

# FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK

## MEETING MINUTES

### SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Karen Grossman, Adrienne Landry, Megan Chrisman, Susan Saw, Lally Stowell, and Phinney Morrison.

**JULY 17 MEETING MINUTES ADDITIONS & CORRECTIONS:**

The July 17 minutes were approved with the following correction:

- In the third paragraph of the Beautification section, “Parks & Rec commissioners approved the plan to pay by check” should be changed to “Parks & Rec commissioners approved the plan for FSPP to pay three high schoolers by check to do extra work with Adrienne’s guidance”

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Sarah Zadova

Bank Account Balance as of 07/15/22: \$32,145.08; \$32,358.60 after outstanding transactions			
Bank Account Balance as of 9/17/2022: \$33,376.08; \$32,888.60 after outstanding transactions			
Income		Expenses	
Contributions via NFG (Network for Good)	\$150.00		
Memberships & Donations	\$380.00		
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$530.00</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

Treasurer after this date: Susan Saw

Sarah Zadova has resigned, and Susan Saw is the new Treasurer. Susan and Karen signed the paperwork at Citizen’s Bank to authorize Susan to deposit the contribution checks picked up by Daniel Jalkut from the PO box and write checks for reimbursement/payment of expenses. Sarah gave Susan the Treasurer’s records and Karen emailed her the most recent financial reports from this calendar year, which Susan will go over after today’s meeting. She will reach out to Sarah with any follow-up questions. The format for the Treasurer’s report is flexible; Karen can also provide past end-of-year reports as an exemplar if needed.

**BEAUTIFICATION:**

There are two bulletin boards in the park, one near the playground and one near the boat ramp, which is locked. There is a third on the bike path at Linwood St. that is built and maintained by FSPP. Anne Ellinger posts the newsletter three times a year and keeps the community side of the boards in good shape by pulling out staples and keeping things up to date as events occur. Karen thanked Anne for her dedication.

The discussion moved on to park maintenance. Adrienne reported on maintenance in the planting beds, her main role on the committee planning and supervising this effort. This year, she started removing or treating the invasive plants in March at the first signs of growth because the multiflora rose, and the Japanese honeysuckle were already coming in. By June, all plant life was burgeoning, including regular and invasive plants. On top of that, there were heat waves, drought, and a poison ivy incident. We were going to hire three high schoolers for the bed where the poison ivy was but felt that it was not safe for people to work there. Now that it’s cooler, FSPP member Lisa Reynolds and Adrienne can try to eradicate the poison ivy so the high schoolers can get into the bed and clear/prep it for planting next year. Due to the drought, FSPP member Linda Clark suggested not planting anymore because of the inherent challenges in keeping new plants thriving. During the Workdays, we planted five new shrubs and replanted two native shrubs. Eight flowering perennial plants were also planted, totaling thirteen new plants for the year. We fell short of the original goal of 20 because of the problems mentioned above. The buckthorn will be taken out by the Tree Division of Public Works this fall; David Morgan of the Conservation Commission (ConComm) put in the request with Tim, the Tree Warden. Most of the invasive plants and the buckthorn are in bed 4, so we would like to clear it all out and be ready to start planting right away in the spring. Planting has also been done closer to the shoreline and David Morgan has proactively given FSPP clearance for all future native plants. Adrienne planted two buttonbushes, a New England native wetlands plant, next to the coir fascine, a large roll of organic matter installed at the shoreline. The long-term hope is that the buttonbush roots will grow into it.

Parterre is a contractor who planted on the slope going down to the coir fascine. Parterre had originally asked FSPP not to plant in the lower beds, but now they understand we know what we’re doing. Adrienne and Lally asked them to clear out the lower bed, but due to some miscommunication with Parterre, they cleared out the upper beds where FSPP had been

working. On the bright side, they did take out some invasive plants by cutting them and putting herbicide on the stumps (they have said that the herbicide should kill the whole root system). Karen and Adrienne noticed Parterre working in the upper beds again on a different unscheduled day. Adrienne had an email forwarded from David Morgan confirming that they will continue the work in the lower beds; they have one more day on their 3-day contract.

The fencing at the end of the planting beds was taken down about two years ago at the end of the 3-year edge protection program, allowing people to walk around on the coir fascine and create paths. Karen found the name of the original fencing company and Adrienne gave it to Joe Connelly, Director of Parks & Rec. for Arlington, who will engage them to help curtail the damage. Adrienne will ask him for the status of this initiative. David Morgan will order any signage that we want for the edges of the planting beds so that people understand why the area is restricted and has asked Adrienne for the wording. The space will be called “the revegetation area”; and the campaign-style signs will explain that there is an ongoing shoreline stabilization program with native plants growing to create a healthier ecosystem. Karen asked if the signs will be there for a while and Adrienne said she imagined so. The signs will also have a QR code that points people to the FSPP website to explain what is being done. Karen thanked Adrienne for her efforts.

Karen asked what will happen if we have more drought next year. Joe Connelly is working on a water source for the park; Adrienne will follow up with him about it.

Phinney applauded Adrienne for her efforts. Adrienne credited Karen and Lally for supporting her.

Lally noted that Workdays have had fewer volunteers, but the same level of energy and focus. So, a lot has gotten done, even with a smaller group. We should discuss how to handle this next year. Group participation has also dwindled, so now we need to focus on recruiting more individuals. BU Global Day of Service volunteers still come, as well as People Making a Difference® volunteers, who trim hedges by Linwood Beach. Charles DiVirgilio brought students and parents from his martial arts group from Zhen Ren Chuan in Arlington Center. On the last Workday we’re having a group of first grader Daisies coming to work on the cobblestones, including getting the weeds out from between the stones. Phinney noted that a first-grade teacher inquired about Workdays at the Town Day booth and Karen had also heard from someone about volunteering. Adrienne noted that the previous Workday in September was during the first week of school and that the coordinators may have been overloaded; we may have had more student volunteers if the date was later.

Regarding the irrigation system, Phinney said that at Town Day someone complained that grass sprinkling was getting people wet during the day. Karen said we do have an underground pipe and that the sprinkler is supposed to operate early in the morning; the irrigation system also keeps the grass alive to enable better water filtration. Rain runoff, otherwise, would cause pond pollution and water pools in areas of only dirt (this is also why we have a pervious path). Adrienne noted we could also include this info. on the website linked to a QR code. She also mentioned that many people around the community enjoy this shared space. Lally pointed out that the town irrigates all the parks as part of town policy for the same reason.

Parterre’s services will be funded from various sources. Lally thinks that Parterre should make planting and weed removal in their areas their priority because they have worked there previously and know which plants are theirs and which are invasive. Adrienne noted the contract spells that out. If they have completed their areas, they are welcome to help out in the upper planting beds where we’ve been working.

Karen thinks that the playground renovation work is currently at a standstill. Contractors have removed all the old equipment and surface and put down some material for the base of the playground and the walkway. However, they are waiting for another contractor to pour the basic materials covering the ground. Karen has received objections to the material for the path and playground base because of prior lawsuits around the country regarding children getting sick from the materials in the rubber. The design was approved by the Town; a compromise was already reached about the percentage of playground that would contain this rubber (Karen believes the proportion is around 70/30). Joe Connelly has told Karen that the Health Dept. was involved in making the design decisions and that the plans are not going to stop at this point. Karen has passed his commentary from the design meetings to the people who objected to her directly and will provide the comments from the design discussion.

Lally asked how the coordination gap could have occurred when the next vendor wasn’t ready to take over, leading to the park being unavailable until next year. Karen will send Joe Connelly an email to see if he can provide a satisfactory answer for us to pass along; she didn’t realize there was a standstill until talking to the workers and hearing about it at Town Day.

#### **WEBSITE:**

Daniel Jalkut continues to do a great job of updating the database and adding volunteer data into MailChimp. He will have around three pages more to add after Town Day and hopes to have them done in time to alert people about Fun Day.

Julie McBride is keeping up with the postings/changes and has suggested adding more info. about the planting bed activity. We could link out to it from the Workdays page when Adrienne writes up the work that's being done in the planting beds. The QR code on the signs in the planting beds would also refer to that page; Jenny Babon can make a QR code for the sign. Julie would need to know the length of the text to figure out whether a separate page or a section works best; Jenny will need to know as well. Three or four paragraphs would be fine, the shorter the better. Adrienne suggested adding a new section to the FSPP website banner called "Maintenance" or "Plants" to be separate from the Workdays; she can discuss further with Julie. It would be preferable if we can link the QR code to a stand-alone page.

On the Outreach front, Jenny has been doing a good job advertising things we are involved with. Karen asked her to investigate why volunteers may be shorter in supply and to make a correction on the high school guidance departments' pages about the Contact person; it should be Lauren instead of Lally, who is handling groups.

#### **OUTREACH:**

Mari Megias has resigned from the Publicity Committee. Phinney Morrison is on the Communication, Outreach and Publicity Committee.

Lauren Bonilla has been getting VolunteerMatch emails forwarded by Karen and communicating and documenting the volunteers. There may not have been as many volunteers recently because of the summer heat; July and August are also historically low-turnout months. Since Lauren was unable to do tabling on Town Day, Karen was able to pick up the T-shirts and cashbox from her house and help, including the canopy/tables and organizing volunteers, and she had marvelous help from Monet Rosenberg and Sofia Shi, along with a larger table. We sold some T-shirts, got three pages of new people who signed up and got to talk to a lot of folks.

Betsy Leondar-Wright sent an offline update to Karen that Fun Day is going to be great, with a new activity called Go Trek, a button-making machine, and a bird picture hunt with QR codes. She has set up a document for volunteers and still needs some more for pack up, set up, and takedown, as well as assisting with the activity station. Karen needs to leave by 12:00; we are also looking for someone to take her place the last hour at the outreach table and help take things down after 1:00. Monet and Sofia are helping with face painting and may also be available for setup/takedown; Karen will email them about it.

Kari Percival will design the FSPP poster and send Karen a link. Karen will try to share this link with the rest of the group; the poster focus is anti-rodenticides.

The FSPP assistant mailing coordinator position remains Open and Marshall should begin preparing for the end-of-the-year solicitation the second week in November.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Fall/Winter 2022 Newsletter Contents can be sent to either Lauren or Karen, who will forward them to Jamie Ciocco. The deadline is October 3.

We need material to hand out at Fun Day, so Karen will make up 25 new copies of the FSPP Summer newsletter to pass out.

**OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING DATE:** November 13, 2022

Respectfully submitted,  
Megan Chrisman  
Recording Secretary