Westbury Community Garden Board Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2026

The board meeting was called to order at 6:36. Members present were Cindy Chapman, Kat Elder, Julie Fordes, Steve Goldberg, Debbie Gordon, Marcia Hartman,Peggy Sweeney, Dr. Maisha T, Shannon Vitek and Betina Wolfowicz.

Debbie Gordon announced that she just received news that Hazel Potvin suffered another stroke. She is in the hospital. She is ambulatory but frustrated with an inability to speak. The plan is to move later to a rehab facility. We all hold her and her family in our thoughts.

Old Business

September minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report- See Dumpster Change below

National Night Out Recap

- District K will reimburse up to $200 for NNO. Peggy Sweeney will pursue reimbursement.
- WCG celebrated NNO on Oct.6. Board members set up at 4:30. Don Finley brought his grill and grilled hot dogs. We bought 96 hot dogs (beef, turkey, small veg), buns, chips, lemonade, cookies, and popcorn for $144 at HEB. Debbie got a HEB gift card that they suggest getting 6 weeks in advance.Board members bought Fall Trail Mix, cake and fruit.We had plenty of foil pans, chafers and other

supplies in Shed 3. A few gardeners came by along with civic club members, a large crowd of neighbors from the Post Oak apartments(after their activities) and both the police and constables. District K and Precinct 4 presented certificates to WCG. We started to clean about 7:30.

Dumpster Service Change

Cindy Chapman says our dumpster service is changing and the new dumpster will be delivered October 30. If our old dumpster is not picked up by then, our new service will return to reposition the dumpster. Kat Elder says there is an oyster shell pad.
We have paid the former company the six month penalty fee. Cindy signed on to the class action suit against the company.

Other Reimbursement Issues

Kat wondered how payment from our grant works. Cindy says it's a reimbursement grant. The $845,000 stays with the county. We have to submit a line item and be reimbursed.

Debbie said Doreen Gallevos from NPSOT reached out about The Amazing Caterpillar. We owe them half of ticket sales/concessions. They owe us for licensing fees, rental.

Nominations

Katharine Jager and Peggy Sweeney both accept nominations for Vice President and Secretary, respectively. We still need a president.

Debbie would very reluctantly continue as president. Julie Fordes asked Debbie who might be a good candidate for president. Debbie said Julie or Betina.

There was some discussion about co-presidents or having an expectation that the VP would move into the President's position.

New Business

Memorials for Wayne and Mike

There was some discussion of memorials.

- Kat recommended expanding Bert's memorial with 2 trees and a garden with a bench.
- Cindy commented that Trees for Houston does a memorial grove so that there's not a problem if a designated tree dies. She commented that Mike worked on Purple Martin houses. Could we designate houses for them
- Marcia says we should look for a design with landscape designers.
- Debbie commented that Bert's memorial marker was a plaque from Post Oak Trophy(about $15) mounted with Bondo on a black brick from Home Depot.
- Betina says she's seen medallion plaques hanging from trees.
- Debbie suggested leaving discussion for later
- Marcia suggested a committee and she, Peggy and Kat signed up.

Another Soil Purchase? 8yds, $380

We got 25 yds of soil for E-beds and to top off beds. E-beds still need soil for lower levels. St. Johns could move soil on Thursday if we get it.
There was a motion for a vote to get 8 yards of soil. It passed .

In E-12 we're leaving the plants and need help moving Wayne's in E-7.

Kat Elder expressed concern about continual maintenance in E-beds. Debbie said Virginia had used vinegar spray consistently with success on nut grass.
Peggy Sweeney suggested a task force on E-bed issues later.

New Square Credit Card Reader

The freebie Square Card Reader is not compatible with I-phones. New Square Readers are $47. Kat moves to authorize the purchase of a new Square Reader. The Board votes to purchase one.

QR Code for Zelle Payments

Cindy recommended a QR code for Zelle payments. Currently we type in the treasurer email

Houston Toolbank Picnic Table Giveaway

Debbie signed up for two free picnic tables from the Houston Toolbank. We need two trucks to get them.

Bodega Wash-Wash & Fold Pickup/Delivery Service Donation

The owner of this Wash service at West Bellfort and Fondren contacted Debbie about a service donation. They settled on him purchasing and donating kids garden gloves. We'll get a photo of kids in gloves and put it in the Crier.

Other New Business

The October Farmers Market at Westbury Baptist netted WCG $651. Combined with $148 in Zelle payments that comes to about $799. The coordinator mentioned another complimentary booth for WCG in the Spring.

The Meeting Was Adjourned at 7:46

Committee Reports

Composting and Volunteers-Betina Wolfowicz

Composting

No news. We are still hoping to recruit more people. The maturing piles will be for the specialty gardens

Volunteers

The Volunteer Houston organization has updated its site and it is again functional. We are now posting again monthly to recruit volunteers.

On September 26th we had Katherine Jaeger students who worked very hard to remove weeds from this summer and other general maintenance jobs like mixing compost. A second class is coming October 24th.

I am maintaining vacant lot E12. It was already weeded and I just planted bush beans and butternut squash. Shannon Vitek helps with the watering. If you want to water it as well once a week please just holler.

Betina

Education and Herbs- Julie Fordes

Education
Used slides from Ray Sher's Fall Gardening powerpoint to make an article for the website featuring a link to Unban Harvest's Fall Planting Guide and how to purchase our seed packets. We continue to host the Gardener's Q an A on the second Saturday of each month. Attendance has been spotty. The second Saturday of November will be a class, Using Herbs for the Holidays.

Herbs
WCG Herb Committee consistently has 2-3 and often more volunteers for the workdays. Members were invited to Julie's house to learn to make teas, salves etc. for the Herb Fair.

Membership- Shannon Vitek

October Membership Committee Report
10/20/2026
1. Unoccupied beds: B3, B5, E2, E10
2. Existing, new, and potential gardeners
   a. The garden lost both Wayne Slaikeu (E7) and Mike Blaha (E12)
   b.. Betina Wolfowicz and Elena Perez have started gardening in C12 in addition to B11. Betina cleared the bed which was in terrible shape.
   c. Catherine Reimer moved from B5 to E9.
   d. Gina Gratten is a returning gardener and completed an orientation on 10/15/2026. She was offered to lease E10. She has not completed the membership documents or paid for the bed at the time of this report.
   e. E12 was adopted by Betina Wolfowicz to keep it healthy. It was planted with beans and squash. Shannon Vitek is assisting with the watering.
   f. Membership is actively contacting individuals from the waitlist to fill the vacant beds. There has been little response.

3. Volunteer hours - quarterly record keeping reminder to log hours was emailed out to active gardeners

Site Maintenance-Don Finley

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

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

* National Night Out participation at WCG

* Continued wasp spraying several locations around garden

* Repaired faucet leak near apiary bed

* Replaced water hose/backflow in fig orchard

* Replaced backflow device and tightened B2 hose

* Tightened hoses near beds C 2 and E 2

* Replaced backflow devices on beds E 7 and E 9

* Working to repair bed E 11 water backflow

Specialty Gardens/ Purple Martins-Kat Elder

Specialty Gardens:
As noted to Gardeners, SG Committee has lost 2 special members: Wayne Slaikeu & Mike Blaha.

No activity since a special pre-announced workday on 9-12-26 to work in the SG beds. No dedicated group attention possible in B1 or the north fence Apiary Pollinator bed. The latter is covered with Pink Coral Vine & Salvias & some perennial Natives.

I attended the annual NPSOT Wildscapes Workshop at the Houston zoo, missing the 10-26 workday - no report on whether any work was done on SG.

Pollinator insects are busy in all of the beds packed with flowering natives, including Yellow Swamp Sunflower, Red & Pink Salvias, Dwarf Turks Cap, hummingbird bushes, pink Rock Rose , Coreopsis, Thrysallis & a few pruned repeat bloomers. Bees are using any water sources during these dry periods.
Some of my garden Rain Lillies, Basils & Salvias were sold at the Bayou City Mkt. 10-10-26.

The Johnson's & hopefully Katharine Jager & some of her experienced UH students can help clearing Day Flower weeds in B1 & help lead other volunteers on 10-24 while I'm at the Westbury White Elephant Sale.

Also have more Persimmon sprouts & Hackberry to herbicide.

Purple Martins:

This PM Team has now lost 3 special members: Wayne Slaikeu , Mike Blaha & Seth Rodecker. Still persisting in trying to schedule remaining members to help clean & close houses for the winter. Need muscles & strong backs! May investigate seeking Audubon Society PM landlords to come help.

Kat Elder, Chairman