

**Westbury Community Garden
General Meeting Board Minutes
May 16, 2023
6:32 – 7:35 PM via Zoom**

In attendance, Debbie Gordon, Dorthy Smith, Kat Elder, Wayne Slaikeu, Virginia Livingston, Ray Sher, Gary Edmondson, Betina Wolfowicz, Hazel Potvin, Prasad George, Tracey Schreiber and Marcia Hartman

- I. Call to order by the President, Debbie Gordon.
- II. **Old Business** - A motion was made to approve the April, minutes by Ray Sher and seconded by Marcia Hartman. The motion was approved.
- III. A motion was made by Debbie Gordon to approve the April Treasurer's report which included a 4% APY Interest rate for a 6-month CD with Chase Bank, Monies were from WAIC's operating account and WCG for \$100,0000, renewal is October 26, 2023. The interest will be added to the total on October 26, 2023 and we will decide at that time if we wish to renew the CD. The motion was approved by a show of hands.
- IV. **New Business – Isaac Spencer will be our new Orchard Committee Chair.**

Weed letter was sent out to D10. The bed must be clean by May 24.

Beds E9 and E11 – The walls are bowing out. Franco Posa will work on redoing these beds. He will work on rebuilding E11 sometime this month (May). Thursday soil will be delivered. Low grade soil mix will be on the bottom and Premium soil mix on the top (6 yards). We are using Al-Co Landscape Supply, 14022 S. Gessner Road, Missouri City, Texas 77089. The soil will be delivered free since we are a non-profit. The tarps for the soil are in the compost bin. Blocks will be delivered on Friday as close to E11 as we can get; along with T-posts, and cap blocks.

Work Day May 20 – Work on Pollinator Bed (B1) new compost. Volunteers need to work in all Butterfly beds, in preparation for upcoming Tomato Tasting event; cleanup of trash, aisles, weeding and removing loose cardboard.

July 14, 2023 – Betina Wolfowicz - A high school, Breakthrough Houston, may come to volunteer for 2 hours. Virginia Livingston helped Betina thin the trees. A woman in a wheel chair felt insulted that the garden was not wheelchair accessible. We only have wheelchair accessibility up to the pavilion.

The dead Chinese Tallow trees will be removed by the Houston Parks Department. Our property is owned by the City of Houston. We will remove the ones by the picnic table on the east side. Alan Potvin will help with their

removable. The Forest Service might help with this too. If you need trees removed call 311.

We will have the east field mowed around the sunflower maze and the milkweed there. Texas Tractor has mowed the field before. It was mentioned that we might look into purchasing a garden tractor. Somewhere in the range of \$2,500 to \$3,000 or renting one from Houston Tool Bank might be an option. Later decided we didn't have the space to store it and there was also the risk of someone stealing it.

Bob Randall's will offer his book to WCG for \$35.00. It currently is selling at South West Fertilizer for \$49.99.

Tomato Tasting, June 3, 2023 – Do not refrigerate your tomatoes. We will supply Fig trees for the drawing. Tickets are \$1 each or 12 for \$10. Hazel Potvin and Julie Fordes will provide regular tables. We still need a long table (6 ft). Marcia Hartman has one that she will bring. Julies Fordes will do name tags with tomatoes on them.

Tent will be setup near the cistern for the fish bowl drawing.

WAIC with HPD will discuss the fences and crime tomorrow at their meeting. I (Debbie Gordon) plan to attend and will report back at our June Garden meeting.

Bishop McCarthy with HPD – Will remove the motor home on the east side of the property this week.

V. Reports

A. Bee Committee Report – Steve Ewing - May 16, 2023

- We now have another colony of bees in the yellow swarm box at the garden. However, there is “No Vacancy” in our apiary or at the Shamba Ya Amani apiary. We will give this colony to a beekeeper friend.
- It is looking like we will be harvesting honey this summer!! Becky is working on a design for the jar label. We need to decide if we are going to harvest just honey or also cut comb. Pretty exciting!!
- It appears that some of our colonies swarmed, leaving us with fewer bees in the hives. We did not pick up on the signs that the bees were about to swarm in time to react.
- I made a presentation about bees to a 2nd grade class at Horn Elementary, which was a lot of fun. A lot of excitement and good questions from the kiddos. Becky and I will be making a presentation to her class in Tomball on Monday, May 15.

B. Community Outreach & Fundraising Report – Debbie Gordon – May 16, 2023

Community Outreach

- We had a request to do a Volunteer Day/Class for clients at The Menninger Clinic's Gathering Place. Still need to reply and get details.
- Amy Hermann will represent WCG teaching garden topics at a 6-week summer camp for preschoolers (one hour/week) for Ahavah365 Incorporated in Stafford.
- Next Event
 - Tomato Tasting **June 3, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM**
 - Prep begins at **8:00 AM**
 - Scorecard price increase to \$15
 - Fishbowl drawings – need more non-plant donations; we have lots of plant donations.
 - Still need volunteers
 - 3 more tomato preppers (have 2)
 - 1 more for fishbowl set up (have 1)
 - 1 more for registration table (have 1)
 - Table and chair setup – have 1

Fundraising

Grant applications

- AARP Community Challenge – submitted; Awards are announced mid-May. \$46,000 for raised beds on E row and driveway/parking segment 1. Have not heard the results yet.
- Constellation Energy Community Grant - \$500
Application prepared by Matthew Simon has been reviewed and is ready to submit this month.

Donations

- Thanks to Michael Trachtenberg (Betina's son-in-law) for his \$500 donation to WCG that was matched by his employer, CenterPoint Energy.
- Tarek Al-Romani with Total Energies is donating the cost of materials (almost \$1000) for one elevated bed conversion and the volunteer labor to do the build. E11 will be built on May 20.
 - Blocks will be delivered by Lowe's on May 19. Betsy will meet the driver to make sure the materials are put near E11.
 - Soil delivery for E9 and E11 will also be this week.
 - Mike will be removing plants from the south/high end that they wish to retain. All other plants from the south end will be removed. We will build the low end but will try not to disturb plants until they are removed for the fall season. Then soil will be added to the low end.

C. Compost Report – Hazel Potvin – May 16, 2023

We continue to receive kitchen waste and continue to turn the pile. The primary turner is Betina with help from various gardeners who want to find out more about the process. It really does take two people to turn the pile because the kitchen waste barrel needs to be emptied, coffee grounds should be added and leaves need to top off the pile. In addition, the pile needs to be watered as the layers are made.

We are putting the coffee grounds in trash cans which have drainage holes in them. We get so many it is pretty hard to put enough in the piles and reduce the supply. A big challenge is to keep the outside of the cages tidy.

We have an idea for better gates between the bins. We hope to find time to make a model and try it out. We need an easier way to open the divider between the bins to turn them. We saw the idea when we visited the Fort Bend AgriLife Center.

Hazel, Betina, Rich and George

D. Membership Committee Report – Ray Sher – May 16, 2023

1. All beds are occupied except for E9 which will be elevated.
2. Two potential members have inquired but have not responded to the standard membership letter that we send out.
3. The community garden group needs an additional member starting in June.

E. Pocket Prairie – Hazel Potvin – May 16, 2023

We could list the wide variety of flowers in bloom in the prairie for the benefit of pollinators. I think there would be well over 100. Our prairie is a good source for the honey bees both from the apiary and for any bees that are searching. Please try to look at the scene as you drive by.

Now it is very yellow with a huge variety of blooms. Gradually the scene will change as these plants go to seed and the liatris bloom. Everything will be taller and grasses will be more prominent. We see change every year. We discover new plants every season. If you are interested in wildflowers and grasses, the pocket prairie is well worth regular visits.

Hazel and Noreen.

F. Specialty Garden Report – Kat Elder – May 16, 2023

At the Earth Day workday 4-22-23 (See Betina Wolfowitz Report & my Photos in separate emails), the weather was perfect & I had great volunteer help in the Butterfly Beds, Apiary Pollinator Bed & Orchards.

Gardeners attending & working with me & the outside volunteers included Shelly & Roy Johnson, Wayne Slaikeu, Betina Wolfowitz, Rich Keogh, Isaac Spencer, Don Finley & Steve Goldberg. Isaac completed long overdue pruning deadwood/shaping our South Orchard Pomegranates. Our 2022 Earth Day Ohio State Alumni Assoc group led by John again provided fantastic help with many heavy tasks & unwanted tree removals.

Franco Posa, Mike Blaha, Martha Huebel & Andy Wilhoit were among those working on constructing the E9 Elevated bed.

Julie Fordes was happy to have White Beebalm for herbal tea from B1 Pollinator Collection. I will be continuing to remove it, growing to excess.

I would love to give it to gardeners for home gardens or tea before it forms seeds. Please spread the word.

I've renewed the WCG annual Purple Martin Conservation Assoc. Membership. Will be completing the NWF membership application (we are more than qualified) as soon as I have time. Perhaps need to renew NABA membership also Franco Posa and Mike Blaha removed invasive European starling eggs from SE purple Martin house. We had seen the starling enter and exit numerous times.

Kat Elder
Chairman, Specialty Gardens Committee.

G. Site Maintenance Report – Wayne Slaikeu – May 16, 2023

Since the Tomato Tasting Event is only a little over 2 weeks away, we need to inform gardeners to get their beds and aisles in good shape. I saw weedy aisles, plants blocking aisles, and what really looks bad, is uncovered cardboard in several aisles. The cardboard not only looks bad, but it is a dangerous tripping hazard. Bare uncovered rubber is slippery and dangerous as well as thin small leaf cardboard coverings. We need to think about buying some mulch if we cannot get some free mulch. We have too many aisles that need mulch.

In the building of the E-9 bed, all the small 8-inch blocks were moved to the North of shed 2. Not a good place for them and we need to plan on what to do with them.

Grapes near the North Fence are being picked at a fast rate by apartment people using trail to the store.

Wayne Slaikeu
Site Maintenance Committee Chairman

H. Treasurer's Report – Marcia Hartman – May 16, 2023

Westbury Community Garden

Profit and Loss YTD Comparison

April 2023

	TOTAL	
	APR 2023	JAN - APR, 2023 (YTD)
Income		
Garden Income		
Donations to WCG		1,690.15
Fundraising	1,100.00	12,602.97
Garden rental	77.00	5,219.20
Volunteer Hours Paid		572.00
Total Garden Income	1,177.00	20,084.32
Total Income	\$1,177.00	\$20,084.32
GROSS PROFIT	\$1,177.00	\$20,084.32
Expenses		
Garden Operations		
Fundraising Expenses		1,641.14
Garbage/Trash/Dumpster	66.22	295.15
Garden printing, copying		10.01
Garden Supplies	21.38	49.47
IT	306.62	781.82
Legal/Professional/Bank Fees		
Fees-Stripe		107.56
Paypal Fees	6.60	140.49
Total Legal/Professional/Bank Fees	6.60	248.05
Memberships, dues	100.00	100.00
Portapotty	170.01	238.59
Raised Bed Project	504.66	671.30
Seeds	-395.50	-502.50
Site Maintenance		357.10
Soil sales to gardeners	0.00	-984.50
Soil, Mulch, Fertilizer		785.00
Square Fees		17.31
Water		239.76
Total Garden Operations	779.99	3,947.70
Total Expenses	\$779.99	\$3,947.70
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$397.01	\$16,136.62
NET INCOME	\$397.01	\$16,136.62

Bank Balances at 5/15/2023:

WCG Operating Acct \$33,136.36
Jumbo CD-WCG portion \$75,000.00

Jumbo CD combined \$75,000 from WCG with \$25,000 from WAIC. Matures 10/26/2023 at 4% APY.

I. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Betina Wolfowicz – May 16, 2023

The weather was to live for, 63°F early morning and in the low 70* when we left the garden. A nice breeze, sun and transparent blue sky. Kat came early, took attendance and got the tools ready. I could not arrive before 8:00 but luckily Amy Hermann was already prepared to lead composting. We had 2 or 3 independent volunteers who worked with her and finished the job in one hour! I first helped Franco, his Kincaid student, volunteers and Eve from C5 weeded E9 to get it ready for buildup. Franco continued his work with Kincaid and some Ohio State Alumni. Mike and Steve also helped. They finished building the elevated bed by 11:00. I worked on the North 40 with 2 independent volunteers, we weeded and added fresh mulch. Rick Keogh and Wayne fixed the rubber borders on the trees, pruned, and dealt with 2 dead trees. Kat worked on the pollination gardens and the front orchards

with Ohio State. She got help from Shelly and Roy. I worked with 4 volunteers from Casa Sunzal on the fence/ apiary/ newest pollination gardens. We removed ragweed, primroses and Bermuda grass and covered with dry leaves. A lot was accomplished and the jobs were finished before 12:00 p.m.

VI. Meeting Adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Dorthy Smith – WCG Secretary