

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors

Sunshine Community Gardens

7/12/22

Attendees: Jim Willmann, Steve Camp, Kerry Drake, Debra Mariano, Carol Limaye, Iris Slevin, Juan Pedro Maestre, Marsha Riti

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.

B. Approval of Minutes

June 28 Board Minutes

Suggestion: water stations: add in that about half have been replaced with steel posts

–Passed as amended.

Executive Session May 24

–Passed.

C. Reports

Treasurer's Report: Debra

We are pretty much on budget even with a very big garden water bill. The water bill was over a thousand dollars more than last June. It was noted how much hotter this year is. It was also noted that we might need to talk about water conservation. Some non-conserving watering techniques have been observed lately.

Billing: Carol

More service hours seem due than usual now that bills have gone out. 56 people owe hours– this is not that bad, but a lot of these gardeners have worked zero service hours. Two new gardeners have not worked any hours. Question: are they not getting the message they need to work their hours? How do we encourage more participation in being a community garden?

Plot Report: Kay– not present today

RE. the plot report, Jim asked us to note that the WL has more people for quarter plots, but the wait time is about the same across the board for plot sizes. Quarter plots seem to have more turn over.

Plot Compliance Issues / Workday Participation (Only if needed): Steve

Steve reported that noncompliance issues may be on the rise because of the heat. Folks aren't showing up because of the heat, so gardens are not looking good for this reason and because plants are dying in the heat. Steve reported wishing more folks would show up for workdays. At the very least, if gardeners just showed up for an hour a week it would help with the maintenance of plots.

It was asked if the board has considered raising fees for noncompliance issues. Historically, the board has explored this possibility, but each time has recognized that this puts members with larger incomes at an advantage, as they can afford to be in noncompliance. Those that can afford it continue to be repeat offenders. There are some issues with the service hours, and it seems to not be working as smoothly as it can.

D. Calendar: Jim

Why we need a calendar: for one, in the past we failed to execute the agreement with TSBVI. We want to avoid forgetting to do crucial things like renewing our contract agreement with TSBVI. As well, important things like ordering the banner for the plant sale and reporting to TSBVI about our maintenance of the grounds must continue to happen in a timely manner for our success and sustainability.

Note to board members: Please check to see if you can move the next board meeting to Aug. 16th to accommodate a member's calendar.

E. Discussion and Action Items**1. 2023 Plant Sale****1) Organization and management structure**

Suggested steering committee: Debra, Carol, and perhaps two co-chairs. For a while it was a single coordinator. Then more recently Janet and Randy (a married couple) worked to run the plant sale. We can evaluate the structure after the next sale, but we have to come up with a workable structure. We also need to consider the coordinator/s and how they interact with the board. There have been coordinators for cashiers, pass-alongs, compost, etc. In the past the coordination has not been managed for the different roles. Billing, receipt writing– that should be under the treasurer, and needs to have the sign off from the treasurer. There needs to be coordination for all the sub committees.

We should now consider what will bring the most success for the plant sale. Over the next year we can review the working document. Is there a role for the board in running the plant sale? Seems the board has to have some say for an event that is responsible for 50% of its income. The board seems to agree that the board should be updated and kept in the loop about major aspects of the plant sale, and the treasurers remain as over-seers of the billing and receipt writing. Karl Arcuri and Marsha Riti

have agreed to Co-chair the plant sale. It was noted they are good communicators: maybe we don't need the liaisons to the board, as they are willing to communicate with the board. There used to be an "after-action meeting." Perhaps this could be reimplemented. For this year Carol, Debra, Marsha and Karl will be okay with serving in the roles of communicating back to the board re. issues of the plant sale.

2) Qualifications of the Chair coordinators

Position appointed by board. (There was some discussion about whether or not this should be an elected position, but the general consensus seemed to not find this a workable idea.)

3) Selecting Chairperson/Timeline for appointing (Volunteers to Chair were found during the meeting.)

4) Notifying Coordinators

The board will need to notify the current coordinators that Janet and Randy have decided to not continue as Co-chairs and introduce the new Co-chairs. Jim will do a draft email about the change with chairpersons for the board's review, and then he will send the email to the coordinators and people involved directly. Then we can set up the meetings with the Co-chairs and the coordinators.

The list of past coordinators was reviewed and filled out during the meeting. It was suggested that the Co-chairs also speak with Michael Hall who ran the plant sale in the past for more historical information as we establish and document the process of having the plant sale. This year we will work on record keeping: how many plants ordered, how many left, etc. The goal is to improve record keeping, as it's useful information for future sales. One thing that would be helpful, said one board member, is how we present to the public the plants we want to sell: eye-appeal, the way the plants are listed (into meaningful categories, i.e. cherry tomatoes, description or link) (images from gardeners to avoid copyright issues?) How a plant performs, what it looks like, etc.

At an AGM we could have a time when gardeners can have an open forum to share ideas for the plant sale. Jim will send an email on behalf of the board when that time comes. It was suggested we review expectations for gardeners on plant sale day, i.e.: "No group gardening day" "no parking"-- etc.

5) Financial Goals

It was suggested to make the goal what it was last year, and shy away from saying "make as much money as possible." \$20,000 or \$25,000 seems a reasonable goal-- we know how much we can make selling compost. We know how many herbs we can grow. We would like to end up with an organizational plan for future plant sales, including a manual for future sales. It was also stated and agreed that the sale should be an opportunity for community building, both for gardeners and those who are not garden members.

6) Setting the budget

Carol and Debra could set a working budget. One issue: the cost of plants from Gabriel Valley. Cost of plants has increased (plastic pots, etc.). Our costs are going to go up. The goal is to set the budget around September.

7) Immediate actions

We need a list of vendors and contacts—(we do not have this record from billings as we do other records.) Michael Hall might know about past vendors. Tents (tables and chairs) are the biggest concerns for ordering, and likely the biggest expense.

8) Board involvement

The board wishes to have overall oversight while avoiding micromanaging. There should be a balance, though of course there will be a pendulum. It is not the board's role to get into the details, but to help ensure success and some oversight to help if things are looking unsuccessful.

Marsha and Karl would report back to the board— budget, etc. Marsha suggested giving a short report at every meeting.

Background Materials:

May Report by Debra, Carol, Marsha

List of Plant Sale Roles/Activities/Coordinators

Executive Session Minutes Sections Re Plant Sale

Marsha signed off at 7:39 p.m.

2. Front Gate

The gate may be installed tomorrow 7/13/22. It is a very different situation than expected. Badge readers are up and a gate motor has been installed. We will have to see what it looks like. We will have to see if it can even be a manual gate at this point. If a manual locking gate is workable, that is our preference, as it has simpler mechanical parts, and is more reliable, generally. It is hard to know what is going on with the gate; it keeps changing. There are a lot of unknowns. Is our preference for a manual gate? It was acknowledged there are so many complications with badge systems. Would a manual gate be too heavy for some gardeners? If the gate goes in tomorrow, Steve and Jim will check it out and let us know. If a manual gate is workable for us and an option, it seems to be our organization's preference. One issue with a manual gate is making sure the gate is locked at night. The trailer and tool shed are often not consistently locked at night. Should we get a punch button lock for the handles of each? (It is cheaper than a security guard.) At some point we will need to discuss safety issues of gardeners gardening at night.

(August meeting— Jim would like Kerry to remind him to send out an email to board members requesting a date change for the August meeting.)

Motion to adjourn 7:55 p.m.

Passed & Adjourned.