

## **Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Sunshine Community Gardens

**5/10/22**

Attendees: Jim Willmann, Kerry Drake, Debra Mariano, Kay McMurry, Carol Limaye, Karl Arcuri, Marsha Riti @6:15

**Meeting called to order at 6:02 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.***

**A. Meeting called to order at 6:04.**

### **Approval of April Minutes**

The minutes were approved.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Overall we are doing fine. We netted \$5,500 more than projected. The plant sale total was \$15, 557.00.

### **Plant Sale**

The sale did better than expected. The street sign was up; same cost at \$600. Even though the wholesale cost of plants went up from 75 cents to 90 cents, the garden still made a profit. We gave a thousand seedlings to nonprofits. We may wish to revisit pricing next year, depending on the nursery cost increase.

### **Plot Report**

The waitlist has grown to 172. A quarter plot just vacated, and it should be filled tomorrow.

### **Ratification of email votes**

none

### **Discussion and Action Items**

**A. Consensus Items** (if more than minimum discussion is required, it will be moved to the no consensus agenda.)

1. Add removing khaki weed to the permanent list of tasks counting as TSBVI service hours (Steve will add this to the task lists on website and WW)

**Passed**

2. Increase allowance for workday refreshments from \$25 to \$35

**Passed**

3. Approve expenditure of up to \$300 for plant sale volunteers thank you event. Since it is an expense which would not be incurred but for the plant sale, it can be treated as a plant sale expense and can be incorporated into future plant sale budgets, so there will be no need to authorize separately.

**Passed**

## **B. Nonconsensus Items** (Items requiring more discussion.)

### **1. Expenditure Pre Approval Policy (See attachment in financial policies)**

Proposal: Expenditures from \$100-\$500 would go before Pres, VP, or Treasurer for approval. Any of these three board members can opt to bring it before the board. One board member expressed the proposal is appropriate with simple guidelines, and noted that expenditures can be combined - which may save time and money. Recurrent purchases don't have to be continually approved, especially if it's budgeted. (This is listed under item 4, exceptions.) This will be a board policy- likely incorporated into financial policies. This will not be inconsistent with Bylaws.

**Motion: Accept the draft policy to put in place, and eventually incorporate them into the financial policies.**

**Passed.**

The Bylaws need major revisions. Things have been flagged (including email votes.) The new policy can be added when the Bylaws are revised.

### **2. All Blind Children of Texas Donation**

Jim has done some more exploring of All Blind Children of Texas (ABCTX). It appears it is again active. Apparently, Gloria Bennett's illness resulted in it becoming somewhat inactive for a while. The TSBVI website identifies ABCTX as a community partner and identifies donating to ABCTX as a way to support TSBVI and has a link for donating. The web page [Community Partners Support TSBVI](#) with this info was updated on 4/7 so it is current. A PDF of the page is attached.

ABCTX participated in Amplify Austin again this year and the ABCTX profile can be found at [All Blind Children of Texas | Amplify Austin \(amplifyatx.org\)](https://amplifyatx.org). The profile lists Lee Sonnenberg as a contact and he is the chair of the TSBVI board. He is who earlier responded to one of Jim's emails to Gloria Bennett. The profile lists the ABCTX address as the TSBVI address.

### **Motion: Donate \$3000 to ABCTX**

#### **Passed**

We will invite a representative from ABCTX someone to come accept the check at the AGM. We have a giant check for a photo op.

### **3. Dumpster Cost and Options Available**

Debra, Steve, Carol and Jim present options for board consideration

Background: The monthly dumpster fee went up to \$525/month. The contract with Waste Management is onerous. Options were explored. Seemingly, the best option is to take the plant waste going in the dumpster and take it instead to the compost area. The current compost would stay. Whittlesey has a roll off service. They will leave a container when we call them, and we will fill the container with the plant waste. It would be 5-10 yards larger than what we currently have.

We want to try to reduce the WM cost or find someone else. The first step is to get the plant waste out of the dumpster, and then we will know how much plant waste we have. Gardeners will take plant waste to the compost area, and we will have it picked up once a quarter. Hopefully, this will enable us to reduce costs by 40-50%.

How can we mitigate khaki weed spreading in certain areas where we are collecting the plant material? We will have to monitor the situation. We will attempt to get at the khaki weed as soon as we see it. This should have minimal effect on the compost area, but there will be a new pile for all plant material.

Compliance issues? How do we keep people in compliance with what goes in the dumpster, etc? We should be able to remove inappropriate things from the dumpster. The problem with the current setup is that plants can go in the dumpster. In the future, no plants are to go in the dumpster. There will be an "*absolutely no plants in the dumpster*" sign. The new plant area will be 20x20. This will be a good trial period in order to see how/if we can get the plant material out of the dumpster. We have a written quote from Whittlesey. Currently plant materials from the dumpster are going to a landfill, whereas Whittlesey will make the plant material into compost. This is more in line with our mission. The plan is to meet with Randy and

Janet and then make it a discussion at the AGM and provide info about the change.

Motion: We continue the current compost situation and have a conversation with Randy and Janet and then proceed with removing all plant material from the dumpster and then create a pile in the compost area for plant waste. This new situation will be presented at the All Gardener Meeting.

**Passed**

#### **4. Potential Future Expansion of Raised bed Area or Children's Garden**

There is probably a current need to expand the raised bed area and possibly a future need to expand the children's garden. To facilitate any actual decision to expand, it is recommended that if any plot adjacent to the raised bed area or children's garden is vacated, it not be reassigned until the board evaluates if it wants to actually expand the raised bed area or the children's garden. It is not being recommended to actually expand at this time.

**There is a consensus to do this.**

#### **5. Fence Replacement**

The new gate will be a 28 foot sliding gate with a pedestrian entrance. The sliding gate will be activated electronically by keypads or cards. We hope we can have the gate open all day. As a non-profit we agree to keep the gate open to the public. The pedestrian gate can stay open. A concrete slab will be put in. We will need gravel to fill it. We could order granite base for gate prep then we can use the rest for rough spots in the driveway. We could get ~10 yards and then let the fence/gate crew use what is needed. The cost may come to about \$500. Are we agreeable to providing the gravel for the gate work and for our garden roads?

Motion: We get a minimum of 15 yards of granite base (approx. \$500) to provide some filler for the gate and use the rest for the garden road repairs. Jim will talk with the work crew liaison about the gate and the granite base for filler.

**Passed**

#### **6. Topics for Discussion at AG Meeting**

We may want to get member feedback on the following topics:

- a. New Fence: do we want to keep it cleared or allow vines to grow on it?

b. Timers: do we want to permit use of timers with soaker hose/drip irrigation systems?

Timers would require a rule change. We can get feedback from membership. Drawback: it would tie up a faucet. Those wanting to put in timers would need approval from ZC or VP to also approve the type of timer. Timers would have a 3 hour limit. In the past, they were not used appropriately and we had some failures. However, the technology has gotten better. One advantage to a timer is the hose will eventually turn off. It may be more accurate than gardener error, as often gardeners forget they have left their soaker hoses on. Also, timers can allow for a more effective watering time, thus saving water potentially. We could get a sense from the gardeners at the AGM about their thoughts about timers. We would need to implement rules if we accept the timer. Jim will address the pros and cons about timers at the AGM.

c. Fall Plant Sale. Question gardeners about if they would like a Sunshine gardeners-only sale like we had last fall.

d. Dumpster Cost and Options: explain the new system and explain why it is being implemented.

## **7. Date for an executive session**

This exec. session should happen before the composition of the board changes on June 1. The board should come up with fairly firm recommendations. Jim will send out an email for the date for an executive meeting.

## **8. In person board Meeting for June**

June will be a new board, and Jim would like for the board to meet in person as a first meeting. He would also like to invite the existing board to this meeting.

## **9. Audit committee**

We are overdue for an audit. There are accounting rules for audit committees. Do we have gardeners with accounting expertise? Should we hire an outside CPA group? Should we bring it up at AGM to ask for volunteers?

Meeting adjourned @7:50 p.m.