Westbury Community Garden Board Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2026

VP Katharine Jager called the meeting to order at 6:33.Members present were Cindy Chapman, Kat Elder, Don Finley, Steve Goldberg, Marcia Hartman, Katharine Jager, Hazel Potvin, Peggy Sweeney, Shannon Vitek, and Betina Wolfowicz.

Old Business

August minutes were approved by acclamation.

August Treasurer's Report was approved by acclamation.

Cindy Chapman updated us on the following:

- The next round of city and neighborhood councils grants have come out. WCG used one last year. The deadline is August 10, (2027?)
- WCG got donations from Edith Smith and the Herb Society.
- WCG has a CD maturing in late September. WAIC holds 25% of it. Since we also just got our big reimbursement grant, we need to think of how we will handle these funds.
- More news on the Dumpster Issue-
  Marcia Hartman found a dumpster competitor that costs $113 monthly. Cindy sent a letter by certified mail to our current contractor to cancel our service. We will still be paying the $400 monthly penalty for 6 months for breaking the contract.
  Cindy learned that Westbury Methodist's dumpster cost about doubled to $900 a month. They are looking at charging the contractor for fraudulent practices.
  There are also questions about shady contract auto-renewals. Cindy received a letter from a law firm initiating a class action suit against our former vendor. Marcia says you're often automatically included in such suits. Cindy will check it out.

Cindy wondered if a WCG member was an attorney. Kat suggested Ross Ascher.
WCG needs to notify PIF of the price increase. They are in arrears with the old price payments.

Bed Abandonment Clarification

1. Courtesy emails, 10 day letter then ultimate letter with Clear the Bed fee
2. Final email from Membership with exit instructions; ask for waterkey; bill for Clear the Bed fee if needed.
3. Remove constituent from LGL; make “May Not Rejoin” note for those who did not pay or clear the bed.

Peggy Sweeney recommended omitting the courtesy letter or leaving it to the VP’s discretion since it was not mentioned in Garden Rules or Gardener’s Agreement and only makes more work for leadership.
Shannon Vitek wondered if Katharine got much response from letters.
Katharine said chiefly from the 10 day letter.
Peggy made a motion to drop the courtesy letter reminder. Kat Elder seconded it and it passed by vote.
Peggy also clarified with Shannon that only those who did not clear the bed or pay the fee were ineligible to join in the future.

New Business

Website,forms and documents update (Steve, Peggy, Shannon)

Steve Goldberg, Shannon and Peggy are working on forms for 2027. Peggy and Steve will discuss the edited forms now that we’ve approved changes.

National Night Out, October 6, 2026-Menu Ideas

Debbie Gordon applied for an HEB giftcard four weeks out from the event and learned HEB wants the application eight weeks in advance. She followed up with the person in charge and is still waiting to hear if we'll get the gift card.

She suggested rice and beans from Teohuatican, and prepared meat and fixings for tacos from HEB.

Katharine recalled that we had hot dogs, beans and s'mores in 2025. Other options are Potato Bar, Taco Bar …

Betina Wolfowicz asked if we had funds, and suggested waiting for Debbie's return with more information/details. Marcia suggested looking back at receipts to find out the cost of the event.Cindy wondered if we should go ahead and pass a motion giving Debbie authority to spend funds. Kat objected to all the organizing being left to Debbie.Bettina suggested that we'll help Debbie get items at HEB and if we don't have a gift card for hot dogs, we'll just get snacks. Katharine asked for a motion but when none came she clarified that we'd get more information and authorize Debbie to make purchases.

This conversation resurfaced later when Marcia did not find any receipts from the 2025 NNO event.Hazel Potvin asked about cooking hot dogs.Don Finley said that last year Debbie had a card for $200 to $250 and we had hot dogs, a cooler of drinks and s'mores. Peggy agreed with Kat that we could not leave it to Debbie. Katharine again suggested getting meat from Teohuatican and the rest from HEB. Hazel thought the simpler, the better. Cindy thought we could just market it as a party and have snacks and drinks. Shannon suggested prepared sandwiches but acknowledged they were expensive.

Don said that we had about 18 to 20 people at the beginning and numbers swelled to about 50 when the apartment event ended. He remembered using almost 100 hot dogs.Cindy lamented that we could not just partner with the apartments. Don thought Debbie had tried.

Katharine thought maybe we should stick with hot dogs and asked Don about cooking them. Don said it was important to start early and have some in reserve. He's willing to bring his grill.

Katharine clarified hot dogs and snacks and asked for a motion. Betina made a motion to help Debbie buy at HEB and we'll help Don grill hot dogs

and we'll have hot dogs and snacks, and just snacks if we don't get a gift card.

Kat seconded the motion. We voted to pass the motion to have hot dogs and snacks and just snacks if we have no funding.

Volunteer and Educational Groups Report (Betina)

Betina reports the following volunteer news:

- St. John's students will volunteer once this school year.
- Kincaid students will volunteer three times
- Another school will possibly volunteer
- Katharine J.'s Food Justice UHD students will volunteer twice.
- A Girl Scout troop is anticipating their WCG field trip date
- We are in desperate need of more Compost Committee members

Other New Biz

Katharine reports from Debbie that David B. from PIF had a big volunteer event on Tuesday and three cars were broken into. Debbie asks if we could allow PIF volunteers to park in our lot on weekdays when we have no planned activities.

Hazel moves that PIF volunteers can park in our lot when we have nothing planned on weekdays.

Cindy amends that they could ask in advance. Kat objects and says that won't solve the security problem, that they should call the constable for a patrol and park in the street. Cindy and Marcia say it's being a good neighbor. Steve suggests parking in the back 40 (East) toward the gas station.Don thought the big 18 wheeler out front forced them to park down toward the southern curve.

Katharine asked if anyone seconded Hazel's motion, which was changed to allow PIF volunteers with advanced notice to park in our lot on weekdays, Monday-Friday only, when we had no planned events. The motion was seconded and passed by vote.

Kat says that PIF has covered their large warning sign prohibiting vagrancy and thievery on the farm and garden. The sign is covered by their discarded pallets. Hazel thought Debbie had talked to David about their obligation to display the sign. Marcia said it's part of their contract and does not require a vote.

Katharine asks for a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourns at 7:38.

Committee Reports

Debbie Gordon -Fundraising/ Community Outreach

FUNDRAISING REPORT
September 15, 2026
FUNDRAISING
GRANT APPLICATIONS

Rejected
Ozarka / Greater Houston Community Foundation
• Rain tank replacement
• Pump
• Battery power station w/ solar charging
• Irrigation to main orchard & butterfly beds

Awarded (Reimbursement Grant)
Harris County Precinct 1
• Awarded $845,000; Reimbursement grant
• Covers all except parking area costs – Seeking other funding
• WCG to pay $44,500 (5%)
• Meeting soon to discuss getting started and the reimbursement process.

Submitted

BOMD

• Requested supplemental funds for Master Plan work; a grant to get the first surveying steps started($31,000). Will help the reimbursement process get rolling

Requested

State Rep Lauren Ashley Simmons
• $20,000 to cover parking areas
State Senator Molly Cook
• $20,000 to cover parking areas

Potential Applications
Cullen Foundation
• Mural and Making-of video

Bayou City Community Market Plant/Seed Sale Fundraiser
• October 10, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM; setup at 8:00 AM
• Need volunteers for 2-hour shifts including setup/tear down
• No booth rental cost to WCG
• WCG Fall Seed Packs and wholesale plants from JJL Greenhouse

COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT

National Night Out
• Tuesday, October 6
• Applied for $275 H-E-B donation to cover food/drinks
• What's on the menu?

Plant It Forward Sound Bath Experience
• At WCG; on a Sunday in November
• Up to 80 participants
• Possible chef-prepared meal

Don Finley- Site Maintenance

Greetings, contained below is the activity report for August/September 2026.

* Continued inspection of site hoses, faucet and backflow devices.

* Installed new WCG main entrance sign

* Wasps sprayed/removed in several locations around garden

* Organization of tools in outside storage

* Organization of cardboard in rear container

* Removed debris from locations around garden

Specialty Gardens/Purple Martins- Kat Elder

Specialty Gardens: no August workday was announced nor held. On 8/29 I weeded in B1 and pruned vegetation away from the B2 aisle.

A workday for SG committee members was scheduled & pre-announced to all membership for 9/12/26. (I have another commitment on the 9-26-26 workday). Only Dorthy Smith, Kathy Wall & Marcia Hartman (none from SG), Peggy Sweeney & Wayne Slaikeu came & helped me to accomplish a lot in the front BF Beds. -also killed more Persimmon shoots. Beds are extremely dry. No manpower to work in the Apiary pollinator bed nor B1.

Intending to request a SG member to take over maintenance of B1 pollinator collection. If none, then I will request that B1 be cleared, specimen plants be moved to BF beds & made available for lease by the EO the year.

Purple Martins: I've been unable to schedule maintenance/closure of the houses with those group members who remain active gardeners (2 now gone) . Impossible to manage cleaning of two telescoping pole houses by myself & the SE house requires a new cord replacement. Will persist.

Kat Elder

SG Chairman

Education/Herbs-Julie Fordes

Education- hosted a successful Garden Q and A forum last Saturday.
Plan to share Ray's fall garden PowerPoint on the website.

Herbs- all is well with the herbs.

Julie

Orchard Report-Hazel Potvin

Here is my orchard report, short and simple like everyone's. The heat has been a real burden on us all and the garden. The only thing I've done is some oversight and planning. We picked what we could and tried to get gardeners to pick so they could share in the fruit.
I plan to conduct an early pruning as soon as the figs go into dormancy. We will take out the tall trunks to get the fruit to produce lower and be easier to pick. We can probably lop off some of the branches on the pear trees so they will be easier to harvest from. Let's hope most of our trees survive . I know that Calvin and his mom did as much watering as they could. I hope we are in for rain soon to replenish the soil.As soon as we can get some decent mulch, all the trees will get a good application.

I am happy to report that my husband has come through his bypass surgery very well and will probably be able to help out.

Hazel

Membership-Shannon Vitek

September Membership Committee Report
09/15/2026
1. Unoccupied beds: B3, C12, E2, E9, E10
2. Existing, new, and potential gardeners
   a. Seth Rodecker stopped gardening E9. He cleared his bed prior to leaving.
   b. Stephanie Blakes and Anji Irving stopped gardening C12. They were provided the option to clear the bed or pay the clear the bed fee.

Volunteers/ Compost Committee- Betina Wolfowicz

Not much happening after my last report, we did not get outside volunteers. It is the heat that refuses to leave!

The compost group now is composed of 3 able-bodied people and the others either left or are unable to mix. So, we need more people in the group. You can get all your squats and launches without paying a trainer!.