

Minutes of Meeting of the All Gardeners Meeting

Sunshine Community Gardens

5/21/22

Attendees: 66 gardeners signed in as present. Garden board members Jim Willmann, Steve Camp, Debra Mariano, Carol Limaye, Marsha Riti, Karl Arcuri, Kay McMurry, and Kerry Drake were present.

At 10:03 a.m. President Jim Willmann began the meeting.

Special Order

1. Donation to All Blind Children Texas with representative Beth Pierce

Beth Pierce from ABCTX received the \$3,000.00 donation from the proceeds from SCG's plant sale. Beth Pierce outlined the many ways donations help the organization. Gardeners were encouraged to view the ABCTX website and see the many ways the nonprofit aids blind and visually impaired children in Texas.

2. New Fence and Gate with Brian McDonald, TSBVI Director of Operations and SCG liaison

Brian McDonald updated gardeners about the upgrading of the perimeter fence and the new gate for the garden. He mentioned the uptick in nefarious activity on the TSBVI grounds, and said the 8 ft. fence is hoped to help increase security for the grounds after hours. All of the maintenance of the fence and gate will be kept up by TSBVI. Mr. McDonald fielded questions.

Questions:

Can there be an additional pedestrian gate at another location for garden entry?

This idea can be discussed in the future once the initial planned work is finished.

Can a car get out of the garden if the gate closes at night?

Yes, there will be a sensor that will trigger the gate to open when a car goes over the sensor.

What direction will the gate open?

It will slide open toward the bus stop.

Will there be additional security measures?

No, TSBVI will not be providing additional security measures.

Why has work on the fence perimeter stopped while there is no fence on 49th street?

Because the TDCJ has been on lockdown due to a north Texas escapee, work on the fence perimeter had to stop, as the workers are inmates with good standing.

Are vines permissible on the fence?

Yes.

Will the gate have a problem opening or closing if severe weather affects its power?

It will have battery back-up.

Will there be a keypad for the gate?

No. Badges will be issued for special cases. Some badges will be issued for special purposes, and these badges will be the responsibility of the garden board to determine who will receive an entry badge. Most gardeners will not need badges as the gate will remain open during

operational hours. The gate will open and remain open during normal garden hours (daylight hours). However, Brian said the garden may be issued as many badges as requested.

Regular Order

1. Introduction of the Board

Board members were introduced, and Marsha Riti & Karl Arcuri were recognized for their service, as they are not seeking reelection.

2. Thank You to Garden Volunteers

Great appreciation was expressed to Janet and Randy for their hard work on the successful plant sale. In addition, volunteers who do a tremendous amount of work were thanked. Some of these hardworking volunteers are: Carol Limaye as assistant treasurer, Zone Coordinators, who are a key point of reference for all gardeners, the Micah 6 volunteers, particularly Walter and Mary and Dana. Thank you to the Weeder editor/publishers: Maria Beach, and Kristin Phillips who has recently stepped in to help out publishing the Weekly Weeder in addition to being the ZC. The beautiful front garden upkeep is thanks to Matt. Thanks was expressed to Bob Easter for keeping our tools operational, and to Robert Jarry and Stan Lundgren for repairs, and Steve Schultz for plumbing.

3. Reports from President, Treasurer, Plant Sale, Plot Coordinator

President's Report

There is a feeling we are returning to some degree of normalcy. Jim reported that our Micah 6 donations are going well, and that we have made fine donations, also, to the Central Texas Foodbank. We have supplied 1500 plants to public schools as part of our initiative to promote community gardens. This past year, we updated and developed a set of financial policies so it is no longer left to memory but is officially recorded.

A plan for Children's Gardens has begun to be implemented. There will be 10-12 3x3 ft. garden beds available for children to garden. Big thanks to Debra Mariano and Alex Luckasiewicz for their hard work making a grant application happen on very short notice that would support the Children's Garden initiative.

4. Discussion Items and Open Forum

Dumpster

The cost of the dumpster at the garden has become too expensive, the board feels. It is \$520/month, or 15 % of our total budget and 40% of our member dues. The dumpster is often only half full many times, so the expenditure seems excessive. The new board policy is that NO PLANT MATERIAL will be placed in the dumpster. Instead, the compost area will have a single pile where all garden plant material can be placed. Once we have 30-40 yards of plant material, Whittlesey will bring a roll off container and remove the material and turn it into compost. The city does not provide this service for commercial areas. The "pile" of plant material will be easier for gardeners in some ways, as not sorting or cutting of plant waste will be necessary. A reminder that no plant material and no logs should be brought from home. Nor should any

refuse be brought from home and put in the dumpster. The plant pile is just for plant material generated from Sunshine, and the dumpster is just for trash from the garden. The leaf and wood chip piles will continue as usual, as will the vegetable compost. We will not generate as much compost as in the past, and we will evaluate if more compost is needed as we put this practice in place. No plant material should be placed in the dumpster.

Timers on Soaker Hoses

Right now, the garden does not allow timers on hoses. Some gardeners have requested we reevaluate the timers, as they may remove gardener error in forgetting to turn off soakers, and they would allow for timed watering at most effective times of day. Members brought up the problems with leaks that occurred in the past. Another member mentioned that the tools are more effective now; timers are of better quality. Also, it was mentioned that the VP would need to sign off on any timer set-up a gardener would like to use. Again, malfunction was expressed as a concern, as was the concern of the finite amount of plumbing connections we have at watering stations. A brief show of hands seemed to indicate a preference for no timers.

Vines on the Fence

Vines and stumps had to be removed before our new fence work could begin. Those gardeners who worked on this removal task reported it to be arduous. Vines made tree and stump removal from the fence more difficult. Some gardeners expressed strong opinions that they like the look of vines on the fence line. One gardener stated that we should give thought to what personality we want to show the community... a clean fence or one with vines. Some were of the opinion that the vines made it appear more junky. Another gardener expressed that the vines provide a type of shelter.

Khaki Weed

A reminder to all gardeners to pull it as you see it and attempt to slow it down. Khaki weed removal can count as the TSBVI service hour.

5. Call for Volunteers for Audit Committee

The garden is due for a financial audit and this cannot be done by the board treasurers. The request for a volunteer with a financial background went out. Please email Jim if you know of someone who can volunteer to help with this.

Treasurer's Report

The garden is doing well, and the plant sale was fantastic and profitable. We made more than we had hoped for. Our goal was 10 thousand, and we exceed this by 6 thousand.

Plot Coordinator's Report

We currently have 178 on the wait list, and this number has gone down a bit. The quarter plots remain the most in demand, and this is the size the garden has the fewest of. There was a reminder to gardeners that if they are giving up their plot to contact the Plot Coordinator or Zone Coordinator.

6. Elections - Secretary, Directors, Nominating Committee

The current election is taking place for secretary and for three directors. Those running for election were introduced in person or by proxy if they could not be present. Ila Falvey presented the slate. Running for reelection as Secretary: Kerry Drake. Running for 3 Director's positions: Iris Slevin, Juan Pedro Maestre, Mike Reed, and Kay McMurry. Members were notified that they could vote today by paper ballot or vote online for a week.

For the future Nominating Committee, the following people were nominated and elected by acclamation: Polly Porter, Steve Uecker, Shannon Cunningham, Matthew Johnston, and Marsha Riti.

Meeting Adjourned 11:49 p.m.