

# **Westbury Community Garden Board Zoom Meeting-January**

**January 20, 2026**

President Debbie Gordon called the Westbury Community Garden (WCG) Board meeting to order 6:32 on January 20, 2026. Those present or joining soon included Board members Debbie Gordon, Peggy Sweeney, Katharine Jager, and committee chairs and garden members, Kat Elder, Shannon Vitek, Hazel Potvin, Marcia Hartman, Julie Fordes, Wayne Slaikeu, Steve Goldberg, Betsy Longoria, Santel Frazier, Catherine Reimer, and Kelly Huang.

## **Old Business**

Debbie introduced a motion to approve the November 2025 minutes. The minutes were approved.

Debbie introduced a motion to approve the Financial Report from Marcia Hartman, which was also approved.

Debbie made a motion to install the security “cameras” that Kat had ordered- namely 4 solar “cameras” and 8 signs warning of surveillance. The motion was approved. Steve already installed one in the apiary. Debbie suggested contacting Don Finley for installation of the others.

In response to inquiries about getting DEI information on new members, Debbie emphasized that we need the data on date of birth, ethnicity, race, gender etc since it's essential for grant applications.

## **New Business**

Debbie welcomed new officers and chairs to the board. These include the following:

Vice-President- Katharine Jager

Secretary- Peggy Sweeney

Site Maintenance Chair- Don Finley

Orchard Committee Chair- Hazel Potvin

Membership Chair- Shannon Vitek

Also working on Membership- Nadia Kahn

## **Shed Interior Build-Out**

The total cost of the three new or relocated sheds(storage , containers) was \$8,102. The Super Neighborhood Project Grant provided \$7,000 and \$1,000 was left over from a previous grant. Expenses included 2 new sheds, relocating an old one, laying and relocating plumbing lines, Pod rental and pick up, shelving, hooks, cabinets, lighting, tools and pavers.(See New Shed Project,attached for more detail)

Many people worked on this effort. The temporary POD storage was done in a month while the sheds were emptied and the contents sorted.Marcia was instrumental in orchestrating the transition from old to new sheds. Ross Asher and Steve Goldberg helped with power tools to build out the sheds.Shelves and hooks were hung.Kat worked on organizing. Ray and Shelly assembled a new chest.

Future plans involve more spray painting of tools to facilitate storage and a reorganization of the compost area.

## Shed Pavers for E beds

We saved the former shed pavers for the raised E beds and plan to build steps of pavers and place pavers for approximately \$3,000.

## Bert Gonzalez Memorial

Bert was a founding member. We honored him Sunday at 1:00 with 2 trees and a bench in his memory. His daughter, Diana, and her family came. Debbie potted up some rosemary for remembrance from Bert's big rosemary bush.

## Winter Field Mowing

Hazel was pleased with the mowing of the prairie. We're experimenting with mowing twice a year; usually it's mowed once. Hazel says it needs de-littering.

## Volunteers: MLK Day of Service

We had a surprisingly large turnout for the MLK Day of Service with volunteers from The Junior League Houston, Enterprise Rental Cars, TSU dancers, individuals and probationers. Waivers attest to 41 volunteers. We got a lot done.

## School Field Trip

St. John's , with which Franco Posa(D9) is affiliated, will bring 35 students on February 6 from 9:00 to 11:00. These are highschoolers, who will work in the garden.

## Classes and Events

Debbie Gordon and Julie Fordes (Education Chair) looked ahead to schedule classes and events for the upcoming season. These begin with a couple of tomato growing classes in February and an herb focused lesson in March. Julie made a flyer (attached) and will post these at senior centers, churches and other community centers. Flyers also went to the Herb Society. Julie is also talking with a nutritionist with Agrilife/County Extension Office about teaching an 8 week nutrition course.

## Outreach

Brazos Towers and Harris County Senior Center- Debbie gave Virginia Livingston, a resident at Brazos Towers, the Classes and Events Flyer to post. She expressed interest in residents taking a garden tour.

Rodney Rogers, Program Director for Precinct I, also got the Classes and Events information

Debbie forwarded class/event information to Brian Pendleton, who is in charge of constituent communications for Precinct 4.

Debbie also sent the Classes and Events flyer to the (Westbury) Crier.

Julie questioned possible interest from local churches and schools. She reported that the local library does not have a community posting board and suggested passing out postcard sized class schedules at the upcoming Tomato Tasting and making a list of possible places that might be interested in our class offerings. Some suggestions follow:

Westbury High School Garden Club

Post Oak Apartments

Westbury Civic Club especially President Lindsay Pollock, who is active at Westbury Methodist.

St Thomas More Church

Bethel Church

Westbury Baptist Church

## Department of Neighborhood Reimbursements

We have expenses of \$8,100 for our new sheds. WAIC is a vendor with Neighborhood Reimbursements and our contact for getting money back.

## Braes Oak Management District Grant Application

We've gotten grants from the BOMD before. Debbie has reached out, applied and will try again to get a grant to fund some art for our shed.

## Harris County Precinct I Plan Together Partnership Application

This is a grant funded by the Toll Road Authority that is focused on mobility and will give grants for city property. We hope to qualify for a large mobility grant, possibly a matching grant. Anything with driveways, trails and paths qualifies for a mobility grant. We could break up our needs for our envisioned Master Plan and perhaps fund our new driveway with this grant since it will require flood mitigation even though we plan on permeable materials. Debbie and Katharine are working on this. The deadline is February 28. The grant is awarded in March and funds are received in June.

## Farm Dirt Compost Sale

Several people wanted the reduced priced compost even though there were some issues with delivery last year. Suggestions were to reach out to the League of Young Men for help and to plan it for before March 1, (Debbie sent a letter. It's February 20(Friday) and you need to order by February 14)

## Seed and Plant Sale at Bayou City Community Market, February 28.

We have scheduled a spot. Debbie has been concentrating on growing seeds from the Dwarf Tomato Society which specializes in small patio type tomatoes that are shade tolerant and very productive. Ray has also started growing these dwarf tomatoes. She hopes this gives us a niche since others sell regular seedlings. She also sees it as a great bridge for bringing food production to any patio.

## Levitt Music Festival, March 28, 11:00 AM-8:00PM

We will have a booth at this Willow Waterhole event and will need volunteers.

## Additional Remarks

Hazel wondered about stringing lights on Citrus. She's checking out a heater. We'll need volunteers to cover citrus Thursday at 10:00.

Hazel added that bags of leaves for compost should be left in bags at the north compost area.

Kat wonders about new garden t-shirts and our buckets disappearing. Debbie suggested checking at the bakery at HEB before noon on weekdays. They decorate cakes in the morning and have large buckets left over that you can take. They're slightly smaller than 5 gallons.

Debbie will check into new t-shirts.

Debbie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:42. It was seconded and the meeting closed.

## Addendum to the Agenda

Vote to cancel January 24th workday due to weather. We voted Yes.

Vote to make an additional payment to Long Films Studio for the tomato tasting video and our psa video. We voted Yes.

## Committee Reports Are Attached