

Chinquapin Organic Gardens Board Meeting January 19, 2021

The January 19 Board meeting was held via Zoom. Participants included: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer, other Board Members: Julie Le, Ed Mensch, Elizabeth Charles. Missing Board members: Kathryn Long, Brad Kukuk, Tammy Preston Boyd. Other gardeners attending: Tsion Bezu, Gretchen Schreiber, Michele Late. Also attending: Oscar Mendoza-City Parks and Recreation Liaison.

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

Anne and Richard made a few changes to the November 17 Board meeting minutes. There was a motion by Elizabeth to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Ed, and the minutes were approved as amended.

City Liaison Report: Oscar informed the Board that the city offices are performing regular routine maintenance. Some recreation centers are open at 20-30% capacity. City workers have started receiving Covid-19 vaccinations at TC Williams. The emergency operations center is preparing for inauguration day and the rec centers are ready to be used as mass casualty shelters if necessary. He thanked the Board for the Chinquapin coffee mug. Plot registration has been completed. There are 32 new gardeners.

Maintenance: Richard noted that the retaining wall in the middle has been finished and he thanked Oscar. The city crews took out some fig trees from vacant plots. Richard and Al Havinga fixed the wheelbarrows – some had flat tires- it was cheaper to fix than to replace them. They fixed 2-3 and all are now operational. The larger ones are sturdier but Anne stated we still need the smaller ones for some people. Richard will get a count of wheelbarrows before the next meeting and see if we need more. Gretchen asked if the handles can be sanded and painted, they are kind of rough on your hands. Richard will look and see if that can be done. Ed stated that some paths had been fixed, but it was hard to do some that had the fencing up. They completed 8-10 paths. Anne stated we can tell people to remove fences temporarily in order to do the paths. Ed responded that for now we have enough other paths to do first. Richard said there was more lumber in the city's warehouse and he can have the city deliver this when needed. Ed said he needs 15 more boards, but he will wait for better weather. When the weather is suitable, Ed will send out a notice for volunteers to help with the next installation.

Monitoring: Anne said the end of season inspection that was done in early December was to make sure plots were cleaned up. Of the 140 rented plots (36 are vacant), 15 had violations, 8 needed end-of season cleanup and 4 were cited for weeds.

Renewals: All returning gardener applications have been processed. Eighteen did not renew, leaving a total of 38 vacant plots and 58 people on the waiting list. However, of the 58, 48 are city residents and they get first priority so that leaves 10 city residents on the waiting list. New gardeners have until February 5 to pay. Anne anticipates all will be rented, so there will be no vacant plots for the food bank this year. She hopes the food bank program will continue this year with donations from gardeners. Anne brought up for discussion whether we should

continue to have restricted access to the shed due to Covid. Richard felt we should continue to limit access to the shed until the state or city relax their Covid restrictions.

Finances: We have approximately \$900 in the bank, once we add in the profits from Café Press.

Fundraising: Julie discussed having a fundraiser at Lena's Pizza. There was discussion about whether to do it now, or wait until March, or do both. Lena's has outdoor seating, and carryout are available. It was decided to wait until March in hopes of better participation.

New Business: Richard informed everyone that the Spring Social would have to be cancelled again this year, due to Covid. Ed suggested doing a Zoom social, perhaps Kirsten Conrad can do a presentation. Anne noted that Kirsten has a program on deer controls via Zoom that she would like to share with the gardeners. It was decided a weeknight at 7:00 might be the optimal time for such a program. Ed inquired if there would be elections this year. Anne replied that the Board terms are for two years so elections will be next year. Tsion asked if her teenage daughter was eligible to be a Board member. She was told that her daughter would need to attend meetings and be responsible for a project just like other Board members.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Upcoming agenda:

February 5, 2021 – new gardeners payments due

February 16, 2021 – Board meeting via Zoom

Mid-March (date to be determined) – Lena's fund raiser