

Westbury Community Garden Board Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:35. Members present were Catherine Chang, Cindy Chapman, Kat Elder, Don Finley, Julie Fordes, Steve Goldberg, Debbie Gordon, Marcia Hartman, Katharine Jagar, Hazel Potvin, Peggy Sweeney, Xiong Thao, and Shannon Vitek.

Old Business

The May minutes were approved by acclamation.

The May Treasurer's Report was approved by acclamation.

- Cindy Chapman says the dumpster price has risen with no notice from \$320 in May to \$403 in June.
We split this cost with PIF
Marcia Hartman offered to price options.
- Our CD was renewed at the same rate - 3.8. It earned \$750.
- Cindy Chapman will locate the April minutes.

Discussion of June 14, 2026 Security/Social Event

- Members offered positive feedback.
Debbie Gordon counted 27 gardeners, a couple of spouses and a few children.
A local constable, Officer Otto, also attended and Steve Goldberg showed him the garden area.
- Additional WCG lanyards, parking stickers and clipboard are in Shed 2.
Parking stickers go on the rear window, driver's side.
Marcia Hartman suggested looking for additional lanyards at the Platou office amongst other WCG belongings including the fishbowl raffle materials.
Julie Fordes volunteered to check Platou with additional volunteers and suggested a newsletter reminder of the lanyards and required parking stickers.
- Hazel Potvin wants access to the new bed charts. Steve Goldberg says they are on the WCG website and available to gardeners. Debbie reminded people that they can use their emails to access the website if they forgot their user name. Steve will talk to Hazel.
- Julie Fordes asked about enlarging the print on the website. Debbie explained the font was part of the website theme and not easily changed. Steve Goldman said he'd get with Julie.
Yes, Steve says there are available but rarely used analytics that enable us to track usage on our website.

New Business

Orchard Planning

- Hazel Potvin thanked Debbie Gordon for creating current orchard maps. She hopes to get maps on the WCG website. The maps and brochures will be distributed to orchard committee members.
- Shade from maturing mulberry trees and oaks will affect other orchard trees. Hazel suggested removing the large mulberry. Some members were opposed to removing any shade trees and suggested trimming or moving the small affected pear tree. Hazel will meet with the Orchard Committee and possibly Ray Sher and bring back a recommendation.
- Hazel would like the persimmon tree, planted in 2010 and ground down once, taken out by a tree service. There was debate over whether grinding the stump of the main tree would prevent its persistent spread or if all shoots and the stump had to be poisoned. Hazel will talk to Astro Tree Services about how to remove the invasive persimmon.
- Hazel sees a need to evaluate the orchard trees so that we're ready to buy when plants become available. The hard pears are doing well. She'd like more Tennesse pears, peaches and maybe a better pomegranate. There is more room in the front orchard. The figs were recently trimmed. Committee members are active and some are knowledgeable.

Other New Business

- Julie Fordes noted that we are due for a planning session this summer to address the next 6 months including Fall gardening activities. Debbie Gordon suggested asking committee chairs for their anticipated activities and said she would give her some upcoming set dates and that Betina Wolfowicz would also have some scheduled volunteer events.
Julie plans to schedule an Education Committee meeting.
- Shannon Vitek says she and Nadia Kahn will look over the Gardeners Agreement in preparation for a new year.
Debbie Gordon requested Kat Elder also look over the agreement for possible revisions including raising dues, which were raised two years ago and increasing the fee for missed volunteer hours.
- Hazel Potvin remarked that a blood test revealed that Betsy Longoria's husband's severe illness and hospitalization were caused by a bug bite, which Debbie Gordon determined to be rickettsia parkeri caused by the Gulf coast tick
- Cindy Chapman recommended a YouTube video on the Harris County Texas Master Gardeners website called Enemies in the Garden, about health risks and hazards in the garden. She will send the link.
- Kat Elder sent information to Hazel Potvin and Steve Ewing about optimal times for mowing-June or July after blooms go to seed and in the winter.
- Kat Elder says we have surplus Texas Coneflowers available to gardeners, who will dig them up. Peggy Sweeney will notify Doreen Gallevo from the local chapter of the NPSOT in case members want to dig them up from 7-11 on June 27th. Debbie will add it to the

newsletter and Hazel will alert her Willow Waterhole friend, who is preparing for a plant sale.

- Joanne Trainer is in the hospital.
- There will be a Juneteenth celebration of a historical marker at the Riceville Cemetery on Keegan's Bayou near Gessner at 10:00 on June 19.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43.

Committee Reports attached below.

Committee Reports

Compost and Volunteers-Betina Wolfowicz

Compost

The compost group is working hard to mix and water compost. Thanks to all contributors. It takes anywhere from 3 to 6 months to get a new batch. We have 3 bins going so hopefully we will get new batches every month!

Volunteers

Volunteers: this month volunteer day happens on June 27. This far we have 2 high schoolers registered. We also have a group of girl scouts who are coming to do some outdoor activities with us from 9:00 to 11:00. Peggy, Amy, Julie and myself are going to lead different modules. The girls go from 6 to 11 or 12 years old. If you want to participate, please join us by all means!

Education and Herb Committee-Julie Fordes

Education

We have not been active since our last report

Herbs

Things continue to go well with this committee. We have good turnouts for our workdays and a wonderful sense of community.

Fundraising and Outreach-Debbie Gordon

June 16, 2026

FUNDRAISING

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Submitted

Costco

\$250 requested for Volunteer Appreciation Week

Harris County Precinct 1

Inquired about status by email, but no answer yet

In Progress

BOMD

COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

WHOLE Foundation event at One Church @ Bethel's Family

Resiliency Fair

- o How to Build a Basic Home Garden

- o Tabletop demo with cinder blocks

- o Other raised bed materials

- o Planting guides

- o Soil and fertilizer calculator
- o Crop Yield Poster
- o MicroLife samples
- o Fall seed give-away
- o WCG Membership

Orchard and Pocket Prairie Reports- Hazel Potvin

Orchard Report, June 2

Current state of the orchard

- 1. pears are developing and the most are going to be the hard pears known as Tennesse. They are an Asian pear. I read in Dr. Randall's book that pears should be picked before they are ripe and allowed to ripen on their own. The Tennesse tree is in the North orchard. If you see any on the ground, take them home and see if you can get them to an edible state on the kitchen counter. My elderly friend used to cook them up and make pies with them in order to make sure they got watermelon.*
- 2. The figs are coming along. The birds are checking for ripeness. I recommend you use a clipper if you harvest any. There won't be many figs so share and share alike. I do know there is a good recipe online for candied figs which is well worth trying if you don't want to make poached figs.*
- 3. We will be having a work day this Saturday to weed and put labels on each tree. We have also developed a map of the orchards thanks to Debbie and Kat and it will be on the website.*

Hazel

Pocket Prairie Report, June 2026

Utility pole has been installed to bring power to coolers that PIFF wants to install.

The sink hole we had been struggling with for quite some time has now been filled in. Since the city did not think it was their responsibility, I think that Martha Castex Tatum's clean up team lead by Eric Overwine, was responsible for dumping soil and stone into the hole and repairing a bad tripping place for pedestrians.

We know the outdoors is in beautiful bloom especially with liatris and lots of partridge pea.

Once the liatris goes to seed, we will probably have a mowing done especially because the field in back of us to the Valero fence and around the apiary needs mowing.

Hazel and Noreen

Site Maintenance-Don Finley

Greetings, contained below is the activity report for June 2026.

- * Continued inspection of site hoses, faucet and backflow devices.
- * Completed hose tightening on bed C 9
- * Replaced backflow preventer on bed C 9
- * Tightened hose on bed E 9 and E 10
- * Tightened hose nozzle bed C 2
- * Replaced hose sprayer bed E5

Specialty Gardens and Purple Martin Leader-Kat Elder

Specialty Gardens:

All of our specialty gardens are in full bloom with various varieties of beautiful flowers. They still need volunteer maintenance with cutting back of bloomed cone flowers & and especially in killing invading persimmon and Hackberry trees & ragweed. I planned to pot up more excess cone flowers to raffle off at the Tomato Tasting , which was canceled. No where now to sell for fundraising; can only transplant elsewhere or give away.

Note: invasive Persimmon roots have now further extended underground roots into B2, back in C2. We have the target herbicide but I need helpers to cut & apply. Recommend adding Epsom Salt applications on the Orchard Persimmon to kill the roots.

I did donate and help plant some of our natives at the Company OnStage Theatre front Native Garden. Viewing that garden 6-12-26, some of the plantings are dormant, dead or dying, but the garden & deep swale remain attractive (no onsite watering source & inconsistent rain).

Without volunteer help, the N. Fence Apiary Pollinator bed is full of blooming natives, Frogfruit groundcover, an actively growing Pink Coral Vine & weeds. Must have help weeding, to enable transplant of more natives from the front BF beds & B1.

Westbury Community Garden is now a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat!!

I am awaiting the metal sign to arrive, which we'll place in the front entry garden.

Purple Martins:

We have Baby Birds in all 4 houses!!

Unsure how many but you'll notice LOTS of parental activity, chatter & songs as they hunt insects constantly to feed the chicks (can also hear them chirping at feeding in the nests). Please keep an eye out & let me know if you see problems at any houses.

And do whistle songs back with them- they like being with us!!

For anyone interested in learning more about these beautiful migratory American Songbirds, I'm leaving some Purple Martins Conservation Magazines in Shed 1 to peruse.

Kat Elder
SG Chair
Purple Martin Lead