Board Meeting Minutes

Date: October 20, 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-Head
- Tayler Spiotto, Secretary; Fundraising Committee Head
- Jo Horr, Maintenance & Beautification Committee Co-Head
- Patrick Spiotto, Communications Committee Co-Head
- Additional members and volunteers (see sign-in sheet)

Summary of Discussion

The Board and committee heads reported on progress since the September meeting. Topics included the 501(c)(3) application and tax preparation, finances, park maintenance and security, township coordination, beautification, communications, fundraising, and a recent dog bite incident.

Key Points:

- **Meeting schedule and minutes:** Meetings will be held as needed rather than monthly. Going forward, the Board will review and approve each meeting's minutes, and Tayler will post them to a meeting-notes archive on the website and to Facebook.
- **Taxes and nonprofit status:** Linda is meeting with H&R Block, whose nonprofit service costs at most $428 a year, compared with the roughly $2,300 previously paid. H&R Block can also help with the 501(c)(3). CLA, the former accounting firm, is no longer doing work for the Association.
    - The Association obtained its articles of incorporation. Gary is completing the 501(c)(3) application, which requires the names and addresses of Board members (collected on tonight's sign-in sheet).
- **Finances:** The Association has about $2,000 across its accounts. Venmo is now live, and flyers listing PayPal and Venmo will be posted at the park.
    - The park safe remains the largest source of income: $430 this period, steady at $100–125 per week. Larger checks totaled $300.
    - Stu paid a $630 CLA invoice on the Association's behalf. The Association will repay him $100 per month, or sooner if funds allow.
    - Garbage: members paying $5 per bag are offsetting the cost. Credits from the container change covered the last two months; the bill will settle at about $180 per month. A seasonal hold can be placed without penalty during slow winter months.
    - Mowing will continue a few more weeks, mainly to clear leaves. Both expenses and donations are expected to drop over the winter.
- **Maintenance (Duane):** Before winter: re-insulate the well pump housing in the shed (mice damage is driving up winter electric costs), and complete a safety walk of the

agility equipment and fence perimeter. Anna and her daughter Anetta volunteered for the walk and will mark hazards with caution tape. Plow markers are already in place along the driveway.

    - Completed: the bulletin board was cleaned, the plexiglass removed, and new locks and keys installed.
    - Planned: reset and level the stones by the pool; repair the safe's keypad; move the bench out of the crowded train area to the top of the hill; continue tree trimming; and scrape and edge the memorial brick front walk. A member's husband, a stonemason, offered to help raise the walk later.
    - Sussex Rural Electric has been contacted about a new light pole at the parking lot entrance for better lighting and a second camera location.
    - Parking lot: it will stay gravel (it was left unpaved so surfaces don't get too hot for dogs' paws). The focus is regular raking, keeping the parking bumpers exposed, and clearing dumped debris near the dumpster. A possible no-dumping sign was discussed.

- **Security:** Wi-Fi and cameras are becoming more urgent; liquor bottles have been found in the trash. Planet Networks has not followed up, so the plan is to start service, get cameras running, and negotiate costs afterward. Eddie is sending the pricing tiers. Camera Wi-Fi will be on a separate network and will not be open to overnight visitors. A motion-activated solar light was also suggested.
- **Township:** Duane met with Mike Resty, Township Administrator, and Nicole Dunn, Recreation Committee Secretary. The township agreed to provide a handicap-accessible portable restroom.
    - Creek access: the Jolly Rovers Trail Crew, a volunteer nonprofit, will assess building a timber-and-stone staircase down to the creek on Woodburn Park land. The township would supply the materials.
    - Insurance: the township and the Association each believe the other carries coverage. The park has a certificate of insurance under the township's policy; this will be clarified with the township.
- **Beautification (Jo):** Keep poop bags stocked from the shed; place a trash can near the pool area; and price post-mounted bag dispensers. Holiday decorations will be kept simple, at the entrance and gazebo. The refrigerator will get a deep clean, and the safe and refrigerator will be painted (Justine leading).
    - Spring projects: a butterfly garden of dog-safe native plants in the stone circle (volunteers and wheelbarrows needed), grass seed for muddy areas in the small dog park, and flower boxes from Ellen. Daffodils are already planted. The pink meeting signs will be the standard for future notices.
- **Communications (Patrick):** The new website, wantagedogpark.com, is live with no hosting cost. It averages about 16 visits a day, with peaks around 50. Planned additions: photo and suggestion submissions (reviewed before posting), a meeting-notes archive, and an info@ email address.

    - A park Instagram account will be created, since Facebook reach is low. The website, bulletin board, and Instagram should all point to one another. Cindy will manage the bulletin board once she recovers, with Patrick's help.
    - The visitor sign-in book will be used to build an email list for newsletters and donation drives. Visitors will be encouraged to leave reviews on BringFido, Google, and Yelp.
    - The Facebook group will decline unsolicited advertising; businesses may instead pay for sponsored posts. A WhatsApp group will be set up for the Board and committee heads. Board members should check that Board emails are not going to spam.
- **Budget Committee:** Laura is unable to continue as head, so a new volunteer is needed. Linda will ask Gary whether a budget committee is required for the 501(c)(3) application.
- **Fundraising (Tayler):** The committee now has six members. Progress was held up while access to Venmo and social media was sorted out. Ideas discussed:
    - A raffle at $5 per ticket, pending a check on raffle permit requirements; a candy-jar or pumpkin guessing contest; holiday dog costume contests; and Photos with Santa, done in-house.
    - A holiday giving tree for shelter dogs (for example, Father John's); memorial options such as pet ornaments on the large tree or plant-a-flower markers; and selling bottled water from the refrigerator by QR code.
    - Spring seedling sales, Eagle Scout projects, and early conversations with local businesses about sponsorships. Members stressed reaching new donors rather than repeatedly asking the same people.
- **Dog bite incident:** On Sunday a dog with at least five prior incidents was involved in another attack, and owner information was not exchanged. The Board will document past incidents, consult a local dog-bite expert, and ask Gary and the township about banning the dog from township property, which may include contacting Animal Control. Members present at any incident should make sure information is exchanged; incident forms are kept at the park. Reporting through the website, rather than through any one person, was also discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.