

Project Grow Board Minutes

August 11th, 2022

Zoom

Board members present:

Joanie Stovall

Royer Held

Joe Schutte

W. Scott Richardson

Sharon Fay

Dave Corsa

Dan Noble

Marcella Trautmann

Joet Reoma

also: Kirk Jones: Managing Director,

Absent: Jesse Raudenbush

Meeting started at 7:06PM

July board meeting minutes approved

Manager Director Report (comments in red) Community Gardens

County Farm Work

I spent about 3 hours removing a fence and honey locust trees between plot A2 and Cat Adams's Garden. There is a long background to this and I can share it at the meeting if anyone wants to know. Basically, I had the time, the tools and the experience to do this and saw it as a way to permanently resolve a problem.

Joanie and I each spent about 3 hours clearing plot 29A. We have a couple of people interested in tending late season gardens and are in the process of determining commitment.

Training with Joanie

Over the past couple months Joanie has picked up some of the routine work I did such as checking our voicemail and the PO box. Joanie has also been:

Following up on reassignments and finding users for abandoned plots. This has mostly been at County Farm, but there was one at Ellsworth. Acted as point person for meetings with CSS about some safety concerns. A group from PG will be meeting with CSS soon.

CSS Meeting

Royer, Deb Nystrom, Caitlin Potere and Joanie Stovall met with Laurie Wilcox, Operations Director at CSS to relay the 7/4 experience Caitlin had in the CSS parking lot and discuss a couple of ways security at the site could be improved for everyone involved. The options presented were:

- Install a fence (approx 2 feet long) from the PG Shed to the CSS dumpster shed to remove a blind cut through that can catch people unaware due to the tight spacing between the two tall features
They said no to this.
- Install a fence (approx 5 feet long) between the woods that border the garden site and the garden fencing to stop cut through pedestrian traffic to/from Golfside
- Install several “Area Under Surveillance” signs to make all visitors aware of the ongoing video surveillance in the parking lot.

Laurie explained that the person who had accosted Caitlin in the parking lot was known to CSS and the surrounding businesses. He was a previous client of CSS seeking the help of a social worker that no longer worked at the building and has a couple of challenges including schizophrenia. The Pittsfield police are regularly visiting the parking lots of the surrounding buildings to make sure he can be redirected if found. Regarding the options presented, she advised:

- Because of the cooperative nature of the CSS spaces, she could not approve any fencing that removed access to passersby - the fencing would remove shortcuts for bicyclists and pedestrians that move between Dawn Farms offices on Golfside, and their clients and neighboring residences (apartments). It sounds like they are aware of the people moving through their spaces. They definitely consider these spaces communal.

- She is onboard with the installation of several “Area Under Surveillance” signs. CSS may have several and will handle the installation. We offered the idea of placing a convex mirror at the shed to illuminate any passersby in that tight space which she agreed would be helpful to all involved. Project Grow will source and install the mirror on the shed. If there is any vandalism to it, the site coordinator will let us know.

We will reconnect in a week or two to follow up on the installation of the above measures.

Deb also asked if a CSS gardener that had taken over an abandoned space could place a cooler under the building overhang to house produce free for the taking. While Laurie really appreciated the idea and generosity, she did not want to do anything to encourage additional gathering/loitering at the building after hours and asked that the harvest be directed to Food Gatherers, who is a partner of theirs thus the food would find its way to clients at CSS.

Plant Sale

We ordered and received seed for Cobalt Dreams delphiniums from New Zealand Delphiniums, and will be offering them next year at the plant sale. We may offer some other flowers if we can find good options. People working the swag table said quite a few shoppers asked about flowers last year. I spent a few hours today clearing weeds in the hoop house. Even though we cover all of the interior with a tarp, bindweed, thistles and other weeds grow on the edges. With the heat inside, some of them reach 6-8 feet! Some discussion about the hoop house. Kirk says the plastic will hold up for years. But should be replaced when the base boards need to be replaced. Kirk believes the hoop house will be fine for 2023.

We did talk about Jacob at Clague, he did respond to emails & does not seem to need help.

Treasurer's Report

Lake Trust Credit Union \$6400

PayPal. \$7200

Vanguard Mutual Funds about \$120,000

50th Anniversary Committee

Scott gave us a comprehensive report on the ongoing plans, schedules, included speakers, food trucks, & entertainment. He also explained the marketing that's been happening. We have no idea how many people will attend the event.

Joanie requested that we get a new banner & the board approved.

Scott reported we have 16 volunteers. He also explained that we have a plan for the parking.

Tech Committee

Joanie reported problems uploading the Wordpress files & had to get the site reset. She suspects there is a problem with the files. She said she will be working on it again soon. Joanie is suggesting we source an outside designer to determine costs and a delivery timeline.

New Sites

A few board members & Kirk visited Renz farm, a location that will likely have a new garden site in the future. We had staked out a square acre. Mike V. happened to show up & told us it won't be square but 65 feet wide, headed south & use up an acre. Once Mike has more plans on the layout of his operation there, we will revisit this.

Dispute Resolution Process

Royer reported that the concerned parties have met. We are waiting to hear from Germain.

Tomato Tasting Concerns

There are some concerns if there is a massive crowd, we may not have enough tomatoes. Also, a lot of discussion about marking the plant sale.

Changes to the Bylaws

Note: changes to bylaws must be sent out in September for Annual Meeting! Royer attached the draft with the agenda. Please review & send any feedback soon. We need this completed before the next meeting.

Meeting ended at 8:26PM

