

## **Chinquapin Organic Gardens Board Meeting May 16, 2023**

The May 16 board meeting was held via Zoom. Participants included: Richard Dorrier-Chair, Anne Saul-Vice Chair, Lori Hartmann-Secretary/Treasurer, other board members: Julie Le, Stacey Potosnak, Kathryn Long and Brad Kukuk. Other gardeners attending: Tyler Perez, Gretchen Schreiber, Margie Heins, Chelsea Redman, Deborah Levi, Sharon Vannucci, Jean McKean, Mimi Murphy, Ulysses Guerrero, Zook Park, and Allison Dreyer. Absent: Board member Elizabeth Charles. Also attending: Maureen Sturgill, City of Alexandria Recreation Manager/Park Operations.

The meeting began at 7:01 p.m. There was a motion by Richard to approve the March 21, 2023 minutes. It was seconded by Julie, and the minutes were approved.

City Report: Maureen reported that the remaining three plots that were relinquished have been rented so all of the garden plots have been rented again. There are approximately 50 Alexandria residents on the waitlist, which is about a 2 year wait for a plot. In January, the city checks with those on the waitlist to see who wants to stay on it.

By-laws: The updated by-laws and the MOU with the City are both completed. The eight board members signed the by-laws and they are now in synch with the MOU. Richard invited others to join the Board, the requirements are to attend meetings and spearhead one activity at the garden. He currently is in charge of the wheelbarrows, lawn mowers, trash pick up, terraced & perennial beds, and path maintenance. The gardens are run by volunteers, and the more hands the better as it makes the jobs easier.

Maintenance Activities: Richard reported that the water was turned on early this year -- April 3. One lawnmower is broken and has been taken to the repair shop and they might be able to fix it. It was probably broken by an unauthorized mower. As a result, the lock combination on the remaining mower has been changed. Only the mowers and others authorized by Richard will be given the combination. We have received a fourth load of Leaf-Gro Pro compost. This will be the last load for the season -- it was great stuff. When it runs out, we will fill the upper bin with leaf mulch. Richard will order more wood chips for the upper bin also. The City Parks Dept gave us a tree (a hackberry) which was planted by several gardeners by the picnic tables to create shade.

### Volunteer Activities:

Monitoring Report: The monitoring team conducted the first review of the season on April 22. Of the 172 rented plots (one was vacant), 131 had no violations. This is an improvement from 119 during the first session of the 2022 season. Eleven plots showed no sign of activity and were very weedy, which is down from 13 in April 2022. Another 18 plots were cited for weeds, although the infractions were minor and 10 for path maintenance, which is a significant improvement from April 2022 – most likely because of the good supply of nice wood chips. There also were five citations for leaning fences – due primarily to flimsy posts and netting. The next monitoring session is scheduled for June 10.

Plot markers: if any need replacing, let Kathryn Long know. They are all caught up and the posts look good.

Perennial bed and orchard: volunteers are all scheduled for summer and fall maintenance.

Mowing: the team is up to date on their duties.

Finances: We have \$1,032.93 in the bank.

Fund Raising: Julie reported that we made \$301 on the raffle at the Spring Social, after expenses were paid. We also received \$495.65 from the pizza fundraiser. Julie introduced the Board to MyRegistry and showed how it could work for us to get supplies from anyone who wants to donate something, such as gas cards or extra fabric pins. It could also be used to raise money for a new lawn mower if needed. It was decided that Julie would set it up and Anne and Richard will look in the shed to see what items to list. Listing will be done only by the Board (Anne and Richard), and perhaps Stacey on behalf of the Food Bank. It will not replace the raffle but hopefully supplement it.

Spring Social: Anne noted that there were approximately 33 people in attendance, which was good considering the rainy weather. It was about the same number as last year.

Summer Picnic: Richard will check to see if grilling is allowed outside the rec center for the picnic. If allowed, someone would have to bring a portable grill. If not, we can consider purchasing a hot dish such as fried chicken. It was noted that the children like the hot dogs, but the dishes made by the gardeners usually include garden produce and we want to keep that the same. We will discuss the picnic at the July Board meeting.

New Business: Anne welcomed Chelsea, a new gardener in G4. Stacey noted that the Food Bank will have its first collection and delivery this Saturday.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Upcoming 2023 events:

June 10 – garden monitoring

July 18 – Board meeting

August 12 – picnic at Chinquapin Rec Center