

## **Chinquapin Organic Gardens Board Meeting July 21, 2020**

The July 21 Board meeting was held again via Zoom. Participants included: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer, Kathryn Long, Julie Le, Ed Mensh, Brad Kukuk, Elizabeth Charles, Michele Late, Tammy Preston, Glenna Winnie, Tsion Bezu, Mary Ryan Connolly, Dona Lee, Ela Macander, Salma Ahamed. Also present: Oscar Mendoza-City Parks and Recreation Liaison.

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

There was a motion by Anne Saul to approve the June 16 Board meeting minutes, as corrected. It was seconded by Kathryn Long, and approved unanimously.

City Liaison Report: Oscar provided an update of city recreation and parks operations that were open, and those not yet open. Not many indoor activities are open, but all outdoor activities are open. He recommends we continue to meet on Zoom rather than try to meet at the Mt. Vernon Rec center. Richard agreed we would do this through the summer with a potential in-person board meeting in Sept. Anne noted that some tree branches fell during the recent storms, Oscar said he will take care of it. Richard noted that the yard waste and trash are still being picked up sporadically. Oscar suggested Richard work with T&ES to develop a regular schedule. Leaf mulch is needed for the upper bins, Oscar said it should be delivered this week and he will follow-up with it. Richard said that Davey Tree had delivered wood chips to the upper and lower bins.

Path Restoration: the city will provide wood for the paths to be fixed in the fall. Richard and Ed will work on a plan.

Garden regulations – smoking & parking: Oscar raised the issue of smoking in the park and in particular, in the garden area, responding to an earlier email from Richard. The whole area is supposed to be smoke free. Oscar is working with City legal folks on how to control this. It likely will require the city put up signs to enforce the no smoking rules. Lori raised the issue of other types of smoking in the wooded areas; the police told her to call the non-emergency number and if an officer is available they will respond. Oscar suggested that the more people who call and complain, the more likely the police will be by to patrol the area. Once he gets a legal opinion, he will work with Richard to install signs as needed. Anne asked if “no parking” signs could be placed along the service road in order to protect the spigots. Oscar agreed the city will do this.

Food Bank: Dona Lee reported they were adding a third plot to grow produce for donation to the Mother of Light food bank. The next collection will be on Saturday. She noted the charity feeds over 300 families, up from 200. Also, she spoke of the 14 year old son of a gardener who donated store-bought produce so that he could help out on his birthday.

Volunteering: Kathryn reported the plot markers were ready to go into the ground, she was leaving it up to the volunteers to do it after the ground softens up. Anne noted that gardeners are getting their volunteer hours completed earlier in the season. Some gardeners have given up their

plots, so there are now 21 vacant plots, some covered, some not. There are 31 people on the waiting list for next year.

Finances: We have \$1,071 in the bank. Elizabeth will be sending in another check for \$130 from the fundraiser.

Fundraising: Michelle showed the Cafe Press site with the merchandise (t-shirts, masks, bags, etc.) she designed. Board members can review the site, give her feedback, and we can go live in August to the rest of the gardeners for on-line purchase. Ed asked if she could design a hat, which she did immediately! Any other items wanted can be sent to her as feedback. The average profit is \$4-\$6 per item, but more than a money maker, it is a chance for community sharing. We can select the most popular items and pre-order to sell at a future picnic. Anne asked how reliable the site is, as she waited 2 months for an item from another website. Michelle said she uses the site for business all the time and hasn't had any problems. Michelle also suggested a virtual auction on Facebook and described how it would work. She has baskets her sister made, and Brad also has items to donate. A mid-to-late August time frame was suggested, around the same time as the awards, which should be done after the August inspection.

New Business: Richard announced that as this was Brad's third meeting this year, he wants to nominate him to be a board member at the August meeting and take a vote. Brad was on the board previously. Anne discussed theft incidents at the garden, and gave a description of a woman who has been seen stealing in the early morning. A discussion on how to approach people suspected of stealing, and keeping it non-confrontational, such as asking "do you have a plot here?" may be all you need to do. Calling the police isn't helpful because if they don't see it happening they cannot do anything. There are signs already, and if the person cannot recite a plot number they probably don't belong there. Richard suggested that Anne send an email to all gardeners advising them as to what to do if they see someone suspected of stealing from the gardens.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Upcoming events:

August 1 – monitoring inspection

August 18 - Board meeting via Zoom

Mid-to-late August - awards, auction, Café Press sale