

Westbury Community Garden
General Meeting - Board Minutes
March 21, 2023
6:30 – 7:17 P.M.
(Zoom Meeting)

In attendance, Wayne Slaikeu, Ray Sher, Gary Edmondson, Debbie Gordon, Dorthy Smith, Steve Goldberg, Marcia Hartman, Virginia Livingston, Amy Herman, Mary Thomas, Prasad George, Dr. Maisha Tianuru, Donna Meyer and Hazel Potvin,

- I. Meeting called to order by the President, Debbie Gordon.
- II. Motion to approve the February minutes was made by Ray Sher and seconded by Wayne Slaikeu. Motion was passed.
- III. Motion to approve the February Treasure's report was made by Wayne Slaikeu and seconded by Gary Edmondson. Motion was passed.
- IV. Motion was made by Debbie Gordon and seconded by Ray Sher to plant the Vitex tree, donated by Kat Elder, by the Apiary. Motion was passed.
- V. Old Business – Marcia Hartman was unable to obtain a 90 CD from Chase Bank since it was discovered the correct signatures were not on the account. The CD is **on hold** until all signatures can be obtained.

New changes to the garden rules have been published to the garden website under Documents, Garden Rules Revised 2-2023. These changes are:

1. That sunflowers both wild and hybrid, mint, trees and blackberries are not to be planted in allotment beds and cosmos are strongly discouraged.
 2. Easily seeding vegetable and flowers must be removed from beds before they form seeds, berries or flowers i.e., Malabar spinach, lamb's quarter, amaranth, and comfrey.
- VI. New Business - I (Debbie Gordon) would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped with working on the Founder's Breakfast. There are many. Thank you for taking part in this event.

Kiosk – The plexiglass will be replaced before the Founder's Breakfast on March 25, 2023. Don Finley will be in charge of keeping the information in the kiosk up to date.

First Founder's Breakfast March 25, 2023 – I estimated that the cost for the Founder's breakfast will be \$1,500.00. I also estimated that it would earn the garden \$4,000.00. We currently have \$5,000.00 in donations and will go higher since we have a couple of pending donations. The value of the auction items is \$2,500. Types of payment we will accept are cash, check or credit card. We have 6 tables that seat 8 people at each table, A long table outside the pavilion and a long table over by the butterfly garden for drinks. We will have two tents, a table for auction items and one for books. The auction will close at 11:30 a.m. We have 8 donors who will not attend and 34 who will attend plus 14 volunteers.

Thank you to: Bob White – 30 books, Central Market, Costco Farmer's Defense Fund Fruit Tree Planting Association – Tina Gleave, Etsy Artist, Silk Squirrel, HEB, Microlife, Niko Microlite Greek and American Café, Panera Bread, West University Café, REI Co op Houston, Smart Pots, Southwest Fertilizer, Tito's handmade vodka, Urban Harvest, Wild Birds Unlimited, and Westbury Area Improvement Corporation.

AARP – At the end of May we find out if we have received a grant.

Tomato Tasting will occur June 3, 2023.

The Herb Class was outstanding.

Hazel Potvin will give a tour of the Prairie soon.

Buckets of compost are available for gardeners now.

Vermiculture Class to be offered.

Reports

A. Bee Committee Report – Steve Ewing – March 21, 2023

- Ashton Macklin has joined us to work with the bees
- We have given sugar syrup to all of the hives except for Tsarina, who has plenty of resources (honey, nectar and pollen). We will continue to feed those other four hives until the flowers are in full bloom and we see the bees have the needed resources
- We have our first swarm in the yellow swarm box in the tree next to the dumpster. We will let them settle in for about two weeks then move them to a small hive (nuc) in the apiary
- I am submitting a request to plant Kat's vitex tree in place of the lemon and holly trees by the apiary that were killed in the frost.

The Apiary Garden report - Kat Elder out of town – no report.

B. Community Outreach & Fundraising Report – Debbie Gordon – March 21, 2023

Community Outreach

- Presentation to REI store (March)
- Interview with Urban Harvest's Rice U intern project (March)
- Interview with Grad student at U of H (March)
- Founders' Breakfast in the Garden **March 25**
 - Tables, chairs, tents, bar, A/V equipment – Pick up Friday, March 24
 - Setup 7:30 – 9:00 AM
- Silent Auction – 9:30 – 11:30 (Open to the public; need not be a donor.)
 - Donors – La Madeleine breakfast buffet
 - Shrub bar
 - Tear down 12:30 – 1:30
 - In-Kind Donations
 - Panera Bread – coffee and condiments
 - San Jac Environmental/MicroLife
 - Southwest Fertilizer
 - Johnny's Seeds
 - Urban Harvest
 - Farm Dirt
 - Wild Birds Unlimited
 - Fruit Tree Planting Foundation
 - REI
 - Central Market
 - Tito's Handmade Vodka
 - Costco
 - HEB
 - Etsy Silk Artist, Tina Gleave
 - Smart Pots
 - Farmers Defense
 - Julie Fordes
 - Debbie Lancaster
 - Debbie Gordon
 - Ray Sher and Gary Edmondson
 - Books and yard art from former WCG member, Bob White

- Breakfast Reservations and Donations
 - 30 donor reservations
 - 14 volunteers
 - Over \$4500 donated
 - Expenses - \$1641
- Next Event
 - Tomato Tasting **June 3**

Fundraising

Large grant applications

- Clif Family Foundation - Rejected
- AARP Community Challenge – submitted; Katharine Jager did an excellent job on the application; Awards are announced mid-May. \$46,000 for raised beds on E row and driveway/parking segment 1.

C. Compost Report – Hazel Potvin and Compost Team – March 21, 2023

The composting is coming along fine. We have made buckets of homemade compost available for any gardener who would like some for their garden. We just want the buckets back. The white ones are on loan from a member of the Bouquettes Garden Club. I will be asking for their return.

We are getting a good supply of kitchen waste and have plenty of leaves thanks to George Rejsek. Soon we will be using freshly mown grass. I am trying to get the coffee grounds into the compost piles. Ross Asher brings a regular delivery. I am taking the grounds out of the black bags and storing them in containers that drain. That makes the bags lighter.

Please don't use or let anyone use that area on the east end of the compost bins as a dumping place. Cardboard needs to go in the shed and trash needs to go into the dumpster. I threw away a lot of damaged old plastic pots and soda cans. I like the area to look tidy.

Amy Hermann graciously helped several times now with turning the compost. Today a young man from Bellaire HS helped and made the job go quickly. I think Amy has joined the compost team.

D. Membership Committee Report – Ray Sher – March 21, 2023

1. All garden beds are assigned to members.
2. We are communicating with members who need to plant this spring in order to adhere to the rule that beds need to be planted at least 3 of the 4 seasons.
3. Shari and Oscar are looking for someone to join their C5 group. Diane King was going to join them, but she bowed out.

4. Fliers have been printed to distribute, in order to attract people who might want to become members. Since we have no vacancies at this time, we will save the fliers for when they are needed.
5. A blurb appeared in the most recent Crier announcing that the community garden has beds available.
6. The fundraising committee is developing a questionnaire to collect demographic information. It will be included as a part of the Gardener's Agreement.

E. Pocket Prairie – Hazel Potvin – March 21, 2023

Noreen and I have been inspecting the prairie every week as the prairie starts to bloom again. Today I found lots of the *Asclepius viridis*, green milkweed. There are also many clumps of a tiny white amaryllis, whose common name is Crow poison but the scientific name is *Nothoscordum bivalve*. And so much more is out there.

We will offer a tour of the prairie after the Founder's Breakfast is behind us. It will be a pleasure to enjoy the many small flowers that are up and ready for pollination.

We also want to put up a couple of signs to mark that end of the WCG land. It could help in explaining why we keep that field open and unmoved and unplanted. I hope for a sign on Greencraig and on Dunlap. They will be an inexpensive but big enough to identify the area.

The area across the street from the prairie which was to be a housing development seems to be closing down. The retention pond is being filled in and the land graded.

F. Specialty Garden Report – Kat Elder – March 21, 2023 – Out of town – no report

G. Site Maintenance Report – Wayne Slaikeu – March 21, 2023

Kiosk – After purchasing Plexiglass, the framework was in bad shape and needed a professional to install it. Steve Goldberg found someone to install it, and was assured the Plexiglass would be installed by the Founder's Breakfast Event on 3/25.

Aisles - Have noticed some gardeners are trying to prevent weeds in their aisles by putting cardboard down and covering with leaves. However, although this is the way they are told to cover aisles, the cardboard being used is too small and floating above the leaves causing a tripping hazard. Also, if small leaves are used, the aisle becomes slippery and is also dangerous. Perhaps a class is needed on how to cover the aisles.

Theft – Still getting reports of thefts of vegetables. As the weather warms up and more vegetables become tempting, thefts will increase. With many new gardeners and unfamiliar faces, gardeners need to be told to report theft from their garden and report suspicious activity such as someone picking vegetables from more than one bed.

H. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Betina Wolfowicz – March 21, 2023 – No Report

**VII. Meeting Adjourned at 7:17 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by Dorothy Smith – WCG Secretary**