

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors

Sunshine Community Gardens

1/13/22

Attendees: Jim Willmann, Kerry Drake, Debra Mariano, Steve Camp, Kay McMurry, Carol Limaye, Karl Arcuri (Marsha Riti joined at 6:10).

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

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 Minutes

December Minutes

Minutes approved unanimously.

1. Plant Sale Report

6:02: Janet and Randy join the Zoom for a discussion of COVID protocols during the plant sale.

Janet and Randy and the board all agree that ideally volunteers would be vaccinated, boosted, and masked for volunteering with the plant sale. Also, there is the wish that shoppers at the sale wear masks. We agreed to follow the TSBVI guidelines to encourage vaccinations and the following of the general guidelines for COVID protocols. It was noted that we can find solo volunteer work (i.e. writing plant labels) for volunteers who remain unvaccinated or unmasked to avoid group exposure during volunteering. All recognized that we can not ask about a person's vaccination status, nor force mask-wearing. We will work to encourage masking during the sale in the interest of safety for volunteers.

If conditions were to be as they are now (Stage 5, at capacity hospitals, and rapid spread of Omicron), Janet would not want us to hold the sale. We will continue to plan and hope for the best. So far our biggest expense is for the plants. The tent rental would likely give us a credit and the port-a-potty can be canceled a few days before without penalty. The final decision will be made a week and a half before the sale.

Masking: we will ask for masking and offer masks. We are looking at what we can require being on state property. Surgical masks have been ordered for plant sale volunteers. We will announce that surgical masks will be provided, and that volunteers should feel free to mask in KN95s or masks that meet their desired protection level. We will be able to better

gauge volunteer energy and comfort level when people sign up to volunteer for the sale online.

Our message to the general public will be to strongly recommend masking. We will ask volunteers in a group setting to please do everything possible to mitigate the spread of COVID. We will ask volunteers to wear a mask when they show up to work. We will adapt the language on the TSBVI site for our garden sale.

There was discussion of creating good airflow using the fans. And because cashier volunteers will be outside and spread out, we likely do not need to provide plexiglass panels, but will designate a line to not cross when checking out so that purchasers do not get too close to cashiers.

Fence and security: if the fence is down on the day of the sale it will be an issue for us with plants and compost exposed. We may want to look at hiring a security guard if the fence is down.

Janet and Randy signed off at 6:38 p.m.

Reports

Treasurer Report: Debra and Carol

The final report for the year is reflected on our 990. We came out okay. We had a deficit of about 12 thousand, less than expected. We saved money by not attending educational conferences and less water expenses. We were over-budget with trash removal. We have raised the budget for the trash removal since their prices have gone up. Unworked service hours went up, perhaps because of COVID. There was a question about low interest rates, which is being seen across the board with banks.

Plot Coordinator Report : Kay (shared screen)

178 people are on the WL. Two ¼ plots available. Plots are emptying out faster than they did last year. Is there a way to purge the list to keep it more accurate? Kay has done this in the past, but found it to not be effective. Retention rate at the garden? Kay guesses 80-90%. We average over a year waiting, some folks during the pandemic have waited over 600 days. Health and moving away are some of the reasons folks have given up their plots. Kay has been busy getting folks into plots this month.

Action/Discussion Items

1. 2022 Budget: Final approval

Unanimous approval of passing the budget.

2. Amount being spent on fire ant solution

Ant drench reimbursement checks are equaling a fair amount of money for the drench—annually about \$3,000. Some find it effective, some don't. Is it worth this amount of

money? We may need to look at going to a non-organic pesticide for the ants, a radical move. We should continue to figure out what to do. There was agreement not to discontinue the program now, but for board members to be considering alternatives.

Ant deterrent: farmer's almanac has natural remedies that are fairly inexpensive. Marsha will send the website.

3. Approval of MOU relating to division of responsibilities between treasurer and asst. treasurer

Motion to approve and seconded.

Passed unanimously.

It was suggested we take a look at the way the board volunteer jobs are described and how the board positions are doing. The policies, procedures, etc. in the financial sector are really well done, as written up by Carol, and we should try to produce this for the other board positions.

4. Safety and Security at Sunshine

We have had two issues of unsettling visitor behavior in recent months. We would like to explore ways to address safety and security at SCG.

a. Arranging an APD presentation for gardeners

Ask Officer Grayson to speak at the AGM. Marsha will look into booking Officer Grayson to speak to gardeners.

b. Installing of surveillance cameras

We could consider more cameras around the garden. Perhaps see what the officer has to say about the cameras. It was pointed out that cameras won't necessarily increase safety. Would it give a false sense of security?

We will proceed with the gate camera.

c. Other issues

TSBVI can't respond to our reports, but APD uses TSBVI offices to make reports, so APD is often nearby in the event we call for them.

5. First Quarter All-Gardener Meeting: Setting date and potential agenda

We would like to wait to see the availability of the officer.

6. Chicken operations at Sunshine

a. Update re letter to member on policy decision to limit chicken operations to chicken coop

The letter will be sent certified and regular mail. The Zone Coordinator in this area and the chicken coop coordinator are now aware of the situation. The independent coop operator owes service hours for the past year, so the policy decision letter will be sent with the renewal and service hour bill.

b. New issue of a second gardener bringing chickens to garden

Chickens are coming out with a gardener and being put in a pen on her plot. This could become an issue down the road. Though we allow dogs, it was pointed out that dogs are pets, not livestock. A picture of the pen with chickens will be sent to board members for consideration. We will also review site rules re. permanence of structures and occupancy.

7. Service Hours

a. Confirm return to normal with 2022 season

This means a return to season-based requirements of # hours and when worked/recorded/billed.

Are we worried about Omicron making it harder to work hours? The consensus was that since hours are generally worked outdoors, there is no need to again change the billing times. We will need to let gardeners know about the return to “normal.”

8. Pilot - finalize the type of workdays to which extra credit will apply (all garden, zone specific, etc.)

Zone organized work days could be time and a half credit. Gardeners should record the extra themselves. The board was unanimous in supporting the extra credit workdays.

9. Zone Coordinator Changes in Zones 6 and 7

Charlotte Jernigan (Zone 6) is moving out of state and Jeff Schulz (Zone 7) has moved and found he lives too far from the garden. Steve will share the replacement ZCs he has identified. Kristin Phillips is willing to take on ZC in Zone 7. Marilyn will replace Charlotte in Zone 6.

There was a brief discussion of whether we should return to everyone recording volunteer hours with no exemptions. This would allow us to know how many hours are being worked. It was acknowledged it is difficult for Board Members and the Plot Coordinator to record every volunteer moment for the garden.

10. Needed Repairs

Repairs are needed for the tool shed handle, trailer door, and we need two working bathrooms in the trailer. The unworking restroom in the trailer is currently being worked on. Stan and Rober Jarry will be asked to look at the tool shed handle and trailer door. Mention was made of hanging signage on the chimney swift area.

Question about hoses and who purchases them: The garden doesn't replace hoses. When you put a hose on, it can be used by anyone. Money can be pooled for gardeners using

the same hose.

Motion to Adjourn. Seconded.
Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.