

North School Preservation Society Meeting Minutes June 4, 2024

Attendance

NSPS members: Richard Willard, Francine Provost, David Hall, Ginny Ricker, Moe Gilchrist, Nate Willard, Lara Houghton-Robinson, Jo Robbins

Guests: Lions Club members Mike Martin, Bruce Savery, Ken Millay; Springfield Town Manager Jeff Mobus; Springfield Animal Control Officer Lisa Baker; Willow Farm Pet Services owner Carolyn Tourville; Anna's Dog Services owner Anna Vogel; local residents Tim Blake and Sue Dana

Preliminary Meeting with Lions Club

NSPS President Richard Willard welcomed guests and opened the meeting at 6 p.m.

Lions Club Presentation:

Lions Club President Mike Martin and member Ken Millay distributed proposals to install a dog park on the upper field of the North School Recreation Park. The proposal included illustrations of a design for a fenced park with facilities for dog owners and their dogs to enjoy a venue for recreation. The suggested benefits of the park include a community venue for pet exercise and socialization for dogs and their owners. The proposal included installation and maintenance of the park by the Lions Club and Town services to provide mowing and plowing for maintenance of year-round access to the park. It was suggested that the park be open from dawn to dusk seven days a week.

Attendees offered pros and cons regarding the park.

Springfield Animal Control Officer Lisa Baker explained the current difficulties of enforcing animal control in town. She advised against a dog park saying that dogs and their owners can be irresponsible and unpredictable, and enforcement for irresponsible dog owners and unruly dogs is relatively unenforceable.

Carolyn Tourville and Anna Vogel described the difficulty of professionally overseeing dogs when exposed to each other without individual supervision.

Resident Sue Dana explained that owners in the neighborhood often don't pick up after their dogs.

Resident Jo Robbins explained her experiences having used dog parks in places where she lived. She reported that, in her experience, dog parks were welcoming and safe places because dog owners using the parks are generally responsible and equally concerned for the safety of their pets and others. She also said that she has walked her dogs in the North School Recreation Park and environs and has not seen evidence of dog poop lying around in the neighborhood. She suggested that there is sometimes animal scat from wild animals (raccoons, coyotes, etc.) to be seen.

It was suggested by some NSPS members that security be installed for the park as well as possibly using a card entry for owners who have proven that their dogs are vaccinated and vetted.

Mike Martin proposed that Lions Club members research these issues and return to discuss the proposal at the next NSPS monthly meeting on July 2.

Guests left and the regular NSPS monthly meeting followed.

NSPS June Monthly Meeting

Richard opened the North School regular monthly meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Minutes

Minutes of the May 2024 meeting were motioned and approved with two corrections: the cost for the poster Ginny created had been donated by Ginny; and the concrete stairs in front of the building had not yet been completed at the time of the May meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Ginny distributed the May Treasurer's report, which included income from the May yard sale and regular expenses; it will stand for audit.

Old Business

Property Update

Dave reported that until a source for approved wood chips can be found, he will distribute and exhaust the remainder of the reserved chip mulch in the playground and under swing sets.

The upper field and front lawn were mowed by the Town crew in May. After July 1, a mowing service will be enlisted to provide an in-kind service donation for the duration of the season.

It was suggested that a picnic table be purchased for the upper field near the playground. In the past a picnic table had been seasonally placed on the upper field and moved to shelter at the warming hut in the winter. The issue will be revisited at a future meeting.

Building Update

Dave has completed the rebuilding and repair of the concrete steps at the front entrance of the building. Further repairs to the building, including restoration of the front foundation bricks and replacement of the shingles over the upper front fire escape will be addressed when contractors can be found to complete those jobs.

A motion was made and approved for the purchase of a new dehumidifier for the basement of the building. Moe and/or Dave will shop for a replacement.

It was suggested that the fire extinguishers in the building need a timely replacement. In the past, Christy had arranged for this with the company that annually replaced the extinguishers. Either Moe or Ginny will check the records to see when the replacement should be scheduled.

June Yard Sale

The upcoming June yard sale is scheduled for June 8, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Members will meet to set up tents on Friday, June 7, noon-2 p.m. Since there is uncertainty about the weekend weather, decisions about what items will be put outside will wait until Saturday and an updated weather forecast.

June 29 Car Show

The car show is scheduled for June 29, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Richard reported that he is waiting for confirmation from some car clubs and participants. He will arrange to change the yard sale signs to reflect the car show details prior to setting the signs in their assigned places.

Miscellaneous Business

Moe reported that he has contacted two insurance companies with whom he has done business and will let us know if and when they respond with quotes for insurance policies for property and liability insurance to replace the current policy, which is effective until November this year.

The business being concluded a motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 2, 6 p.m., in the warming hut.