

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors

Sunshine Community Gardens

10/12/21

Attendees: Jim Willmann, Kerry Drake, Debra Mariano, Steve Camp, Kay McMurry, Karl Arcuri, Carol Limaye

Meeting called to order, 6:00 pm

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, any statement is reflective of an individual board member and not the opinion of the board as a whole.

Approval of September Minutes

Passed

Ratification of Email Votes

1) Waiting List exception vote

2) Awarding 1.5 credit per hour for organized work days in October

3) Increasing fall plant purchase for schools to \$600

Passed

Reports

1) Treasurer: Debra Mariano

Debra reports we are still ahead of the budget. We have gone into some savings and may have to dip into it more for the plant sale. Things are doing well over all. Re. compost, we are very close to breaking even. We are within 8% of covering the cost.

2) Plot Coordinator: Kay McMurry

Current WL holding steady at slightly over 200. Currently half plots have been given up for a variety of reasons.

3) VP (Compliance) (Also see Plot Compliance and Common Path/Area Encroachment under Business Items): Steve Camp

The Northwest corner is a bit overgrown. Some concern was expressed about ZC's not being on task. It is a tough job to be ZC but very important to the garden. Things are starting to look better with the cooler weather.

4) Fall Plants to Schools: Jim Willmann

We gave 600 plants to about 22 schools-- all public schools. One private school inquired, but we were committed to giving to the public schools. We gave one flat per school and they probably could have used twice that many. Working with schools helps promote gardening in central Texas. Should we form a partnership with PEAS? Their relationship with schools is a good one and SCG members may be able to help with plants or mentoring.

Business Items

1) Service Hour Proposals

We may want to implement modifications without having to launch pilot programs-- the exception being the no-pay work hours being explored. It appears 7-8% of members don't work their service hours. A board member pointed out that this seems like a small proportion of people not working hours.

A board member would like us to create incentives rather than a punitive policy that kicks members out. It was pointed out that we can't imagine all the reasons people can't work hours. People are reluctant to ask for help. On the other hand, do we want people to come and pay and "rent" a plot? Some people are paying their way out of contributing to the community. Also, this is the model we have been using. For instance, not working the TSBVI hour used to be cause for dismissal, and we have enforced mandatory work hours for new gardeners. This shows we are serious about gardeners participating in the community. But has the incentive approach been used before?

It was suggested that \$10/hour pay out is maybe not enough to be meaningful to gardeners. Perhaps it should increase to be more significant. Pricing someone out could be looked at. The gardener would always have the opportunity to work the hours if s/he can't afford to pay the fee. One

member expressed the hope we try incentives or requiring all-gardener priority tasks first to see if that helps participation before we implement a pilot program that would potentially have membership terminated. Two objectives: work hours. Do tasks that work for the garden as a whole. Fenceline work has fallen to about 5 or so people. 50% of workable hour priority tasks would help, with incentives for workdays. It was suggested we exhaust other options before the no work/no pay idea. We may run out of work to do if we have too many workdays. It was stated that in December the garden looks great because people are trying to get their hours in.

Some ideas being considered to improve community service work at the garden:

- Incentivize workdays
- Create more teams like Micah 6
- Record hours instead of waivers
- Adopt a fence line:

If jobs in adopted garden areas don't get fulfilled, the gardener would have to go back to the service hour approach. The "adopt a fenceline" doesn't need to be a waiver but just logged as service hours. Perhaps it would motivate people. It would be apparent when people aren't doing their adopted job.

- Increase fees for unworked hours
- Contract lawn service?

We don't want to rely on unworked hours for our budget. It sets a bad precedent.

2) Width of strip along south/west fence line and northeast fence line

We need to be consistent with gardeners. The 4 ft. barrier is tighter with the wheelbarrow. South/west fence line: we could make them 5ft. It will not affect the size of the plot. To be consistent, we will make it 5 ft. and keep the northeast fence line at 8 ft.

3) Plot Waiting List Exceptions

The current waiting time is no more than a year and a half. Exceptions should be allowed. What are the guidelines for exceptions? The board would be addressing the exceptions. How do you tell if a gardener will be a good gardener if you've never seen them garden? Length on the WL shouldn't be the reason we make exceptions.

Motion: *Continue to deal with jumping the WL on a case by case basis by being brought to the board.*

Amendment: if there is a request for an exception, the Plot Coordinator would bring that request to the board and the board would make the decision of whether or not to grant the exception.

Motion to Postpone until November

Passed.

4) Plot Compliance and Common Path/Area (See Background Materials)

Steve will work with ZCs to ID compliance issues. There is a continued non-compliance issue. The board will need to make a decision about a formal letter. Historically, this gardener gets her plot into mostly compliance and then becomes inactive again. This plot is not the worst plot maintenance, but it is a long standing problem.

5) G7-4seX (See Background Materials) & E2-7

G7-4sex

This gardener is visually impaired and has a 2 hour trip to the garden via bus. Nevertheless, the gardener opted to join knowing the length of his trip to the garden. The gardener was initially excited, but disappeared after planting. The ZC worked to provide a reset, clearing the plot and covering it with leaves. The gardener was supposed to return Sept. 1 but has not returned after reminders. The gardener didn't follow through with agreement. A board member wonders if there is a way to give him a raised bed. Suggestions included allowing two more weeks or sending a noncompliance letter now. Also it was suggested this gardener share a raised bed. A gardener will be asked if he will share his raised bed. ZC will continue to inquire with the gardener. There is documentation about his agreement. If not receiving a refund is a hardship for the gardener, the board would be willing to refund.

E2-7

This gardener has had a bereavement service hour exemption. The board wonders if the gardener intends to continue gardening, as the ability to get to the garden and maintain the plot has been spotty for over a year. Kerry was approved to reach out to the gardener's daughter via messenger to gauge the gardener's desire to remain with SCG.

6) Scheduling of Workdays (If not already discussed under previous agenda items)

Typically we have 2 workdays per month. ZCs schedule these, and usually they are scheduled on weekends in the morning. Concern for non-responsive ZCs was expressed. How can we encourage ZCs to respond? It is difficult to consider removing a ZC, but if s/he is not fulfilling the obligation as ZC, s/he would need to be removed.

7) Plot E1-1n (Only if any action is still needed)

This plot had confusion about a new gardener becoming the primary on the plot. The secondary gardener remains secondary, and both gardeners were informed about the ultimate responsibility (service hours; payments) belonging to the primary. This issue was resolved via email prior to the board meeting.

8) 2022 Plant Sale

The board needs to start doing some contingency planning with Janet and Randy. They are traveling back from Wisconsin on Tuesday, so we may need to schedule a special zoom call later.

Some questions to consider:
Should we have a full sale? Accept presale orders?

We will have to look at what will be feasible in March. The board is responsible and accountable for this sale. Consensus is to have a zoom meeting with Janet and Randy.

9) Tool repair costs

We should be able to cover tool costs. Metal handled tools are too heavy for some gardeners.

We will have a bit of wiggle room with finances if we have the plant sale.

Timeline: By Jan. we should have budgets in line. Decide about special projects: Tools/Children's Garden/ raised beds (cedar is high)/ roof repairs?

Trailer Roof is going to need to be addressed. We may be able to get by with an inexpensive coating.

10) Additional Items May Want To Address

a) Naming of Common Paths

**b) Renaming Micah 6 as Nancy Seibert [Memorial / Micah 6]
Foodbank Garden**

Question about SCG plumber. We've used Johnny Rooter for troubles in the past.

Motion to adjourn : at 7:58

Passed.