

Project Grow Board Minutes

June 9th, 2022

Zoom

Board members present:

Joe Schutte

W. Scott Richardson

Sharon Fay

Joanie Stovall

Dave Corsa

Dan Noble

Joet Reoma

also: Kirk Jones: Managing Director,

Absent:, Jesse Raudenbush, Royer Held, Marcella Trautmann

Meeting started at 7:10PM

May board minutes approved

Managing Director's Report (copied directly from the report with comments included in red)

Community Gardens

All sites tilled and open. A few spots have opened here and there as people have failed to start or dropped out for various reasons. I think all of these have been assigned to people from the waitlist or taken over by one or more other gardeners at the site for the season. This happens well into June. We heard about one at Hillside just the other day the gardener was given until the end of the week to finish.

West Park

Joet and Joe moved all the fencing material from Airport to West Park and Joanie and I worked with the gardeners to put up the fence on May 22nd. Site Coordinator Dom has left grad school and now intends to stay in the area working for a while which should help the site run better.

Clague Update

The gardeners responded to the action request to remove any items on the outside of the plots. There was some migration of those items into the plots but a conversation with that gardener helped to understand why and the need to remove as much as possible. The message to remove household items (broken lawn chair and old sponge mops as gates, cabinet doors as raised beds, broken aquariums for seed starting) will need to continue.

A work day on Saturday, June 4 was successful in beginning to remove the large amount of undergrowth around the trees and two large buckthorns that were closest to the garden. The AAPS grounds crew will/has removed the two large brush piles and a large pile of branch poles found under the various trees. There is still work to be done and the school continues to be willing to remove what we clear out. About 6 plastic bags of garden waste were found under the trees (squash/tomato/melon vines and other natural garden waste). These were mixed in with other trash both from the garden and the school. Poison ivy was also discovered growing under the cottonwood. There are still hoses, study branch poles and trash under the pine tree. The hoses and poles are neatly incorporated into the trunk of the tree. One plot was found to be overgrown with a trellis that was falling down. The gardener was notified that the plot was deemed abandoned. It was cleared out of plastics/debris, the trellis removed, weed wacked, and mowed. The plot will be plowed and has been reassigned to a gardener on the waitlist.

In the process of working with the school to place a dumpster (not needed in the end), the school informed us that the entire perimeter of the school building will be fenced during construction making the water spigot unavailable for the summer. A reasonable solution may be found in utilizing the corner fire hydrant across Bluett, a locking mechanism that will limit access to the hydrant and a scheduled effort by the site coordinator to refill the existing onsite water barrels on a weekly basis. If a second gardener can be recruited, the barrel refill could happen twice weekly. The Board will need to vote to approve this alternative so that the hydrant can be requested. Note: A2 has changed the hydrant process - it is now \$1000 deposit with application. Any fees (water, damage, etc) are deducted from the deposit with any remaining balance returned to the applicant.

The site coordinator would like the Board to consider installing a fence around the perimeter of the garden site. Incorporated in to an action plan that would restake the plots and require the gardeners to remove all materials from the site in the fall, this plan seeks to reset all plot sizes to be equitable, remove all household/plastic materials from the site at the end of the season and establish a consistent appearance that can't unilaterally expand beyond its boundaries. There doesn't seem to be any deer pressure at this site, so a fence similar in height and materials to the West Park fence would suffice. The site would continue to be a perennial but with posted guidelines that will be enforced. It could be considered how to incorporate language into the rental agreement that allows a Project Grow Site Coordinator to remove prohibited items or Project Grow materials (hoses/tools) after notice and a grace period. The fencing is intended to be permanent, thus the ongoing water issues need to be discussed.

Lots of discussion about the situation there. Kirk & Joanie will measure & gather more information about the fence & plot sizes for future consideration.

County Farm

The Torch. We learned that the use of a garden torch in the City is not allowed except by permit through the Fire Marshal. It is also strictly prohibited on County property. After the gardener who had requested using the torch did so, several perennial gardeners expressed concern to the County and the A2 Fire Department. Thomas Power, Maintenance Superintendent for Washtenaw County Parks called Joanie to discuss the situation and followed up with an email (thread included). The gardener's contact information was shared, the gardener given a heads up on a possible call from the Fire Marshall and the use of the torch. To date, the Fire Marshall has not contacted the gardener and the County is not certain he will. The reporting gardeners contacted PG (Kirk and Joanie) to ask about the practice after they made their complaints but did not communicate to PG that any complaints had been made. One of the reporting gardeners was onsite at the time the new gardener was using the torch and was reported to be hostile to the new gardener for about an

hour. Another reporting gardener was not onsite at the time (per email thread) and conversation with Kirk.

Josef Guberman/ Plot. Plot 34. Several letters, calls via English and Russian and a deadline of May 31 to renew were unsuccessful. A Russian speaking County Farm gardener (Masha) called several times (from Belarus) to communicate the need to register by sending a check or consider the offer of several Discovery beds for free this year. The gardener decided to renew the perennial plot and said they would send the check immediately (May 11) but the check was not received by the deadline of May 31. The plot will be cleared this summer with the help of several gardeners and the site coordinators and prepped for reassignment as a perennial or consideration as an annual.

A workday will be scheduled to clear the plot.

Plant Sale

All our work paid off and the plant sale was very successful. We started with about 3400 plants and half were sold as advance orders before we started at 10am on May 14th. By 11am, we had 446 left and when we ended the sale at 2pm we had 133 left. These were given away to volunteers.

Holding the sale in mid-May rather than the day before Mother's Day is better for a number of reasons and we will continue to do that in the future.

The Cooperative at Dawn Farm and Dawn Farm sold enough strawberries, mushroom logs, dahlias and cannas to make it worthwhile.

Board Terms

Anyone can know which board terms are expiring by looking at Board Terms on Drive.

Right now we have 10 board members listed with their terms in bold below:

2021-2024

Jesse

Sharon

Bilge - resigned

Scott

2020-2023

Dan N.

Dave

Joet

Joe

2019-2022

Eric - resigned

Royer

Joanie

Beth - resigned

Marcella was appointed to fill out a term, but we didn't specify whether it was - Bilge's 2021-2024 or Eric or Beth's 2019-2022. It is probably simplest if Marcella is appointed to Bilge's empty spot, since the other two are expiring this fall anyway. That appointment needs to be confirmed this fall. **Marcella is board member until 2024.**

In addition to confirming Marcella's appointment, we have 4 positions expiring in the - Eric (empty), Royer, Joanie and Beth (empty).

Joanie will be stepping into my non-voting board position on January 1st.

Treasurer's Report

As of May 31:

PayPal \$17,747.13 (mostly plot rentals)

Stripe \$7,679.22 (plant sale presales)

Vanguard Mutual Funds \$134,061

Lake Trust checking \$9,183.27

Lake Trust Savings \$514.26

Petty Cash (cash box) \$1,907

Charles Richie donated \$2000, which is planned to be matched with the Jack Johnson fund raising event.

Dave will be crunching numbers & will have more details next month. Dan reported the fence project is nearly complete & all materials have been purchased.

50th Anniversary

Two major events, potluck & 50th anniversary. The Gardener's Potluck 7/10/22 of July Shelter B. \$600 for food & music. The \$600 was approved by the board. A survey will be sent out to sign up for what they are food they are bringing.

The 50th Anniversary, lots of advertisement has already gone out. Two food trucks are confirmed. We are looking for two more food trucks to attend. Pittsfield Open Band payment of \$250 was approved.

Leslie garden site needs a lot of work. We are looking for volunteers to help with the cleanup. The site coordinators will arrange the dates & make the request for volunteers.

Education Committee

IPM class is going to be rescheduled to 6/23/22.

Joet & Royer do plan to offer more classes.

Master Composter class received an award from

Freeman Environmental Center is still hoping to start a garden on their site.

Status of D&O insurance

We've been approved for the insurance & the \$590 bill has been paid,

More in County Farm

Use of the flame torch did end up with an altercation that escalated to level with some rude language. It was decided that there would be a request for civility in the newsletter. Joanie will compose it & Kirk will run it by the board.

Multiple Plot Policy

It was decided that new gardeners have the priority. We will polish the language later.

Availability of Board Meeting Minutes to all PG Members/Gardeners

Kirk will look into putting the PDFs of the minutes on the website.

Vestegaard Update

Vestegaard has successfully won the bid. Mike is asking if we would be interested in a tour on the new farm. The New Site Committee will be asked to look into setting up the tour.

UM School of Information Project to catalogue PG Historical Archive

They will start the project in the Fall.

Volunteer Jack Johnson Concert Tickets (7/2/22, Pine Knob) and Event Briefing

We will have two tickets to give away & it was decided to give them to 2 volunteers from the plant sale that say they will use them.

Printing of Signs Discouraging the public from entering or disturbing gardens

Sharon said once she gets the number of signs, she will take care of getting the signs.

Ann Arbor's Green Fair

PG will be participating in a joint table with the Ann Arbor Commons Organization. Basically dropping off our brochure.

Garden Tours

Every other Saturday.

Meeting ended at 9:05 PM