

Chinquapin Organic Garden Board Meeting -- December 2, 2025

The December 2, 2025, board meeting was held via Zoom. Present: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer and other board members, Stacey Potosnak, Brad Kukuk, Elizabeth Charles and Julie Le. Board member absent: Kathryn Long. Other gardeners attending: Sally Richards, Chelsea Redman, Greg Ettleman, Patty Ennerking, Kirsten Fehrenkamp, Siena Loprinzi, Deborah Levi, Jib Vimuktalob, Jennifer Penoso and Natalie Frank. Also attending from the City of Alexandria Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities: Natural Resources Manager Katrina Napora.

The meeting started at 7:00 p.m. Anne moved to approve the October 21, 2025 Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Brad, and the minutes were approved.

City Report: RPCA liaison Katrina Napora reported that the 2026 plot renewal notices had been sent out and responses were being received. She said RPCA also was working on sending out the plot rental invoices. Anne asked for a list of plots that were not renewed so that the Sunday monitoring group would waste time checking vacant plots. She said she knew of about 15-18 that were not renewing, but that there might be others. Katrina said she will get a list.

Anne asked about the materials requested for the path leveling, and Katrina said the city had ordered 260 cedar boards, but 60 were needed. Richard said that we need only about 10, but Katrina said double the number would be needed as they are not as long as the 12-foot boards previously delivered, to which Richard responded that boards shorter than 12 feet were no good as the plots are 15x15 and even 12-foot boards need to be cut and pieced together to make them fit. Katrina asked that Richard send an email with the specifics so that she can convey the correct information to the proper department.

Anne asked about the status of the retaining wall repair, and Katrina said Oscar was working on a contract with BrightView to have the work done as well as for removing the trellis in S7. Anne also noted that the city needs to remove the trees in B1 and I1, and Katrina said she would check on the status. Richard said he would follow up with Oscar and Brightview. He also noted that gardeners building large structures in their plots, which the city has to remove when the gardeners leave is a continuing problem.

Maintenance: Richard said he ordered more leaf mulch for the lower bin, and some was also delivered to the upper bin which was not intended as that bin is for compost. He also said that a small maple tree was transplanted closer to the picnic tables and that fall cleanup of the perennials was completed. He said that flower and berry plant pruning will need to be done later this winter, and Anne asked that he let her know if he needs volunteers.

Finances: Lori reported there is \$1,000.48 in the bank account. Richard noted that our fundraising this year has worked out well and the current balance is the amount we usually like to have in the bank to start the new year.

Fundraising: Brad reported that he talked to the manager at the Beeliner Diner and we have three options: 1) bingo on a Thursday night from 6–8 p.m. from which we would get 10% of the sales; 2) band night is on a Wednesday from which we would receive 10% of the dinner receipts or 3) both events. He said bingo might be better as more people likely would participate even though the proceeds could be less. He said there were 60-65 people playing bingo the night he was there. Brad said the prizes are \$20 diner gift certificates, free dessert or entrée, etc. Richard recommended we schedule it at the end of January or beginning of February, and said that we might not need a restaurant fundraiser in the spring and Julie agreed. Brad said he would try and get the bingo scheduled for Jan. 22 or 29.

New Business:

- Richard said he and Anne are meeting with Katrina next week to discuss revisions to the city's community garden regulations and Anne asked the board members for suggestions on anything they think needs revising. One suggestion was to not allow trees (especially figs) in plots as they become overgrown and a problem when gardeners leave. Those who already have trees in their plots could be grandfathered in. Elizabeth asked if plastic netting type fencing should be banned, as it is floppy and falls into the paths and Richard noted that large structures left by gardeners also are a problem as the city has to hire someone to remove them. He suggested perhaps gardeners be required to pay a deposit that they would get back if they remove the structures when they give up their plots.
- Richard said the board needed to vote on the election of officers for the new year, and that all eight current members agreed to serve again. Motion by Elizabeth and second by Brad to approve the slate, and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Upcoming 2025 events:

December 7 - next monitoring session

December 15 – due date for plot renewal payments

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 - next Board meeting (note: change from regular meeting date)