



# Newsletter

Summer 2023

[forestparkcivicassociation@gmail.com](mailto:forestparkcivicassociation@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/forestparkcivicassoc>

## LARGE SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR CITY ELECTIONS

By Kathy Post, FPCA Newsletter Editor

This year’s preliminary election has the largest number of candidates for At-Large City Council members since Springfield revised its charter to use a mixed method of electing eight ward representatives and five at-large members in 2009. Twenty-one candidates have submitted “sufficient valid signatures” to be placed on the ballot for the September 12 election, and the top ten vote-getters will appear on the November 7 ballot, from whom voters may select up to five. The diversity of the slate reflects not only the diversity of the city, but the desire of so many residents to make a difference for their families and neighbors by becoming active in local government.



One would hope that the large field of candidates will boost voter turnout, since voting numbers tend to be low for local elections. Preliminary election turnout during these odd-numbered years tends to run between 5 and 8 per cent, with a high of 14.71% in 2011 when we had 13 contenders for at-large city council membership and 3 for mayor. Municipal election numbers in November are higher, but still represent less than one-fourth of all registered voters, with 27.35% turning out in 2021.

*Photo to left: Garfield Street entrance to Forest Park Middle School, where Wards 6A and 6B vote*

Ward representatives will face fewer challenges this fall, with only two of the current eight ward seats being contested. The Forest Park neighborhood includes voting precincts in Ward 3 (E, F, G, and H), Ward 6 (A, B, D, D1, E, F, G, and H), and a small fraction of Ward 7A. In Wards 3 and 7, the incumbents, Melvin Edwards and Timothy Allen, are running unopposed. In Ward 6, incumbent Victor Davila is being challenged by Humberto Caro and Shanequa Fryar; the top two vote-getters in the Ward 6 preliminary election will advance to the municipal election in November.

The Mayoral race has attracted five candidates this year, one more than in the 2019 election. Challenging Mayor Domenic Sarno, who has held office since 2008, are David Ciampi, City Councilor at-large Justin Hurst, City

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## ABOUT US

*Forest Park is the largest neighborhood in Springfield with over 26,000 residents, 6 public schools (Beal, Kensington, Washington, White Street, Sumner Avenue, and Forest Park Middle School), an active public library, the largest public park in Springfield, a golf course, and many diverse residents, churches, businesses, and organizations.*

*The FPCA is the oldest civic association in the city (1964), dedicated to improving and maintaining the quality of life for Forest Park residents.*

*Membership in the FPCA is open to any resident and/or business in Forest Park. Email us for more information. All are welcome!*

# FPCA Board Members

2023-2024

**Officers:**

President	Beate Bolen
Vice-President	Bill McNamara
Secretary	Jackie Pleet
Treasurer	Dave Rosinski

**Committees:**

Community Improvement	Ralph Slate, Steve Cary, Christine Agnitti, Ron Davis
Distribution	Katie Orellana
Education & Library	Mary Ann Maloney, Jackie Pleet
Finance	Dave Rosinski, Beate Bolen, Don Evans
Historic	Harry Seymour, Erica Swallow, Deborah Shea
Hospitality	Hope & Fred Lewis, Suzanne Accorsi
Membership	Ruth Mahoney, Kathy Post
Newsletter	Kathy Post
Parks	Collette Dill, Phil Contant, Tom Moriarty
Program	Phil Contant, Liz Mulcahy
Public Safety	Wayne Nelson, Sandra Vella, Virginia White, Amy Gustman, Juanita Batchelor
Zoning	Jane Hetzel, Pat Markey
"X" Business Liaison	Dan Rodriguez
Facebook/Website	Beate Bolen
Historian/Archivist	Pat Triggs
At-Large	Victor Davila, Bill Malloy, Fidele Malloy, Laura Walsh

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Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8:30 pm, except in July & August in the Shea Bright Nights Building in Forest Park.

**Fall 2023 Meetings**

**Tuesday, September 12**  
**Tuesday, October 10**  
**Tuesday, November 14**  
**Tuesday, December 12**

**Coming soon: "Meet the Candidates" Night, Wednesday, August 16, 7-9 pm**

# FPCA President's Letter

Dear Forest Park Civic Association Members,



The FPCA has had a busy few months. We have been asked to weigh in on multiple zoning variance situations and to help guide our community members with traffic, safety, and litter concerns.

I offer a huge "thank you" to our committee chairs and members for keeping us informed about Library activities, Public Safety issues,

Historical and Parks committee hearings and Community Improvement concerns. Our Membership committee continues to raise awareness of what FPCA is and does, and has brought in many new and active members.

Though we don't regularly meet during the summer, we have not been idle. Several major initiatives require our focus and participation.

Our Neighborhood Stabilization Grant committee is collating and coordinating the numerous ideas and proposals submitted by members and committees for use of these funds. Now comes the hard work of pricing and fleshing out each proposal and completing the application process.

Last week, we heard an update on the long-planned "X" project. Thank you to everyone who attended that meeting. Many questions were raised about this "close to final" proposal. FPCA is drafting a detailed comment letter expressing concerns about the environments, economic, historical and aesthetic impact of removing 62 mature trees. We urge you to send your own comments about this project. *(See page 6 for more info.)*

Finally, don't forget that we have scheduled the Forest Park Civic Association "Meet the Candidates" night. The event is open to all:

- When:** Wednesday, August 16, 2023; meet and greet 7 – 7:30 pm; 7:30 – 9 pm. Candidates' introductions and brief Q & A (Details to follow on our Facebook page)
- Where:** The Carriage House at the Barney Estate, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108
- Who is Invited to Speak:** All qualified Candidates for Mayor, City Council At Large, City Council Ward 6, and City Council Ward 3.

Enjoy the rest of your Summer,  
Beate Bolen  
President, FPCA

## From The Editor

Yes, we're in the dog days of Summer but Fall will come soon enough with back-to-school, back-to-FPCA meetings, and cooler weather on the way.

As you can see, I've devoted this issue's local history column to Belle Rita Novak, who passed away this month. She leaves a lasting legacy of community service in our neighborhood and her activism and dynamic personality will be missed.

Please reach out to me if you have pictures, stories, articles, and ideas that you would like to see in the next FPCA newsletter.

Kathy Post  
Cozy Corner resident since 1995  
[katherinempost@gmail.com](mailto:katherinempost@gmail.com)

### At-Large City Council Candidates\* for September 12 Preliminary Election (Vote for Five)

Juan Caraballo III  
Nicole Coakley  
Sean Curran (incumbent)  
Jose Delgado  
Drew Keaton El  
Debra Fletcher  
Lynell Gasque  
Juan Francisco "Jay" Latorre III  
Mike Lee  
Gerry Martin  
Soraya Denise McElya  
Willie Naylor  
Edward Nunez  
Thomas Oakley  
Kim Marie Rivera  
Norman Roldan  
Brian Santaniello  
Charles Anthony Stokes  
Jonathan Viruet  
Kateri Walsh (incumbent)  
Tracye Whitfield (incumbent)

\*Listed in alphabetical order

## We Remember – Belle Rita Novak



The Farmers Market at Forest Park, originally called the Farmers Market at the "X", first opened in the parking lot behind the Goodwill Shoppes on June 9, 1998. It was the brainchild of Belle Rita Novak and Michael Thomes, who did their research and hatched a plan through a collaboration between the Forest Park Civic Association and the "X" Main Street Corporation's Promotions Committee.

Sadly, I learned about Belle Rita's death on July 12 as I was leaving the City Archives at the Quadrangle, where I was poring over FPCA documents to learn about how and when the market started. She had just stepped down as President of the FPCA in 1997-1998, and had been serving on the Board of Directors of the "X" Main Street Corp, when she began working on the market project. She served as the Market

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## City Elections *(Continued from page 1)*

Council President Jesse Lederman, and State Representative Orlando Ramos. School Committee members hold 4-year terms and will not be up for re-election until 2025.

Learn more about the candidates by reading the local newspapers and newsblogs and attending any of the following events:

- Wednesday, August 16, 7-9 pm – Meet the Candidates' Night, sponsored by the FPCA, at the Carriage House at the Barney Estate in Forest Park
- Tuesday, August 22 – televised debate for Ward City Council candidates on Focus Springfield Community Television (Channel 12 on Comcast)
- Wednesday, August 23 – televised debate for At-Large City Council candidates on Focus Springfield CTV
- Thursday, August 24 – televised debate for Mayoral candidates on Focus Springfield CTV
- Wednesday, August 30, 5:30 pm – Meet and Greet event with candidates for Mayor and City Council at the Mason Square Library, 765 State Street  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1355126131735012/>

The Focus Springfield website also has brief videos of G. Michael Dobbs interviewing each of the Mayoral candidates at <https://focusspringfield.com/>

Polling locations and times are listed on the last page of this newsletter. Deadlines for voters to register or make changes are September 2 for the September 12 preliminary election and October 28 for the November 7 municipal election.



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# FARMERS MARKET @ FOREST PARK UPDATE

By Jodi-Lyn Manning ~ This is the 25<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary of the Farmers Market at Forest Park! Join us every week, but especially on Tuesday, August 8 as we celebrate National Farmers Market Week!



Staff from Greater Springfield Senior Services will be at the Farmers Market on July 25 (12:30-3), August 8 (12:30-4) and September 26 (12:30-3) to distribute coupons from the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. To be eligible for this benefit, you



Photo above: Sara at Brown Cow Farm Market

must meet income guidelines and be either 60+ years of age or disabled and living in senior housing where congregate nutrition services are provided. For more information, go to <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/are-you-eligible-to-receive-senior-farmers-market-coupons>

Visit our new website at <https://farmersmarketforestpark.com/>

For weekly updates about vendors and events, go to our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/farmersmarketatforestpark>

**See you at the Market,  
Rain or Shine!**

**Tuesdays from 12:30 to 6:00 pm behind  
Cyr Arena through October**

*Free entry through the main gate on  
Sumner Avenue or at 200 Trafton Road  
(off Dickinson)*

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## NEW @ YOUR LIBRARY!

Welcome to the new Manager of the Forest Park and East Forest Park Libraries, Cherokee Lowe!

Cherokee relocated to Massachusetts from northeast Oklahoma. She is joined by her wife, three children, two cats, and one dog. They have spent every weekend since they got here exploring the area, and they love it!

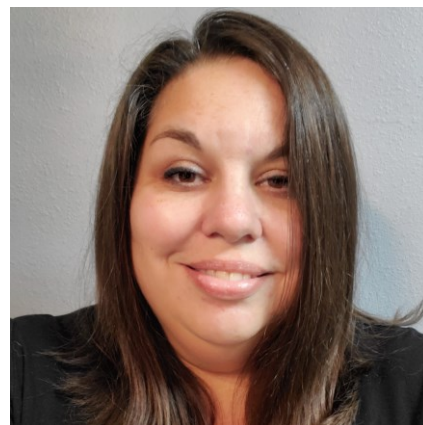
Cherokee started her library career 21 years ago, at the Eastern Oklahoma Library System. She was a clerk for twelve years, then managed two of the smallest Branches for 8 years, and finally spent over a year as the Branch Manager of the second largest Branch. She received her MLIS from the University of Oklahoma in 2021.

Cherokee has a real passion for public libraries and connecting patrons to the information they seek. She looks forward to serving the Forest Park and East Forest Park communities and would love for you to come by and say Hi!

**Cherokee Lowe, Branch Manager**  
Springfield City Library – All Yours, Just Ask  
220 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
413-787-6647  
[clowe@springfieldlibrary.org](mailto:clowe@springfieldlibrary.org)

Forest Park Library Hours:  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-5  
Tuesday 10-5  
Thursday 1-8  
Saturday 11-3  
Closed Sunday

**380 Oakland Street  
413-263-6843**



# COMMUNITY POLICING UPDATE

By Wayne Nelson, FPCA Board Member and Public Safety Committee Member

*Do you have questions or concerns about public safety in your area of the Forest Park neighborhood? Are there "quality-of-life" issues that need to be addressed on your street? Would you like to learn more about Springfield's community policing initiatives in our neighborhood? Then join us for the weekly Forest Park C-3 meetings and/or the monthly Sector H Community and Police Management Team meetings!*



**Forest Park C-3 meets every Monday at 10 am at Calvary's Love Church, 17-19 Oakland Street** (parking lot is on corner of Sumner and Oakland, then enter church through left side of building's first floor.) Sergeant Daniel Johnson and his officers coordinate these meetings, and Ordinance Officer Chad Joseph generally attends as well. About 20 persons usually attend, including neighborhood residents and representatives of non-profits or law-enforcement agencies that serve the Forest Park community. Meetings include a review of recent neighborhood crime statistics and discussion of the community events that the officers have been attending or planning, then Officer Joseph reviews his progress in following up on "quality-of-life" ordinance complaints. Participants can then present concerns, ask questions of the officers, or publicize neighborhood events. We generally sit around several large tables in an informal, comfortable atmosphere, and the meetings last about an hour.

**Sector H Team meetings, which serve both the Forest Park and East Forest Park neighborhoods, are held the first Wednesday of each month at 6 pm at Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street.** (Enter from the rear parking lot.) Springfield Police supervisors and officers attend to update the community on police initiatives in the Sector neighborhoods. There are opportunities to ask questions of the officers and learn the best way to report crime or "quality-of-life" issues, and there's generally time at the end to speak with an officer individually if you have further concerns.

You can also contact key Springfield Police officers and staff as follows:

- **C-3 Forest Park supervisor:** Sgt. Daniel Johnson, (413) 361-8037, [djohnson@springfieldpolice.net](mailto:djohnson@springfieldpolice.net)
- **Sector H supervisor:** Deputy Steven Kent, (413) 735-1505, [skent@springfieldpolice.net](mailto:skent@springfieldpolice.net)
- **Sector H/C-3 Ordinance Officer:** Officer Chad Joseph, (413) 333-8992, [cjoseph@springfieldpolice.net](mailto:cjoseph@springfieldpolice.net)
- **Community Police Liaison:** Ms. Suehaley Arce, (413) 787-6359, [sarce@springfieldpolice.net](mailto:sarce@springfieldpolice.net).
- To provide an anonymous tip using "Text-A-Tip", text SOLVE plus message (include city) to CRIMES (274637), then press Send.
- For **emergencies**, always use "911"
- For **non-emergency calls** where you want a police car to respond, call 787-6302.
- For **routine city service calls or complaints** that do not need a response that day, call "311" or (413) 736-3111.
- Springfield Police Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SpringfieldPoliceDeptMA>

Be sure to get a copy of the online or print version of the Springfield Police Department's *Good Neighbor Handbook*, which includes a list of major ordinances relating to quality of life in our city. See <https://springfieldmapolice.com/good-neighbor-handbook/> to access it online.

**The C-3 Team participates and supports many community events each month.** Officers visit all 6 elementary schools in the Forest Park neighborhood for "Breakfast and Books" events, school barbecues, PTO carnivals, and mentoring sessions, and they coach weekly basketball league games at Forest Park Middle School. Other recent community activities have included the Sheriff's Department/C-3 "Neighborhood Walk and follow-up Pizza Discussion" for the Euclid Ave., Keith St., Hall St., and Crystal St. area, and a presentation at the annual "Save the Streets" event, held this year at Johnny Appleseed Park at Hancock and Orange Streets.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Community Policing Update *(Continued from page 5)*

Officers also conduct outreach at the Forest Park Farmers Market, participate in the DA's Office "Hoop Up Springfield Tournament and Job Fair," assist at the free Elks Spring Fishing Derby at Porter Lake, help conduct Winter Hockey Training events for kids at Cyr Arena, and they recently visited a Boy Scouts troop meeting at Trinity Church to discuss the law-enforcement profession.

**In the month of June alone, the officers assisted with at least 21 varied community events!** Our Forest Park community is so fortunate to have such a committed group of officers reaching out to the residents and businesses and responding to our needs. One of their goals is to build trust in the police among the families and young people in our neighborhood, and their consistent involvement and support is making a difference toward that goal!

**Please join us soon at a C-3 or Sector H meeting to contribute your ideas and support for these efforts. Thank You!**

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## Belle Rita Novak *(continued from page 3)*

Director for 23 years, bringing in many vendors, then adding multicultural entertainment and community organizations. In 2006, the market moved to the Trinity United Methodist Church's parking lot, where it thrived before moving to Forest Park.

Born in New Rochelle, NY, Belle Rita moved to Longmeadow with her family and graduated from Longmeadow High School and UMass. Her legacy lies not just in her work with the Farmers Market but through a lifetime of volunteer activities for Springfield Hospital, Sinai Temple, the Forest Park Civic Association, Rachel's Table, the League of Women Voters, and other organizations. As her memorial states, "her hope was that she would leave the world a little better for her being here on earth even though she would anger people on a regular basis as her mouth got her in trouble." Belle Rita leaves behind a loving family, many friends and neighbors, and the beneficiaries of her kindness and service. Her obituary may be found on MassLive at <https://obits.masslive.com/us/obituaries/masslive/name/belle-novak-obituary?id=52451424>

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## DPW Project at the "X"

The City of Springfield has several webpages that include information about the latest plans for improving safety for cars, bikes, and pedestrians at the "X". Go to these links to learn more:

- Summary of project with links to pdfs of meeting announcements, FAQs, and Environmental Justice Screening Form: <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/dpw/dpw-projects/projects-in-design-phase/the-x>
- Download and save this image, then enlarge it to read street names, map key, and table identifying tree removal and replacement: [https://www.springfield-ma.gov/dpw/fileadmin/images/Projects/X\\_Planning\\_Study/Springfield\\_X\\_Plan\\_Rendering.jpg](https://www.springfield-ma.gov/dpw/fileadmin/images/Projects/X_Planning_Study/Springfield_X_Plan_Rendering.jpg)

## Good Neighbor Tip: Clear Your Catch Basin!



With the heavy summer storms we've been getting, help prevent street flooding by making sure the storm drains by your house are free of leaves and other debris.

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## Hanging Baskets at the "X"



Thanks to your generous donations to this fund and the Dashevsky Fund for Neighborhood Beautification, the decorative light posts in the "X" have once again been graced with beautiful flower baskets, installed and maintained all season by Dave Moretti of Springfield.

## Support the Forest Park Civic Association!

Help us maintain and improve the quality of life for our Forest Park neighbors by joining and volunteering for and participating in some of our many activities!

**Some of our goals for this year include:**

- Continue to review zoning variance requests, support worthwhile Parks initiatives, advocate for increasing road safety, and provide feedback to city officials and departments as they conduct their business. Of particular interest this fall are ongoing issues with litter, the city's use of the former Friendly's property next door to Sumner Avenue School, and traffic safety and speed.
- Submit proposal to City of Springfield for ARPA Neighborhood Council/Association Funding to strengthen the FPCA and conduct more outreach and advocacy activities
- Beautify the neighborhood with fall bulb planting, thanks to the Dashevsky Fund.
- Host our traditional annual events, including Illumination Night in June, the Halloween Parade on Garfield Street, and the X Tree Lighting in December, and explore new events that would benefit our residents and businesses.

Membership is only \$20 a year. Additional funds can be added to support the Dashevsky Fund for Neighborhood Beautification, Hanging Plants at the "X" Initiative, another specific area of interest (Education/Library, Parks, Programs, etc.) and/or general use by the FPCA.

-----Detach here and mail with check-----

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization or Business (if appropriate):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

*We will not release this information and will not use it for anything except FPCA business. Thanks!*

**CIRCLE ANY AREAS OF INTEREST YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP OUT IN AND/OR HEAR ABOUT:**

- Parks
- Newsletter
- Education
- Programs
- Community Improvement
- Zoning
- Membership
- Library
- Publicity
- Public Safety
- Historic

Enclosed is my/our 2023 membership contribution. Please check one:  Renewal  New Member

Please send our quarterly newsletter:  by mail only  by email only  by both mail and email

<b>Annual Membership:</b>	<b>\$ 20.00</b>
<b>Additional Contributions:</b>	
Dashevsky Fund	\$ .
Hanging Plants at the "X" Initiative	\$ .
Specific Area (identify)	\$ .
Unrestricted	\$ .
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECK</b>	<b>\$ .</b>

**Make your check payable to "FPCA" and send to:**  
 David Rozinski, Treasurer  
 34 Pinewoods Avenue  
 Springfield MA 01108

Forest Park Civic Association  
P.O. Box 80708  
Springfield, MA 01138-0708

## Don't Forget to Vote!

**Preliminary City Election: Tuesday, September 12**

**Municipal Election: Tuesday, November 7**

Go to <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/elections/> for information about registering to vote, voting early/by absentee ballot/by mail, and to check your voter status.

Polls will be open 7 am to 8 pm

Precinct polling places for Forest Park Neighborhood residents:

Ward & Precinct	Location
3E	JC Williams Community Center, 116 Florence Street
3F, 3G, 3H	Holy Name Church Social Center, 323 Dickinson Street
6A, 6B	Forest Park Middle School Gym, 46 Oakland Street (Garfield entrance)
6D, 6D1, 6F	Alice Beal School, 285 Tiffany Street
6E	Holy Name Church Social Center, 323 Dickinson Street
6G, 6H	MLK Charter School, 285 Dorset Street
7A	Mary Dryden School, 190 Surrey Road