

Minutes – FoAGM Steering Committee Meeting – Tuesday, December 16, 2003

Present: John Bartenstein, Don Miller, Mike Tabaczynski, David White

1. Next Meeting Date: David will poll SC members to find a good date in January before the planned winter meeting. Getting a firm date that everyone can make hopefully will improve attendance.
2. Previous Minutes: The minutes of November 18 were approved without further changes.
3. Financial Report/Contributions:
 - It was agreed that the email circulated by Brian Rehrig on December 10 is more than adequate to serve as our financial report. We will add Brian to our SC circulation list to: (a) enable him to provide similar reports for future SC meetings; and (b) keep him informed on a continuing basis of our activities.
 - Mike has provided about 15 signed copies of the latest version of his contribution acknowledgement letter to Brian to send out to FoAGM Fund contributors with ALT's acknowledgment form. (Exhibit A) For future acknowledgments, Mike will revise the letter slightly, making a few minor edits that were suggested and adding a reference to the FoAGM Annual Report. (Exhibit B)
 - David will draft a short message to go out on the Yahoo email list with a year-end appeal for donations.
 - SC members are appreciative of the strong support provided to FoAGM in ALT's November 17 membership renewal letter, including the special FoAGM Fund check-off on the renewal form.
4. Resource Management Activities:
 - The paperwork for the grant application to the Recreational Trails Program of the Division of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is mostly done. The final paperwork, including the necessary supporting documentation from ALT, will be completed and submitted when DCR posts the application and deadline. This should happen soon.
 - The kiosk and material posted on it has held up well with the exception of the map holder. We may want to consider installing a metal mailbox as a map container, but this project should wait until the spring.
 - Don will attempt to identify locations for the two owl/kestrel houses made by Waldorf students so they can begin to weather over the winter. He will provide the GPS coordinates to Mike to add to the master map. At least one should be on the Waldorf School side of the Meadows.
 - Don would like the Invasives Committee to become more active and will talk with its members about activities for 2004. These might include checking on the locations where work was done last year, starting a log, arranging a speaker on invasive plants for the spring meeting, and organizing work days.

5. Educational Activities: Andrea has circulated an email about potential woodcock walks in April/May. Details can be discussed at the next meeting. There was excellent coverage of FoAGM and its educational projects on the front page of the *Arlington Advocate* several weeks ago, and the same articles ran on the inside pages of the *Lexington Minuteman*.
6. Future Plans:
 - We are “on track” for our winter meeting. Sandra has invited David Brown to come on 1/27/04 as the first choice, or 1/13/04 as a backup, and will work on booking the Waldorf School. The outdoor tracking walk is lined up for 2/7/04. We can pay the cost of the speaker (about \$150) from our funds, but should attempt to defray that with a request for donations.
 - Further planning for the spring meeting, which is expected to focus on invasive plant control, can be done after the first of the year.
 - We should also make plans for invasive plant control work days that follow up on the spring meeting. This would be a good opportunity to encourage more widespread involvement. Mike pointed out the Lexington High School freshmen are required to complete 20 hours of community service related to the earth sciences. There is an early deadline that might be met by a project in early April and a final deadline around the first of June. Suitable projects can be hard for the students to find, so there may be a real opportunity here. Mike will follow up with the Lexington Schools, and Don will see if there is a similar program in the Arlington Schools.
 - A priority for invasive plant control is the Japanese Knotweed growing along the edge of the bikeway. Mike has spoken with the Lexington Bicycle Advisory Committee about this problem and believes there would be considerable enthusiasm in that group for a project to address it. David pointed out that the best way to control Japanese Knotweed is to dig out the rhizomes, but to eradicate it effectively you need to come back on a regular basis (approximately every two weeks) for a year or more. This will require a concerted effort.
 - We should continue to make efforts to recruit additional SC members.

Logoware: Mike displayed several T-shirts that had been created for other environmental volunteer projects and made a number of thoughtful observations about the elements of a successful design. There was a discussion of the purpose of creating T-shirts, and it was agreed that the most important objective would be to increase public awareness of AGM and portray it in a positive light. T-shirts could be given out as door prizes or to project volunteers. The cost to produce (exclusive of design) is about \$10 per shirt, and if some could be sold for \$15 each, it would help to defray the cost. One possible design would be a simple graphic of cattails and a songbird and a phrase reading: Arlington’s Great Meadows: Worth Preserving. We can continue to explore this and more ideas are welcome.



Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows
Box 492
Arlington, MA 02476
781-861-1537
www.foagm.org

Dear Friend,

The Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) thank you for your generous contribution.

As part of a long term stewardship plan being developed, FoAGM is enhancing the visitor experience at Great Meadows, protecting the environment within its borders, and educating the public about its value as natural open space. With the help of numerous volunteers from Arlington, Lexington, and other towns, we have removed truckloads of litter and large junk items, installed an information kiosk, and started trail maintenance. An invasive plant control program is underway and several school field trips have visited Great Meadows as part of their natural science classes. Entrance signs, a second kiosk, guidebooks, and more trail work are planned for 2004, as well as expanded school visits and student projects.

Although both towns support our efforts, neither Arlington nor Lexington has money available to pay our expenses. Much of our work is done by volunteers, but we cannot accomplish our objectives without the generous financial support of contributors like you. By demonstrating your concern for this property, you and others are helping FoAGM garner strong public support for the preservation of Great Meadows in its natural state for the benefit of all for many years to come.

Thank you again for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Mike Tabaczynski
Financial Coordinator
FoAGM Steering Committee

Exhibit A



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Although both towns support our efforts, neither Arlington nor Lexington has money available to pay our expenses. Nearly all of our work is done by volunteers, but we cannot accomplish our objectives without the generous financial support of contributors like you. By demonstrating your concern for this land, you and others are helping to develop strong public support for the long-term preservation of Great Meadows in its natural state for the benefit of all.

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Exhibit B