

Chinquapin Organic Gardens Board Meeting November 17, 2020

The November 17 Board meeting was held via Zoom. Participants included: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer, other Board Members: Kathryn Long, Julie Le, Brad Kukuk, Tammy Preston Boyd, Elizabeth Charles. Other gardeners attending: Tsion Bezu, Gretchen Schreiber, Michele Late, Sondra Brittain. Also attending: Oscar Mendoza-City Parks and Recreation Liaison.

The meeting began at 7:06 p.m.

Anne and Richard made a few changes to the October 20 Board meeting minutes. There was a motion by Kathryn to approve the latest set of minutes. It was seconded by Tammy, and the minutes were approved as amended. Michele asked that minutes for the website be sent with the title "final" so that she knows which version to post.

City Liaison Report: Oscar informed the group that the city is observing increased covid cases, so they are increasing safety measures internally, such as using PPE, modified work schedules and safe distancing. They are converting the equipment to snow removal. The water turnoff is scheduled for Wednesday or Friday of this week. Anne asked if the water turn off could be postponed until the end of November. Oscar said he will check to see if they could hold off until later. Richard asked about the status of hiring a horticulturist to replace Suzanne. It had been in the works before the pandemic shut everything down. Oscar explained that the city has a financial gap, and the position is frozen but has not been taken away. There is a 10% reduction in funds across the board for park programs. We will have to wait and see what happens with the 2022 budget. Anne added she has been working with Jean Johnson but she (Anne) is doing a lot of the city's work. Oscar said he will look for a better solution and Richard suggested maybe Oscar can meet with Anne and Richard to discuss. Richard noted the recent fallen tree limbs had been removed by the city's contractor, and asked about the retaining wall. Oscar said it is on the schedule and may begin soon. The city is getting ready to award the contract and once awarded, the work can proceed, possibly by the end of the month. Oscar should know more next week. Oscar will check on the materials for the paths, which will be started when the materials are received and after the garden season ends. Anne noted there are four vacant plots with fig trees, and asked Oscar if the fig trees can be cut down and the stumps removed so that the trees do not regrow. Oscar will ask Brightview to do it. Anne also asked about leaf mulch, Oscar will check to see what is available.

Renewals: So far, 49 gardeners have not renewed, one more reminder will be sent. Renewal is due November 30, payment is due December 15. Gretchen asked if any black plastic was available to cover plots. She wants to cover her old plot as she is moving to a new plot. Anne replied that gardeners must buy their own, what we have in the shed is for abandoned plots only.

Upper Perennial Bed: the upper perennial bed was planted with shade plants by Richard, with plants from Richard and Lori. There are benches surrounding it and this will give people sitting on them something nice to look at.

Volunteering: Anne gave the following update: some gardeners still need hours – 24 have completed zero hours, 12 have less than 4 hours. They will have to pay the opt-out fee if they want a plot next season. Total volunteer hours are down overall but there were also fewer gardeners this year. There are 737 volunteer hours total and if you multiply that by the city wage scale of \$28.46, we saved the city almost \$21,000. Volunteering also builds community spirit. Gretchen thanked Oscar, Richard and Anne for all they were able to do this year during the pandemic to allow us to garden, and giving people a nice place to go. Tsion asked if people can donate hours for others. Anne replied yes, but only if people had a reason, like being in lockdown, and not because they were just slackers.

Food Bank: Anne gave an update on the food bank collection. This week the collection will be on Friday because the loop road will be closed on Saturday morning.

Website: Michele was asked if she needed help with maintaining the website. She said yes, her job has been especially busy because she works in public health. She could use a backup if someone was knowledgeable in working with the website software. She feels more people look at Facebook than the website. Anne volunteered to add the minutes, Elizabeth Charles also said she could help; Michele will provide them the account info to access the site. Tammy said not everyone is on Facebook so we should keep the website also.

Finances: We have \$1,066.69 in the bank. This does not reflect recent purchases. Michele said we have money coming from Café Press.

New Business: Michele discussed creating a Chinquapin calendar on Café Press. She suggested holding off on the auction until Spring, but maybe doing the baskets now as a trial run. The basket auction would be on Facebook. Tammy and Kathryn agreed that doing the baskets now is a good idea and Michele will proceed with this. Richard announced he had gifts for the Food Bank coordinator Dona Lee and others and he will present the gifts to them at the last of the weekend food bank collection. He will also have the power equipment tuned up in December so that it is ready for the Spring. Michele thanked Anne for all her work on the registrations.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Upcoming agenda:

November 30 – plot renewal registration due

December 5 – season end inspection

December 15 – plot renewal payment due

No December Board meeting

January 19, 2021 – Board meeting via Zoom

Ongoing - Café Press sale, basket auction on Facebook