

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors
Sunshine Community Gardens
July 14, 2020

Steve Uecker, the president, called the virtual meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. from his location outside of the trailer office. A quorum was present consisting of the following directors: Steve Uecker, Jim Willmann, Kerry Drake, Carol Limaye, Kay McMurry, Marsha Riti, and Doug Zullo.

Note: Unless explicitly stated a consensus reached or decision made, comments in a discussion item reflect the opinions of individual board members and not a board consensus or decision.

Introductions of new and returning board members (Discussion/Non-Action)

Each member took a moment to introduce him/herself.

Financials:Carol Limaye (Discussion/Non-Action Item, with tabled potential budget changes)

Carol reported we are doing well financially.

We should look at the budget re. reprioritizing 2 main areas:

- *Tool budget

- *Educational budget (now an excess, since the money to be used to travel to the LA conference is no longer needed)

Should we allocate funds to other projects or put in reserve?

-might need new cordless tools, so it was suggested to wait before reallocating these funds

A board member suggested being financially conservative during a pandemic, the treasurer was in agreement.

Money for an orientation for new gardeners via a video presentation, was suggested. There is an already formed Education Committee that is in search for a professional videographer. A current SCG member, Jason Youngblood, was pointed out to be a professional videographer. A member from the Education Committee will inquire as to his availability and interest.

Carol Limaye suggested tabling budget changes until tool budget and videographer quotes are explored further. No major changes to budget right now.

Carol mentioned the free virtual conference open to gardeners:

**41st ACGA Annual Conference Virtually(Los Angeles, CA)
Saturday Aug. 8th "Digging for Victory"**

More info. regarding this conference will appear in the Weeder.

Plot Update: Kay McMurry (Discussion/Non-Action Item)

Currently only one plot is available. Quarter plots will be shown. We might expect some openings at the end of the year, but currently we are full. The waiting list is longer than it was prior to the pandemic. Full waitlist and no one is leaving the garden right now. Waitlisted people are helping with plots that require maintenance as a way to get to know the garden.

The suggestion was explored of playing more of an in depth “matchmaker” with wait-listed folks and current gardeners needing help. This would involve identifying members who wish to receive help with their plots.

Communication between Board Members: change platform?: Doug Zullo (Discussion/NA)

Doug asked board members if they are interested in a different platform for communication between boardmembers and gardeners. He suggested looking into Slack and What’s Ap, as docs can be referenced and easily searched, even from months back. He wondered if newer and potentially easier platforms should be explored.

A couple of board members said they are comfortable with the current email system, and stated that directors can have a dedicated email for SCG if that is helpful. It was also pointed out that a change in communication methods may require an in-person set-up or tutorial. But some platforms, it was suggested, may be so easy to use they would require little to no tutorial.

The Future of the Plant Sale: Steve Uecker (Discussion/Non-Action Item)

Members are mulling over the strategies for growing and selling for the plant sale, given the time of pandemic. Some thoughts: no herb tent but having everything out in the open, ways to change the flow and organization of the people, and potential plant pre-orders.

It was stated we should be directly involved with the sale coordinator, Janet, to figure out a contingency plan if the virus is still in place. Randy is ordering seeds in the fall. We need to know if we need to scale back on a time frame or how much is ordered. Plant sale contributes about 50% of total income. Carol confirmed that sales even exceed 50% of total income lately.

We may need to cut back on the scale of the sale, but still hold the sale. There is time to consider entry limitations and the layout of plants and people flow. We need to find a plan for how to plan ;-). Reminder that pre-ordered seeds can be saved in the fridge.

Steve suggested that the board give input regarding the sale day and how to present plants for layout and people and leave the preordering to Randy and Janet. It was stated that the board need not micromanage the plant sale, but to remember we are a volunteer organization, and the board is responsible. The board needs to be aware of what is going on and have input on safety

precautions and layout if the virus is still an issue. Board members suggested brainstorming options for changes that include safety measures and finding plans that are not set in stone so they can be adapted as needed. Board members recognized the importance of Janet's involvement in the sale and her huge role in making it so successful. Jim will ask if Janet would be willing to attend the next board meeting to discuss ideas for the sale.

Keeping Track of Documents and Notes (Discussion/Non-Action Item)

Steve wondered if the system for keeping paperwork and notes is working. Jim stated that the Evernote system Bill Cason set up seems to work well, but we may need Bill to provide a refresher to Board Members. Carol said she sends documents to Bill to put into Evernote. Jim will talk to Bill Cason about whether Evernote is still the best platform.

It was stressed that we need to have good record-keeping and make sure we don't get too lax with documents. We should consider the best ways for SCG to maintain and find records over time. Documents need to be available for members, but some members don't know what documents are there and available to them. Some documents need to be safeguarded.

Jim suggested having Bill set up an orientation for Evernote for boardmembers to explore and try out. He wondered why it hasn't been used more. He knows we need to refresh the passwords and instruct on how to use Evernote. Jim suggested that Noelle transfer information and documents to Kerry and request Sharon's help to input info into the database. Sharon is in charge of the database. Jim said Kerry can reach out to Noelle and Sharon to enter new gardeners.

Pending Projects: Steve Uecker (Discussion/Non-Action Item)

- Nominating Committee (not pressing) next May
- Ongoing project installing add'l water stations
- Committee on Ensuring Gardening success
 - Orientation every mo. re. Garden success
 - (a big committee, 3 subcommittees)

Kay reported this committee met in February and that Bill Cason may want to share the information from the meeting with the board. They explored why gardeners dropped out. Mostly they found that folks reported being too busy or a move. Steve said we have to work to keep the garden in shape while maintaining a balance with gardeners that does not micro-manage but provides help to keep plots from falling into disrepair. Marsha suggested a way to make communication between garden members easier, maybe through each zone having a platform like Slack so they can quickly ask someone to water for them, etc. Doug suggested that zone coordinators could set up that platform fairly easily.

New Business: Carol Limaye (Discussion/Non-Action Item)

A new community garden in Lampasas is asking to use our tax id exemption. She needs to review their documents, make sure their paperwork is in order, and make sure they qualify. She

pointed out that this was the vision of the Identity Committee a while back, to be supportive of Central Texas gardens.

(Jim's Zoom quit working at this point.)

Outreach: Marsha Riti (Action Item: Action approved for Garden Instagram Account)

Marsha wondered if SCG has worked with other community gardens. Has SCG done skill shares, for example? Steve reported having done some work with YMCA, and Carol said we may want to be more involved with the Austin Sustainability Center and the FFC. Previous board members have been contacted from groups in the past about setting up a community garden. Steve said he has sent bylaws and rules for other gardens that inquire. Marsha suggested we could reach out to other gardens to let them know we're there to help. Marsha said we have many resources and knowledge and can give more back to the community. Steve suggested more classes, lectures, etc., when it is safe to return to public venues. Kay said this falls within the parameters of the formed Education Committee. These things can be scheduled when we can meet in person again. Marsha asked if we are considering more of a web presence for SCG.... video outreach, Instagram, etc. Marsha offered to set up a SCG Instagram account.

Steve made a Motion for Marsha to set up an IG account. Kerry seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Then Steve made a move to adjourn. Kay seconded. All agreed.

Meeting ended at 7:05 p.m.