Board Meeting Minutes

Date: September 19, 2026 **Time:** 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Location: Wantage Municipal Building

Attendees:

- Linda Card, Chair
- Ellen Kessler, Vice Chair
- Duane Card, Treasurer; Maintenance & Beautification Committee Co-Chair
- Tayler Spiotto, Secretary; Fundraising Committee Chair
- Gary Kramer, Attorney
- Jo Horr, Maintenance & Beautification Committee Co-Chair
- Patrick Spiotto, Communications Committee Co-Chair
- Cindy Maurus, Communications Committee Co-Chair
- Laura Holt, Budget Committee Chair
- Cindy Maurus

Summary of Discussion

The Board met with attorney Gary Kraemer to review organizational requirements and upcoming governance tasks. The discussion focused on establishing committees, preparing for a general meeting, and outlining steps needed to bring the organization into full compliance with state requirements.

Election of the Board of Directors

Nominations were made, seconded and voted on to seat the Board of Directors. The Board members elected were:

- Linda Card
- Ellen Kessler
- Duane Card
- Gary Kraemer
- Tayler Spiotta
- Jo Horr
- Cindy Maurus
- Others??

Election of the Executive Committee

From the Board of Directors pool, nominations were made, seconded and voted upon to seat the Executive Committee. Executives elected were

- Linda Card - Chair
- Ellen Kessler - coChair

- Tayler Spiotta - Secretary
- Duane Card - Treasurer

Key Points:

- **Mission statement:** A motion to adopt the proposed mission statement for the Dog Park and the Association was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.
- **Nonprofit status:** The Association is currently a 501(c)(4), so donations are not tax-deductible for donors. The Board is pursuing 501(c)(3) status, which requires forming a new entity and typically takes several months after filing. Linda Card is lining up an accountant, and SCORE has been contacted for volunteer referrals.
- **Finances (since June 1):** The balance is approximately $1,577 across a Provident checking account, PayPal, and a credit card with a $5,000 limit.
    - The park safe averages about $100 per week and is the largest source of income.
    - Main expenses are electric (about $75/month), garbage (reduced after Linda renegotiated with Waste Management), and landscaping ($200 per mowing). Pete Nicosia, a former park regular, has volunteered mowing and may provide a quote for next season.
    - PayPal fees are high and only 11 people donated through PayPal in recent months (4 recurring). Venmo, Zelle, Givebutter, and Deluxe are being evaluated, with all options shared through a single QR code.
- **Township relations:** A prior request for $5,000 per year toward a future fence replacement was denied. The Board will ask again, start its own reserve fund, meet with the township administrator and Recreation Committee, and look into the recently approved open-space tax. An accessible restroom is a longer-term goal.
- **Committees formed:** Committee members do not need to be Board members. Chairs will recruit volunteers, and committees will meet between Board meetings. Chair Heads are as follows:
    - Maintenance & Beautification: Duane Card and Jo Horr
    - Fundraising: Tayler Spiotto
    - Communications: Patrick Spiotto and Cindy Maurus
    - Budget: Laura (trial basis). The committee is made up of the other committee chairs and recommends a baseline budget and spending priorities; large expenses go to the Board for a vote.
- **Fundraising ideas:** Park ambassadors at the exit gate to explain the park runs entirely on donations, the monthly pet portrait artist, an Irish music afternoon under the pavilion ($5 entry, split with the performer), donation tables and food trucks at events, and corporate sponsor banners on the fence once 501(c)(3) status is in place.
- **Communications:** Minutes and financial reports will be posted on the new website and Facebook, along with committee chair contact information. Other projects include cleaning up the bulletin board, a pet memorial plaque program, and restoring the donated memorial bricks at the entrance.

- **Security:** The park safe has been tampered with, and about $100 went missing. A State Police report was filed, drive-bys were requested, and a surveillance sign has been posted.
    - Eddie Fuentes and Patrick Spiotto are pursuing donated Wi-Fi from Planet Networks, which would support a camera and on-site digital donations. A donated SD-card camera is already on hand, and a solar 4G camera is the fallback.
    - No new monthly costs will be taken on until fundraising builds a reserve. The cash safe will stay, repainted a brighter color and possibly moved closer to the exit.
- **Park rules:** A motion to adopt the revised rules, prepared by Linda Card and Ellen Kessler with input from Cindy Maurus, was made, seconded, and carried. The rules are now shorter and split into rules and etiquette; the collar restriction and the under-16 rule were removed. Gary Kramer will draft a plain-English "use at your own risk, no supervision" statement. Incident and grievance forms will be available on paper and online.
- **Other items raised:** The gap in the fence between the small and large dog areas, re-exposing and painting the parking bumpers, and solar lights for the pavilion and bulletin board.
- **Next meeting:** Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 7:00 PM, as required by the bylaws.

Compliance & Administrative Tasks:

- An account must be created on the NJDCA Portal, and the new trustees must be linked to the organization's profile.
- The organization must complete its annual registration with both:
    - The New Jersey Nonprofit Registration website, and
    - The New Jersey Tax website.
- The Board noted that the tax portal currently shows the organization as non-compliant, but this status is expected to update within one week.
- The Board will reach out to nonprofit agency accountants to obtain pricing information.
- Work is underway to obtain the last two years of tax documents. The most recent tax payment was $2,100.
- The organization will need to file both a Form 990 and Form 1099 as part of its required reporting.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.