

Strawberry Patch RC Pilots Club: Meeting Minutes for 5 October 2024

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 AM by the club president, Phil Thain. There were 18 members present.

Opening comments: Phil opened the meeting thanking everyone for another successful year and for all those who came to help our several projects this season: the new shelter, dry hydrants, and work on the field.

Election of Officers:

John reported that no one has contacted him to express interest in running for one of the officer positions. He asked again if anyone was interested and there was no response. Motions were made and seconded to re-elect each of the current officers to the same position for next year. Members then voted in favor with none opposed for all of the officers:

- President: Phil Thain
- Vice President: Paul Ouellette
- Safety Officer: Tyler McCormick
- Secretary Treasurer: John Choroszy

Phil asked Steve Prentice if he is willing to continue as Field Marshall for the coming year. Steve agreed, but did say that due to his back he might need some help. Rich Whicker said he would Steve his number.

Phil provided the members with a status report.

- **Lawmower:** At our last meeting in August we discussed needing a new mower. The current situation reinforces that. The mower is broken again and is on it's last leg. We have not been able to mow for the last two weeks. Our hopes are to get a zero turn. Tyler's Dad brought down his Ariens at the last meeting. It's not exactly a commercial mower, but more of a high-end residential. With our current mower it takes 2 ½ hour to mow the field alone (not including the pits). Using the zero-turn, Tyler mowed the field in 35 minutes and it was the best it has ever looked. It was perfectly flat. He started in the middle and worked his way out so it blew all of the clippings off and there were no clumps. That mower cost \$4K. Phil has been looking around. Even a used mower in that class is about \$3500. We started a fund for at the last meeting and currently have \$1350 in it, so we still need to keep pinching our pennies. Eleven members have donated to the fund so far. While we aren't publicizing details about the individual donations, Phil is making an exception in the case of Rich Whicker, who donated \$600.00 to the fund. A special thanks to Rich!

With \$1350 so far, we still have some ways to go. Current thinking:

- The club does have a reserve fund that we can draw some money from. But, we have will already need to tap into that to fully cover this year's expenses.
- We pay \$625/year for the porta-potty. The members seem to really like having one, so we need to plan for that.
- We paid \$575 for Woody to cut the field this season. Between officers and anyone else who wants to help out, we could probably cut the field ourselves and save the money we are currently paying Woody, especially if the new mower cuts so much quicker.

- We may need to put-off some of the future projects. Keeping the field mowed is a necessity and has to be higher priority to other enhancements.

Phil was asked if we've narrowed down to a particular brand/model. Everything Phil has looked at in that tier has been right around \$4000.00. He hasn't narrowed down to a particular mower. The idea is to go for the best deal at the time we buy. We don't need it right now, but will need it in the spring. In the meantime, suggested donation amount is \$50. If you haven't donated yet, please consider giving what you can.

- Future projects status:

After we get a new mower, if we have the money, two projects we have talked about:

- Proposal to move storage wall forward: Between the mower and irrigation equipment the current enclosed space is too small and crowded. If we get a new mower, we are going need more room for it. And, we need space for fertilizer.
- Proposal for solar charging station: The rough estimate from our last meeting was \$300-\$350. Tyler reached out to the Hudson NH club, who lost their field, about getting theirs. But, he did not hear back from them. There was some discussion during today's meeting about this being a waste of money. Phil responded that this is still just a proposal at this point and is on the back-burner until we get a mower.

- Welcome to new members:

Frank Casper and Colby LaChance

Phil then asked for the Field Marshal's report.

Steve reports that we will be closing up sometime around the first part of November, putting flight stations away, taking down the wind sock, flag, etc. You can still come fly, you just won't have the sock. In the spring the ground gets really soft. We'll put out an email then saying that the pits are closed. You can still come and fly. Just park down by the rope at the end of the field and carry your plane in.

We did do watering a couple of weeks ago. But the problem was that due to the drought the water level in the pond was really low, even below the level of the hydrant at the east end of the field. Next year, when Albert puts his irrigation lines in for the strawberries, we are going to put a T in and run a line the length of the field (in Woody's lane). This will have a throw of 60 feet which will cover at least ½ the width of the field and will help out.

Phil then asked for the Safety Officer's report.

Tyler reports that we had a pretty good year. There were no major safety issues he is aware of. For the new members, he repeated our key safety rules;

- 400 foot altitude hard limit
- Fly from within the flight stations
- Call out your intentions
- No taxiing in the pits
- If you are flying a big gas plane, stay away from the tree line at the right edge of the field. There is a housing development over there and we don't want to bother them
- Be respectful, have fun!

Phil pointed out that the BBQ pit and Dawn soap in the enclosures are for lipo fires.

Remember to mark your planes with FAA drone id and AMA numbers. The FAA has been visiting fields in the area checking for FAA numbers.

Phil then asked for Treasurer/Secretary report. John reported that the club has a balance of \$366.54 in the checking account and \$3282.07 in the reserve account. This includes the \$1350 in the Lawnmower fund.

Since the last meeting, the club spent:

\$100.00: donation to SkyStreakers approved at our May meeting
\$261.46: dry hydrant materials
\$176.24: cookout supplies
\$125.55: website security software annual charge
\$78.00: fertilizer
\$125.00: Portapotty September rental

Membership dues for 2025 are \$50.00 and are due by May1, 2025. You can pay today or anytime up to the deadline.

Motion to approve treasurer's report made and voted on

Any other new business?

- We have a few hats and decals today for anyone wanting to purchase. Caps are \$25 and decals are \$5.
- There was nothing else to report, so the business portion of the meeting was adjourned at TBD AM
- We are accepting bids if anyone is interested. Send an email to John if interested. (We did receive a bid of \$400 following the meeting)
- Thursday night training night has been great this year, but calling it quits now for the season. If anyone does want to come down, give a Phil a call and he will be happy to come down. But, otherwise stopping for the season.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

FYI Meeting Dates for 2025:

- *May 3*
- *July 12*
- *August23*
- *October 4*