

MINUTES
FRIENDS OF SPY POND PARK
August 2, 2015

The meeting, which began at 7:00 p.m., was held on the porch of Karen Grossman's condo, overlooking Spy Pond.

PRESENT: Karen Grossman, President, Shalini Bhalla, Lally Stowell, Marshall McCloskey, Sally Hempstead, Dick Norcross

MINUTES of 6/7/2015 were approved as circulated.

TREASURER: Marshall reported a total of 97 responses from the May 5 fundraising mailing so far, 33 additional since our June 7 meeting. Current checking account balance: \$20,867.80.

Expenses paid since last meeting: newsletter \$357.08, Fun Day \$63.69, Feast of the East \$45.00, Service charges \$5.00, Total: \$470.77. Dues and Donations, and miscellaneous deposited: \$937.00.

A vote was taken that passed on obtaining an "indicia" for our bulk mailings for a one-time cost of \$220. We will have this indicia, indicating our non-profit, bulk mailing status, printed on our mailing envelopes instead of a manually attached stamp. Our upcoming fall solicitation will use up our present supply of mailing envelopes and non-profit stamps. The new permit and indicia will be put into effect next May and will save time during the mailing preparations. Note that we save approximately \$350 per mailing of our ~1000 pieces using our non-profit status.

The database is up to date at present, with all dues/donations entered, and workers, sign-ups at our Work Days, Town events updated, notwithstanding restricted access to the database features...

BEAUTIFICATION: Lally noted that no groups are signed up for the June and July Work Days, but that our regular volunteers got a lot done. In August we will have the Arlington/Belmont crew team again. Hopefully, boys and girls will come separately, and no more than 10 arriving at a time.

Lally investigated buying plugs to plant in bed # 6, and noted that we may need to check with the Conservation Commission before planting anything not already in the park. We can buy a bed of 32 plugs for \$120, but only 9 of the 32 are current plantings. Alternately, we can buy batches of 150 seeds for existing plants, such as butterfly weed, golden weed, Solomon's seal, but it's more work watering, making sure they survive, etc. As of now, only improvements to bed 6 are under consideration.

Dick Norcross suggested that we should seek a consultant's input on how to handle the plantings, i.e. what to plant, where, etc. Karen mentioned that Carol Johnson, who spoke at our last annual meeting in December, has performed that function in the past. Karen noted that we are waiting on the Town to commit to correcting erosion problems along the shore before deciding what to do in the other beds and the rest of the park, except for routine maintenance.

Dick would like to get the Town's permission to do additional work on trees blocking the view of the pond to the far right of the boat ramp. Tree alterations require the approval of the Arlington tree warden, Jimmy Dodge.

Karen wants to have the Town restore the bush that was damaged during a storm and cut down. It is located to the right of the 2nd bench along the path from Linwood Street. Find out what the bush was, and possibly have FSPP pay for it, if necessary.

Per our last meeting, Ellen Robertson wrote a letter Joe Connelly regarding posting NO BICYCLES signs on the Spy Pond Park path. There is concern for safety with cyclists riding along the path through the park. Sally indicated that she, in fact, had a close encounter just tonight on her way to the meeting. Joe responded, indicating it was discussed with the appropriate persons, and the request was denied for the following reasons: how would it be enforced, it would set a precedent for other parks with similar paths, it might need to be expanded to other types of children's vehicles... Somewhat specious reasons all, as agreed by those present. Karen will respond to Joe, re-emphasizing that it's a safety issue resulting from the proximity to the bike path, as experienced by a number of our members.

The ART ROCKS SPY POND exhibit has been dismantled. As far as the Parks Commissioners were concerned, it was never intended to be permanent, nor a venue for the possible sale of any items in it. With regard to purchasing the swan sculpted by Kevin Duffy, it was suggested that he (or someone) do a Kickstarter campaign to finance the purchase of it. One person present suggested that we might do better purchasing alternate piece. Tabled till next meeting.

Regarding the DEFACEMENT OF ART at the exhibit (with offensive language on one of the pieces), Karen related that it was determined that the Town of Arlington's procedure established years ago for emergency response to hate crimes was not properly followed. This procedure should involve the response by the police, the Human Rights Commission, Diversity Task Force, and communication to the media with the victim and the perpetrator(s) in mind. Hopefully, the aforementioned parties are reviewing this incident and assessing the procedure for future use. Karen will find out the status of this study.

WEBSITE – Deepak Bidwai is now responsible for posting NEWS items on the updated FSPP website, easily accessible using mobile devices.

OUTREACH - Elaine Crowder is doing a good job with contacts, meeting publicity and activities notification. Sally is all set for **Town Day**, Saturday, September 12, and is lining up additional volunteers for the FSPP booth.

September 19 will be the **Moonlight Beach Party** fundraiser for the Arlington Parks Alliance. The Parks Department decided they do not have time to contact merchants for auction donations, and will request that interested groups provide a basket for the auction. We will again purchase an entire table for 10 (\$600), and it was decided to make an additional donation of \$100 that the organizing committee can use as desired for the auction.

COMMUNICATIONS: Summer **Newsletter** was great! Deadline for the fall issue is September 15th. Sally has kept the archive binders for the library and Historical Society up to date.

OTHER BUSINESS: Additional **benches**-The standard Arlington park bench costs \$1500 for the bench, not including any base under it. It was voted to set aside \$4000 for the purchase of 2 benches, and possible bases. It was noted that without a base, people's feet wear out the grassy area in front of the bench leaving a dirty patch. These benches will be adorned with plaques indicating that they have been donated by the Friends of Spy Pond Park.

NEXT MEETING: tentatively set for Sunday, October 18, at 7 pm at 32 Hamilton Road #402, Arlington. Two suggestions for speakers at our annual meeting in December-Brad Barber from the Spy Pond Committee, which takes care of the Southern area of the pond, and Jimmy Dodge, the Town of Arlington Tree Warden.

Minutes submitted by Marshall McCloskey for Beverly Williams.