treasurer's Report 2022

2022 INCOME	TOTAL
Dues & Donations (Checks) - Solicitations, Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days	\$7,419.00
Dues & Donations – Network for Good (NFG)	\$1,177.50
Dues & Donations (Cash) – Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days	\$130.00
T Shirt Sales - Fun Day, Town Day & Work Days	\$246.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,972.50

2022 EXPENSE	TOTAL
Newsletters printing (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter 2022)	(\$929.11)
Solicitation letters printing	(\$133.17)
Website / Domain Name / Software License	(\$333.47)
P.O. Box Renewal	(\$134.00)
Other postal / postal processing expense	(\$150.00)
Annual report filing fee (Commonwealth of MA)	(\$18.50)
Beautification tools & supplies	(\$743.48)
Fun Day Supplies & Posters	(\$382.73)
Annual Meeting Notice	(\$59.88)
Exterior fixtures (fencing)	(\$1,200.00)
Other printing expenses (T-shirt printing)	(\$599.00)
Other / miscellaneous (portable toilet)	(\$770.00)
Total Expenses	(\$5,453.34)
Total newsletters	(\$988.99)
Total solicitations	(\$133.17)
Total Income	\$8,972.50
Difference (Income - Expenses)	\$3,519.16

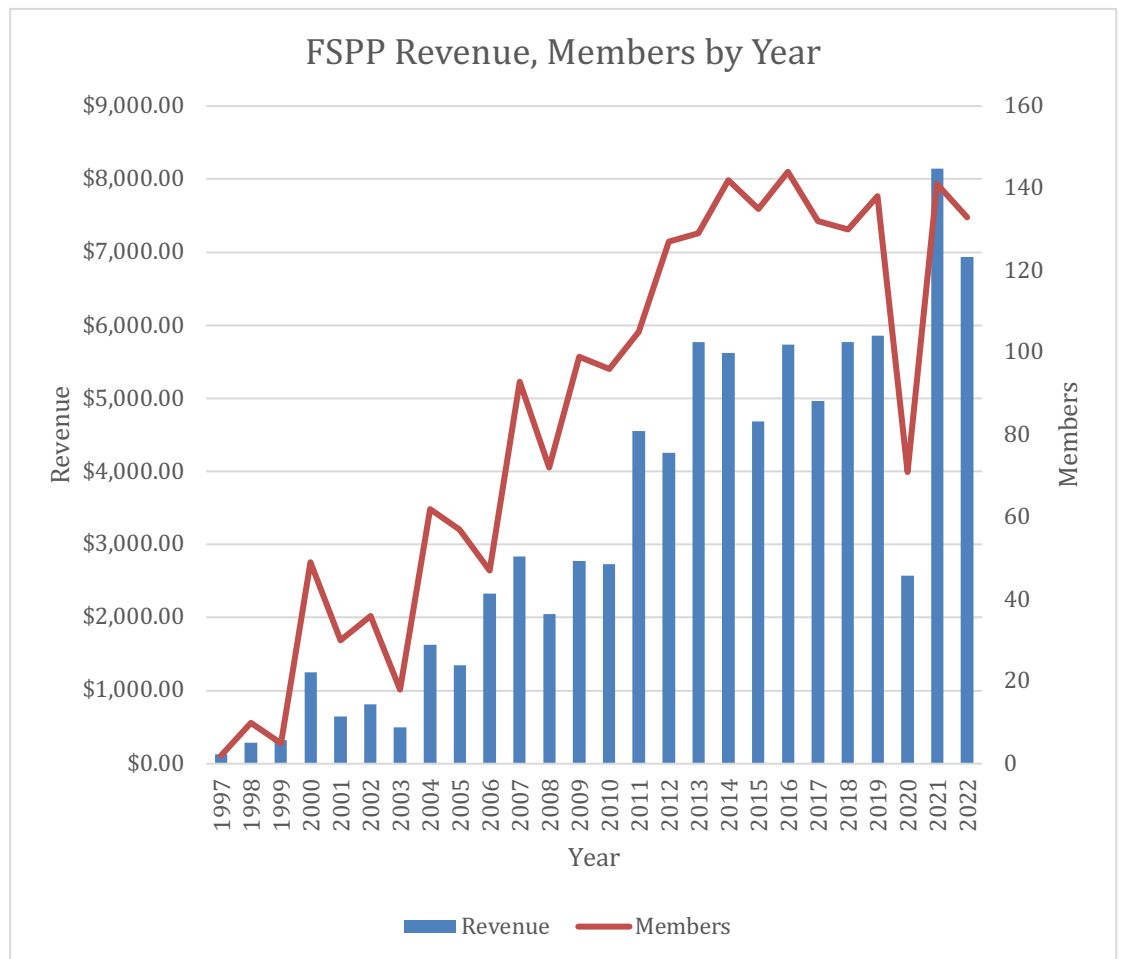
Friends of Spy Pond Park 2023 Budget	
Projected Income	
Dues and donations	\$7,000.00
Merchandise Sales	\$200.00
CD Interest	\$750.00
Miscellaneous	\$100.00
Total Projected Income	\$8,050.00
Projected Expenses	
Park maintenance expense (\$1,500 for a contract)	(\$3,300.00)
Fun Day Expenses	(\$500.00)
Outreach Booths (Town Day & Feast of East)	(\$150.00)
Portable toilet	(\$800.00)
Solicitations	(\$800.00)
Newsletters	(\$1,100.00)
Website	(\$200.00)
Miscellaneous fees	(\$500.00)
Total Projected Expenses	(\$7,350.00)
Net estimated income	\$700.00

Assets	End 2022
Cash Box	\$50.00
Checking account	\$34,126.11
Certificate of Deposit	\$0.00
Net Increase in Assets	\$3,309.12
Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments	\$210.04
<i>Dues and donations (to be deposited)</i>	\$835.00
<i>Dues and donations from NFG (from January 2023)</i>	\$777.50
<i>Tools & supplies and Fun Day supplies (outstanding checks) =</i>	(\$632.46)
<i>Portable toilet (to be paid)</i>	(\$770.00)
Difference - Outstanding receipts & payments	\$210.04

Scroll down for more minutes

Year Revenue Members Analysis

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



Karen has filed Lally's inventories of our T-shirts and tools.

FSPP - T-shirt count, December 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022

Youth	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022
Xxs/4T Gildan	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	11
xs Gildan	18	17	16	13	13	13	10	13
s Gildan	32	32	31	30	29	28	22	21
m Gildan	24	24	23	23	23	23	21	20
L Gildan	12	12	12	8	8	7	6	18
XL Gildan	17	17	17	16	16	16	19	16
total	108	107	103	94	92	90	80	99

Adult

s	Gildan	25	24	21	21	21	18	14	19
m	Gildan	14	10	7	5	14	9	3	26
L	Gildan	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	10
L	Haines	21	19	18	16	16	14	12	11
XL	Gildan	1	1	1	0	11	8	8	8
XL	Haines	5	5	5	2	0	2	1	1
XXL	Gildan	7	6	5	4	9	9	10	6
total		74	66	58	49	71	58	39	81

+50

Friends of Spy Pond - Inventory of Tools - November 2022

- 5 pkgs of paper yard waste bags (5 bags per pkg.)
- 2 boxes of heavy black plastic invasive weeds bags 32x50
- 7 light white smaller plastic garbage bags
- 29 pr. cotton gloves
- 3 pr. large heavy gloves
- 6 pr. children's gloves (rubber coated on glove palm)
- 9 pr. adult gloves (")
- 13 plastic rakes;
- 3 metal rakes triangle-shaped
- 4 heavy metal rakes; wide, rectangular shaped
- 2 small children's rakes
- 1 cultivating rake
- 1 fork for digging
- 2 fork for transplanting & digging holes
- 1 weed-wrench
- 1 device for uprooting, medium-size
- 1 weed/bush heavy chopper (flat one side/pronged other side)

BEAUTIFICATION:

Adrienne thanked Lally and Sharon for their work as Beautification Committee members as well as Seth Anderson, Linda Clark, Julie McBride, and Bill Stalcup, and new volunteers Monet and Alicia. Heat waves, drought and posion ivy prevented the initial goal of planting 20 new plants, but she was able to get 12 planted. Adrienne has also done research on native plants and best planting practices for them, including attending webinars. Adrienne, Lally, and Sharon sort out the tasks/volunteers for Workdays each Wednesday; Adrienne is the dispatcher on the Workdays. The team planted 4 shrubs and 8 flowering perennial plants—foam flowers and iris cristata. Adrienne also found and transplanted chokeberry natives. Sharon and the volunteers transplanted 12 or more goldenrod and Joe-Pye weeds, which are very hearty, to a clear spot on the bike path marked with a "Revegetation Area" sign.

Adrienne assisted with writing a grant for \$1,775 dollars, resulting in \$591 towards mulch and compost for the 2023 FSPP budget. Adrienne and David Morgan met to discuss the Parterre contract; there has been a general lack of communication from Parterre. They also discussed park signage to prevent people from going into the beds and trampling plants. We re-established fencing at the end of the beds with Joe Connelly, Parks & Recreation Director, which required a lot of time and coordination. Adrienne worked with the tree committee to take down buckthorn trees, to be completed in the fall.

Lally coordinates volunteers as they sign up or need to switch projects. All three Beautification Committee members manage the shed supplies. The team is also working on weeding between the cobblestones in the park.

Karen noted that we had fewer Workday volunteers this past year so we should work on getting some more.

On the topic of shed maintenance/movement, Lally and an AB Crew Team rep., James Benn, worked together with crew team contractors and members to relocate the shed to a location closer to the bike path. This allows the crew team to enlarge its cage and open the fencing where the shed had been previously. This took several months of planning and a month for the execution, including digging to install a new foundation. Karen thanked Lally for working on this initiative. The new location is easy to access.

Anne Ellinger has been maintaining the bulletin boards and posting letters/Workday notices. Karen reported that the playground will have rubber poured in-place whenever the temperature rises above 50° for a few days (hopefully in late March or early April). The playground gates are locked now.

WEBSITE:

Daniel Jalkut and Julie McBride have been doing an excellent job with the website upgrade and database upkeep. In 2023 Adrienne is planning to share documentation about the revegetation area with Julie for the website; this info will be accessed from a QR code on the signs in the planting beds.

OUTREACH/COMMUNICATIONS:

Jenny reported that we have about 1168 followers on Facebook, a good bump up over the approximately 800 followers from last year. Jenny will contact the 1,000th follower about their free T-shirt. She can also work with Adrienne to introduce the revegetation project on social media. Jenny would like to expand the FSPP Facebook account to Instagram but needs to work with Karen on accessing the FSPP email address and setting up the account on her phone. She will be working on gathering attendees for Fun Day and Workdays. Karen asked Jenny for a photo of the playground as it is now for documentation purposes on our display board for Town Day.

Betsy reported on Fun Day in the newsletter. We didn't have amplified music because of team unavailability, so our goal for next year is to have amped music to accommodate guitars and singers. We also have permission to use a nearby house electric outlet, so we won't need a generator. We won't have a library display this year since we had one for 2022.

Karen has given Lally articles from the newspaper for memory scrapbooks, which have not been put together because we haven't met in person for a while.

The 2022 FSPP Good Citizen Award goes to Adrienne Landry. Her tireless efforts included planning, leading, and executing planting work, along with communication among town representatives and volunteers. Thank you, Adrienne!

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR:

President – Karen L. Grossman

General Vice-President – Open

Recording Secretary –Megan Chrisman

Treasurer – Susan Saw

Membership Secretary – Daniel Jalkut

Vice Presidents for Communication & Outreach – Lauren Bonilla & Jamie Ciocco

Publicity Chair – Jenny Babon

Communications, Outreach & Publicity Committee – Anne Ellinger & Phinney Morrison

Beautification Committee -

Sharon Green, Adrienne Landry, Lally Stowell,

Web Developer- Julie McBride

Chair for Park Events – Betsy Leondar-Wright

Fundraising Chair – Open

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

Photographer's Assistant – Open

Post-processing – Mark Sandman, Fred Moses

Bulk Mailing Coordinator-Marshall McCloskey **Assistant**-Open

Lauren still needs help and Phinney Morrison has been working with her to help sit at the table and document happenings for volunteers. Jamie Ciocco has done the newsletter for over ten years and does a great job. Bill Stalcup regularly augments the Beautification Committee. We are still looking for a Bulk Mailing Coordinator Assistant to help Marshall. The General VP position has been open awhile; Karen is looking for someone to start assuming responsibilities for leading the organization.

Betsy made a motion to affirm the slate of officers for 2023 and the motion was unanimously approved.

2022 Accomplishments

(All Standing Goals were reached, except increasing *active* membership, participating in Eco Week or Feast of the East, and selling more t-shirts-since the playground was closed.)

2022 Goals Attained

6. Monitor and influence as much as we can the Park Commissioner's efforts re: shoreline rehab, path improvement, and tot lot play area in our best interests.
7. Determine the need for alternatives for handling litter/trash and investigating how other towns do it.
8. Monitor the town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds.
9. Put up a sign in the rain garden explaining its environmental purpose and the added fencing (presented in plans for playground renovation).
10. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP.

2023 Goals

10. Monitor and influence, as much as we can, the Park Commissioner's efforts re: shoreline rehab, path improvement, and playground area in our best interests.
11. Coordinate with Hardy School 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 2022.
12. Determine the need for alternatives for handling litter/trash along with the DPW.
13. Recruit a General Vice-President.
14. Communicate with Public Art to explore additional art for the park and investigate what is being done in other parks and investigate themes with connections to Arlington history and indigenous peoples.
15. Monitor the town's pursuing finances for establishing signage about the soil erosion project and care of the planting beds.
16. Put up a sign in the Linwood (and Pond Lane?) rain garden(s) and planting bed signage explaining its environmental purpose and the purpose of the end fencing.
17. Identify and award 1-2 worthy citizens for outstanding service to the FSPP.
18. Train a new Bulk Mailing Coordinator and other supporting board committee members.

OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING DATE: March 5, 2023, 7 PM via Zoom

Newsletters will be distributed to library for the spring so the public can keep up to date with what we're doing.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Chrisman

Recording Secretary