

## Strawberry Patch RC Pilots Club: Meeting Minutes for 24 August 2024

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 AM by the club president, Phil Thain. There were 13 members present.

Phil provided the members with a status report.

- Dry Hydrants: This project is completed. Thanks to those members who came to help out. With the rain lately, we haven't had to water the field, but it looks like they are going to work great. We can now put the pump down at either of the hydrants and drop a suction hose through the hydrant into the pond and then run a single hose up on the field to a manifold which allows us to drive eight spray heads at a time. This will be a lot easier than before, where we had to run a suction line up onto the field and could only drive four heads maximum at a time.
- Future wish list items:
  - Extending the covered storage area: This project is to move the wall of the enclosed shed forward to the end of the overhang, giving us more storage space. We voted and approved this project in principle. We will hold off on starting it until we have a cost estimate for the members to vote on.
  - Installing a solar charging station: Phil thinks a 20 amp charger with a 20 amp hour battery should be sufficient. A rough cost estimate from looking on Amazon is \$300-350. Tyler mentioned that the Hudson NH RC club just lost their field and their charger has been left on-site there. Tyler is going to contact the club to see if it might be possible for us to get this charger instead of purchasing a new one ourselves. We tabled further discussion until we hear back from Tyler.
- Lawnmower: Our existing lawnmower worked OK for us back when there was little grass to mow. But, it is no longer up to the job. We've been cleaning the deck and sharpening the blades frequently, but even with that it is having a hard time handling the field. And we can't keep the deck level. That's why you see waves of different grass height running the length of the field. It is leaving clippings and grass clumps that we can't get reasonably get rid of. It currently takes Woody 4 1/2 hours to do the field and pits. Tyler brought his father's Ariens to the field this morning and was able to cut the field, including pushing/blowing all the clippings to the side, in 35 minutes. Steve Thompson made a motion that we start a donation fund to accumulate money to buy a new mower, suggested donation of \$50 or whatever members can afford. He started us off with a donation of \$100. **Thank you Steve!** We discussed cost a little: Phil estimates the minimum cost would be around \$2000-\$2500. But, we want to get a mower that will last more than just 5 or so years. The cost of the Ariens that Tyler used today is \$4000, which is probably too much for us. Other points: we can probably get \$500 for our current mower. Steve Prentice has a friend in the business who might be able to get us a mower at cost or discounted. And, with a more efficient mower, we could probably split the mowing between club members to save the current mowing expense. We voted and approved Steve's motion to open up a donation fund, encouraging members to give what they can, suggested donation of \$50, to accumulate funds until we have enough to buy a decent mower. *(John will send a separate follow-up email with details)*
- Reminder: We planning to stop the porta-potty rental at the end of September and restart again at the beginning of May.

Phil then asked for the Field Marshal's report. Steve reported that he put down 150 pounds of fertilizer. The grass is in really good shape right now. He plans to fertilize one more time in

September or so. According to Albert, this is the best way to drive out the weeds. He needs to wait until just before it rains before putting it down.

Phil then asked for the Safety Officer's report. Safety has been good throughout the season, Tyler hasn't heard of any big safety issues. The big reminders are to fly from within the flight stations, which some people still aren't doing, and to keep below 400 feet. This is a big item for us since the airport is so close. Tyler has heard reports that the FAA has stopped at Sky Streakers, Prodsnappers, and Concord Sky Hawks to check planes for AMA and FAA numbers marked on their planes. So, it's bound to happen to us as well. They don't seem to do anything about it, just reminding the pilots to mark their planes. Still, we don't want to do anything that might attract their attention to us, so remember to mark your planes.

We had one helicopter/lipo fire at the last meeting. Phil emptied his fire extinguisher on it and it really didn't slow the fire down. We ended up bringing the helicopter and lipo out to the gravel road to let them burn out. Adding a 3x3 or 6x6 pad of crushed stone where we can leave batteries while they burn themselves out is a good idea, but in the meantime Steve is going to bring an old firepit that we can use. Normal fire extinguishers are not effective with lipo batteries. Extinguishers that work for lipo batteries are expensive, \$50-80, but we should have a couple. **We voted and approved purchase of two regular and two lipo extinguishers for the field.** Bob Sgroi is also going to bring a couple bottles of Dawn, which is known to work well with lipo fires, to the field. Thanks Bob!

Phil then asked for Treasurer/Secretary report. John reported that the club has a balance of **\$952.79** in the checking account and **\$1926.87** in the reserve account. Since the last meeting, the club spent:

**\$36.93:** joist hangers for the new shelter

**\$131.95:** weed block and stone for the shelter and for a lawnmower clamp

**\$303.86:** picnic tables and fertilizer

**\$100.00:** gift card for Albert

**\$20.87:** lawnmower gas

**\$250.00:** Portapotty July and August rental

Total proceed for hats and caps total **\$270.00** so far

We have **\$439.46** in checks written but not cashed for dry hydrant materials, wasp spray, fertilizer, and the \$100 donation to SkyStreakers approved at our May meeting.

Remaining anticipated expenses for the season will be for July picnic expenses, lawnmowing for the season, and September porta-potty rental.

#### New business:

- Phil reported that the SkyStreaker's recent fly-in was great, an amazing show. All sorts of planes, from UMX to \$2500 models flew. There was a lot of participation from many different clubs. If they do it again, he highly recommends we attend.
- Attendance at the Thursday night training sessions has been decent. Bob Sgroi and Tyler have been coming to help out. The session is not just about flying. If you are having issues with your plane or with setting up your radio, feel free to come.
- Annual election of officers at our next and final meeting of the season. If you are interested in a position, please do not hesitate to mention it to one of the current officers. All are welcome to participate.

- Keeping it fun: Everyone's here to have a good time. We sometimes give each other a hard time, but just be sure it's a give and take. Don't be shouting out to people who might not want to hear it. We all fly different types of planes and have different styles. If someone is doing something unsafe, of course go up and say something, but do it in a manner that's not degrading or making them feel bad. Be respectful. We're all here to have fun.

There was nothing else to report, so the business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 AM

John Choroszy, Secretary

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