

**FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK
MEETING MINUTES
September 7, 2025**

INTRODUCTIONS: Karen Grossman, Adrienne Landry, Diana Maggini, Sandip Agarwal, Anna Doctor, Lally Stowell, Sharon Green, Linda Grosser

JULY 13 MINUTES ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS:

The meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Sandip Agarwal

We met at Citizen's Bank to install our new Treasurer on August 29. Sandip Agarwal will have online password soon and will get info. from Karen in the meantime. Karen will confirm for Sandip that the GoDaddy expense below was for the FSPP domain name.

Bank Account Balance as of 06/30/2025: \$26,636.12 Bank Account Balance as of 08/31/2025: \$28,344.25			
Income		Expenses	
Contributions via NFG (Network For Good)	\$195.00	Go Daddy	\$(101.87)
Dues & Donations (Checks)	\$1615.00		
Total Income	\$1,810	Total Expenses	\$(101.87)

¹Check reimbursement to Adrienne Landry sent in September for \$167.13.

²Checks received to be deposited in the amount of \$167.13

STEWARDSHIP TEAM:

Anne Ellinger posted the Summer 2025 Newsletter & flyer for Fun Day.

Adrienne reported on the topic of park maintenance:

“On the July Work Day there were 18 volunteers and 6 FSPP members in attendance.

On August 10 Lally Stowell, Sharon Green, Diana Maggini and Adrienne Landry had a pre-work-day walk-through the park to decide what needed to be done the following Saturday. There were 8 volunteers and 6 FSPP members in attendance on August 10.

Before the Work Day two Christmas Ferns were planted in Bed 2.

On the Work Day we had the usual tasks of removing vines and invasive plants from the planting beds.

The larger jobs were: 1) removing Purple Loose Strife from all the beds and transplanting a large Fragrant Sumac. Sharon led a small group for Purple Loose Strife removal. 2) transplanting a large Fragrant Sumac plant from Bed 3 to the squared-in area to the right of the boat ramp. Christopher W. and Maya Apfelbaum dug out and moved the plant. The new site was prepared by two volunteers: Diana M. and another volunteer. Unfortunately, the plant did not survive. It appears that the plant was so big, the root system was hard to get up and transfer successfully.

Coming up is the planting of up to 14 shrubs as listed on the attached report. The original report was written with Parterre as the Landscaper. However, the new landscaper will be Essex Horticultural. They will be doing all the work. I'm not sure what that means for our September Work Day.

Regarding the landscaper, I have a copy of a map of the park beds (Thanks, Adrienne!) marked up as follows:

- Green marker - Plants to be planted by Landscaper and
- Blue marker - Plants which were planted between 2020 - 2025 (so the new landscaper knows)

https://netorg4917069-my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/fred_fmoses_com/EcdvT5iY4atDI8uerP-aCQQBjkeLgDc8Xi9G_eBn2jF0iA I will send copies of/a link to this detailed map to Karen and David.

I also contacted Minuteman Tech to arrange for them to install metal #s on the planting bed black fences and will meet with the industrial arts teacher there on 9/8." (*Adrienne will buy the numbers & steel plating.*)

Karen reported:

"David Morgan talked to Essex Horticulture who will be treating the phragmites in Spy Pond to work with Adrienne and FSPP Stewardship Team the end of this month to remove invasive growth in the planting beds and install native plants as part of the erosion control project. We will meet with them in the park, hopefully, next week to discuss the requested work. Essex's response follows:

Based on the notes provided, I can offer a preliminary budgetary range of \$3,500-4,500 for the complete project as outlined. This estimate assumes quality 3-gallon nursery stock and includes all plant material, installation, invasive species removal, and site cleanup work across the 8 beds.

However, I'd want to emphasize that this is a rough estimate based solely on the written scope. The actual cost could vary significantly depending on site conditions, plant availability, access challenges, soil amendments needed, and the exact extent of the invasive honeysuckle removal in Bed 4. A proper site visit would be essential to provide an accurate proposal.

Given our current schedule constraints over the next few weeks as we enter our prime planting and invasive management season, if the Friends group wants to move forward, we could plan a walkthrough in September to refine the scope and provide a detailed quote.

Let me know if this range works for initial planning purposes.

Zachary Navarro MCH, MCLP, MCA
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Hopefully, their work will include clearing debris at Linwood Beach, grooming the Linwood rain garden and documenting the plants there, as we have asked David Morgan to include.

We'll pay approximately \$2,800 for this service to this project which will take place the end of September after Adrienne meets their representative(s) in the park to plan the work and the watering that will follow.

Karen continues to explore having QR codes with reference to a space on our website for the rain garden designs with Emily Snyder's and others she can recruit. She would like to have someone create a list of the plants and photos of plants in both rain gardens so visitors can use the QR code to identify what they see there.

Christopher Wilson cleared discarded fishing line at the pond's edge July Work Day. Karen attended a Select Board meeting for FSPP on August 21 to support Susan Stamps' request for the board's action to remedy the problem of discarded fishing line that endangers waterfowl in Hill's Pond. Karen suggested that permanent fencing in Spy Pond Park prohibiting entry into the planting beds to replace the temporary fencing that was installed would help there. The Con Comm and Parks and Recreation Commission have studied this issue after meeting with residents since January with no apparent results. After that meeting, as Karen suggested, 3 signs with receptacles for discarded fishing line were installed in Spy Pond Park and are being used. The problem and danger to wildlife has not been solved by the receptacles. Whether any regulations or additional remedies regarding fishing will follow, remains to be seen."

Adrienne will meet with Tim Lecuivre, Tree Warden, to coordinate removal of the dead branch opposite the playground, as well as the two dead plants in Bed 6. She will also discuss with him how to replace the lost tree in the playground, whether by moving one of the quaking aspens from Bed 6 or planting something else there. Karen, Adrienne, and the Stewardship team will work together on this.

Sharon noted that only the Bed 8 Purple Loose Strife roots were fully removed; in other beds her team only cut the plant to the base of the stem, so it will eventually come back. Also, they were unable to clear a path to part of Bed 3, which is heavily vegetated. Adrienne replied that the Stewardship Team may be able to come back in the next Work Day to dig more root balls out. Karen thanked Sharon and the team for attacking the Purple Loose Strife at the right part of the year, before it goes to seed and becomes harder to remove.

Adrienne asked who will empty the fishing line receptacles that the Rec. Dept. is presumed to have put up, and Karen replied that she should empty them into the trash if they become full. Lally noted that soon-to-be permanent fencing by the beds may help assuage the fishing line problem. She also asked if we could ask Essex in our contract negotiation to remove poison ivy from Bed 4 to avoid having volunteers be exposed to poison ivy; Karen will explore this.

Continuing items for Stewardship Team:

- Contacting the Volunteer Coordinator at the High School to get a watering rotation going via Jenny who will set up a google doc.
- Offering citations or other acknowledgement for folks who volunteer for 3+ Work Days. Adrienne will design certificates for this purpose that can be displayed to create enthusiasm. She and Karen will collaborate on stands for display.

Karen updated the group on her communication with Natasha Waden, Arlington Director of Recreation and Community Services:

“Following a complaint that I forwarded to Natasha, the wood chips in the Spy Pond Park playground have been groomed and parts for the broken equipment there have been ordered for DPW to install.

The DPW removed the dead branch near Scannell Field and has filled in the growing hole in the path through the park with gravel, but not at the other growing hole at the short, walk down steps in the middle of the park.

Lally will contact the DPW to ask them to trim the forsythias near Linwood Street. She also consulted with Tim Lecuivre, Town Arborist, who looked at the lilacs near there that have shed their leaves. He said that may be due to weather stress and the leaves may return in the spring. The bushes are not dead, good news!”

WEBSITE:

Daniel has brought the database up to date and Julie is doing a great job with postings.

OUTREACH:

Jenny Babon and David Nejezchleba reported on the following initiatives:

- Instagram posting - Fun Day and Work Days posters
- Work Days
 - earlier start time, not too much foot traffic and fewer sign ups
 - August Work Day Jenny met with Arnav Gupta and discussed doing outreach on Work Days; he also helped the Stewardship team and volunteers
- Jenny sent Daniel list of volunteers and walkthroughs for July and August Work Days
- Jenny sent out volunteer request to AHS Community Service for Fun Day

On the topic of Fun Day, Karen reported on Betsy Leondar-Wright’s behalf:

“Sept. 13 Fun Day 10 am-1pm (rain date Sept. 14, 1-4pm)

Betsy’s plans are shaping up with many volunteers and a new activity of animal origami and a rabbit scavenger hunt.

[Fun Day](#) is going to be great, with new and old activities. We have filled the earlier holes with 2 more face-painters, a truck for transport, and strong loaders and unloaders, but could still use more volunteers on set-up and clean-up. And assistants to activities are always welcome!

Disappointments:

We only have two bands. The music will stop at 12 PM unless a 3rd act comes forward. *(Karen will talk to Betsy.)*
There won't be boat rides to the island, as the Land Trust doesn't want to offer them anymore.
Otherwise, the fun will be abundant!"

Linda Grosser will contact Betsy about potentially volunteering for setup on Fun Day. Karen will check for someone else to take Adrienne's place with meet-and-greet duties.

Jenny Babon reported on Town Day:

"Request for volunteers to table at FSPP Town Day booth – sent a scheduling form to previous volunteers; other volunteers are welcome! 2 hr. shifts – see below. (As of 9/6 only one person responded.)

<https://forms.gle/FtwG8XjZUqYix1jM6>

- Set-up: 8:30am - 10:00am (Mass Ave will be closed to traffic at 9:15)
- Booth and table volunteer: 10am - 12nn
- Booth and table volunteer: 12nn - 2pm
- Booth and table volunteer: 2pm - 4:30pm
- Take-down and clean-up: 4:30pm - 5:15pm

Other times are also welcome – ideally would like to have two volunteers on each slot".

Linda will share her email address with Karen so that she can share the link to the Town Day sign-up sheet with her. Karen will also share the link with Diana.

Anna Doctor updated the group on the FSPP Bulk Mailing November solicitation:

"Will begin planning in October for this solicitation. After reviewing the Mail Anywhere handout you shared with me a while back and talking with someone at the BMEU location in Boston, I plan to follow the same process I used last time. This entailed entering the job on USPS' website in the PostalOne feature, which produces the mailing labels and tray labels we need and dropping it at the BMEU location in downtown Boston. I confirmed with the BMEU rep at that Boston location that we will be able to deposit more money by check or cash into our account at that location. This differs from what we did in the past when we were going to the BMEU in Waltham, and we had to deposit money at the Waltham post office.

This means that costs will be about what we've seen in the past, which spans from \$65-\$80 for a mailing job depending on how many pieces of mail there are. We need to order more envelopes and Sandip may send a check to cover the mailing costs for this mailing or more." *(Anna will advise after the meeting.)*

Adrienne confirmed with Karen that she will check with her church group on their availability for envelope stuffing, perhaps on the second Wednesday in November (Nov. 12) so that they can be mailed out the following week. Anna will work with Karen on the timing of dropping off the materials and picking up the stuffed envelopes.

Arnav Gupta has said he will consider assuming the General Vice-President position, helping Karen when needed.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Arnav will be responsible for soliciting articles for the Fall/Winter Newsletter. From the email Karen sent to Arnav, Jenny and Jamie – Arnav will send out request for contributions on Sept 15, with Oct 1 deadline. Jenny has sent the mailing list to Arnav.

NEW BUSINESS AND NEXT MEETING DATE: November 2 at 5 PM on Zoom

Karen asked the group to give some thought to the January meeting speaker so that she can invite Natasha Waden or another candidate on 9/11 as appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Chrisman,
Recording Secretary