

**FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 14, 2024**

INTRODUCTIONS: Outreach and Communications Co-Chair Jenny Babon, Recording Secretary Megan Chrisman, Stewardship Team Member Sharon Green, President Karen L. Grossman, Outreach and Communications Committee Member Diana Maggini, Stewardship Team Leader Lally Stowell, and People Making a Difference® Executive Director Lori Tsuruda attended.

MAY 5 MEETING MINUTES ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS:

The minutes were approved as submitted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Karen for Susan Saw

Bank Account Balance as of 04/30/2024: \$17,336.84			
Bank Account Balance as of 06/30/2024: \$20,233.34; \$19,966.39 after an outstanding plant expense check			
Income		Expenses	
Contributions via Network for Good	\$1,177.50	Swiftly Printing	\$(311.00)
Membership dues & donations	\$2,030.00	Reimbursement for plant purchase	\$(266.95)
Total Income	\$3,207.50	Total Expenses	\$(577.95)

Walter Fey has indicated he will assume the role of Assistant Treasurer: picking up checks and slips, acknowledging the contributions, and depositing the checks in our Citizen’s Bank account. He will send Karen 2 references and learn how to do the bulk mail acknowledgement through Google using his gmail account. Karen is seeking someone to assume the Treasurer’s position since Susan Saw has said she will complete her commitment at the end of 2024. Lori Tsuruda asked if Susan would still do the filings for 2024 and Karen replied that she had already agreed to do so. Karen has posted the Treasurer position on VolunteerMatch and asked Anna Doctor, bulk mailing coordinator, if she would be interested in this position; Anna is considering and reviewing the role description.

STEWARDSHIP TEAM:

Thank you, Anne Ellinger, for posting notices to the bulletin boards and keeping them neat!

Lally Stowell reported on behalf of Adrienne Landry that in April the volunteers came from EcoFest. At that time, they planted 8 shrubs successfully and carted out 10 bags of yard waste. In May the main task was to pull up several small mulberry saplings (fast-growing invasive plants). Agathe Shaeffer, a Girl Scout working on her Silver Award, and her father joined 4 FSPP volunteers on that Workday. They undertook the large, difficult task that Adrienne and others worked on ahead of time. They used the new Root Slayer Shovel with its jagged edges to loosen the mulberry roots, which are quite difficult to pull because of their root structure. One volunteer, Brian W., managed to take out a 5” wide mulberry stump in pieces. They put it together, like a puzzle, and the roots spanned roughly six feet! The other May major task was removing some Quaking Aspen saplings, so that they don’t block the view of the pond as they grow. The volunteers moved many of these aspens to an open area on the bike path slope. All are doing well.

On June 27 two groups of volunteers – Parents came with Arlington Scout Troop #306 and Kids Saving the Earth (7 years old) and joined our volunteers to remove invasive cuttings (false indigo, suckers from willow trees, mugwort, Queen Anne’s lace, etc.) and groom the park and playground. We also had a local who helped cut the hedge and other growth at Linwood Beach much lower to enhance the view of the pond for people sitting there. Lori and PMD will do further work on the hedge in July. Lally and Adrienne noted that since 2021 we’ve planted 53 plants—35 shrubs and 18 flowering plants! Most are still thriving. Thank you to Adrienne, Sharon and all others involved with this work! Six members of People Making a Difference®, including leader Lori Tsuruda, took on our new project of significantly lowering and pruning overgrown hedges that were blocking most of the view of Spy Pond at Linwood Circle for visitors sitting on the lawn or nearby benches. We are always appreciative of their time, energy, and thorough methods they undertake in helping us perform this task.

On the topic of Parterre’s involvement in further work in the lower planting beds, Karen reported: “We have arranged through David Morgan and the Con Comm funding with our \$1500 contribution to do continued work pulling and treating invasive growth and planting native plants twice this year. Adrienne will be working with David to establish dates and the work to be done.”

Karen met with the Parks and Recreation Commissioners who gave permission for continued use of the temporary signage we can erect in a maximum of 4 planting beds in which we’re installing new shrubs. These signs explain our revegetation project and discourage visitors from going into the planting beds.

Karen noted that we are still waiting for a meeting date with Friends of Parks to go over the submitted punchlist. An interim director, Natasha Gibbons, is taking over for Joe Connelly as Park Commissioner and we will work with her.

WEBSITE:

Daniel Jalkut continues to do a great job of seeding the database and generating emails through MailChimp.

Julie McBride reported: “Adrienne updated the list of plantings along the shoreline in the planting beds and along the shoreline. She also updated the information about the Revegetation Project with additional details for our 2024 activities. I have posted all this on the website.”

OUTREACH:

New volunteer for Outreach, Diana Maggini, will do outreach on our July Workday.

Lauren Bonilla has turned over Outreach and Communication responsibilities to Jenny Babon. Jenny reported that we had a new volunteer sign up at one of the Workdays. Jenny is working with Georgia Hoffman, a new member of the Outreach and Communications Committee, to design catchy templates for Workday and other outreach. Agathe Shaeffer has also taken some responsibilities for managing the volunteers during the Workdays and wrote an article for the newsletter. In August she will post Fun Day flyers in Arlington stores. Sharon Green volunteered to help Agathe post Fun Day flyers; Karen will also help. Agathe has also assembled and oriented a team of volunteers Karen recruited via our MailChimp list who, along with her, have been watering the shrubs that we planted in April.

Karen asked if Jenny can still take photos for the events she attends, and Jenny said it’s fine if there is someone else manning the table. Karen asked Diana if she’s comfortable running the next Workday while both Karen and Jenny are unavailable, and Diana replied that she is. Lally asked if Diana will be sent the list of volunteers for that Workday and Jenny replied that she can send the list to Diana, Adrienne, and Lally in an easy-to-print format on Friday. Diana will be able to write in any additional people who attend. Daniel will send Karen a list of previous volunteers to share with Diana if needed.

Before the Workday, Sharon and Adrienne will exchange the shed key on their walkthrough. Diana will plan to meet Sharon at 7:15 AM and we will try to line up one more person to meet up with them early to bring out equipment from the shed—perhaps a prior volunteer or someone else that Karen and Adrienne will identify together. Sharon and Diana will be able to leave out rakes and other tools by the shed that a volunteer can bring out later.

Betsy Leondar-Wright needs more volunteers to help with Fun Day activities, including setup/cleanup and face painting. Please contact her at betsyclassmatters@gmail.com. Karen asked Jenny if she could coordinate volunteer announcement timing with Betsy sometime in July or August. Betsy could also use nature guidebooks, binoculars, and small boxes to create fairy boxes. The Arlington Land Trust won't do island tours unless we find a boat/driver and the crew team is unavailable then, so if anyone knows anyone with a motorboat, please let Betsy know! Karen will also do some outreach around this issue and Jenny will include it in her publicity notice. Karen noted that we received the permit for this year's Fun Day with the stipulation that we hire a police detail for safety reasons, which will increase the cost.

Anna Doctor successfully completed the Bulk Mailing thanks to the help of volunteers to organize and stuff the envelopes: Gerda Brown, Sharon Green, Karen Grossman, Diana Maggini, and Lally Stowell.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Summer 2024 Newsletter was published in June. The next deadline will be September 27, after our September activities. Karen will give Diana a list of previous writers to solicit for content.

NEW BUSINESS AND NEXT MEETING DATE: October 6, 7 PM Zoom TBA

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Chrisman
Recording Secretary