

Chinquapin Organic Gardens Board Meeting June 21, 2022

The June 21 Board meeting was held via Zoom. Participants included: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer, other board members: Elizabeth Charles, Ed Mensh, Julie Le, Stacey Potosnak and Kathryn Long. Absent Board member: Brad Kukuk. Other gardeners attending: Gretchen Schreiber, Margie Heins, Faatimah Muhammad, Zook Park, Scott Nelson, Neal Fine, Meghan Johnson-Watson, Jennifer Penoso, Dona Lee, Mimi Murphy, Ulysses Guerrero. Also attending: Maureen Sturgill, City of Alexandria Recreation Manager/Park Operations.

The meeting began at 7:03 p.m.

There was a motion by Anne to approve the May 17 minutes. It was seconded by Ed, and the minutes were approved.

City Report: Maureen provided an update from the city. All plots have been rented. The service road has been repaired. Notices to those gardeners in violation after the June 4 inspection will be going out shortly. She is working on getting lumber for the path repairs. Ed asked if Maureen could let him know when it arrives. She said there are still supply issues, but things seem to be better now. Richard thanked her for providing the leaf mulch in the top bin.

Monitoring Report: The monitoring team conducted the second review of the season on June 4. Of the 173 rented plots (one was vacant at the time), 135 had no violations. This is an improvement from 119 during the April 30 session. Four plots showed no sign of activity and were very weedy, which is down from the 13 cited during the April session. Three of the four were repeats from the April session, so the city gave the gardeners two weeks (by June 24) to work their plots or forfeit them. Two of those gardeners have since worked on their plots. The remaining plot will be checked on Friday, which is the deadline. Of the remaining plots, four were cited for weeds and 24 for path maintenance, many of which were minor, but needed some attention. A few citations were for leaning fences, plots exceeding boundaries and standing water. The next monitoring session is scheduled for July 30.

Volunteer Reports: Kathryn said she may need help with putting in new plot markers. They are waiting for some rain to soften the ground. Richard noted that the strawberry bed was not doing well but they had planted watermelons and pumpkins in the two lower tiers, and those plants seemed to be doing well. Anne noted there are plenty of jobs if anyone needs volunteer hours.

Food Bank Report: Stacey reported that the food bank collections began May 28. They have had four collections -- all full car loads with six trays of produce, mostly from vacation donations and the regular donors. They have a signup genius established with a QR code to scan if anyone wants to help with the packaging and deliveries. One of the new Food Bank plots is doing really well; the other one just average, although they are not sure why. Richard suggested we keep track of how much produce is donated each year but Dona suggested that it would not be easy to quantify the amount by weight as they collect a lot of light-weight items, like greens and herbs.

Finances: We have \$1,116.82 in the bank.

Summer Picnic: Elizabeth said she will be out of town for the picnic but she hopes that someone will step forward to take over the set-up, and that there is not much that needs to be done. Some areas are: grilling, tomato contest, awards. Anne will work on with Kirsten on the judging. Richard will invite city council members. Elizabeth will send around the list of food and other items needed.

New Business: Kathryn asked when should someone lock up the shed, if others are using it when you have finished with what you are doing in it? Anne recommended that a person lock up each time he/she goes into the shed, such as when you take out a tool, lock up and when you return it, lock up again. That way you make sure it's locked. Richard said someone asked if they could store personal tools in the shed and he responded no, that is not allowed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Upcoming events:

July 19 – Board meeting – picnic planning

August 13 – picnic

No August Board meeting