

Manhattan Community Gardens

Minutes of the October 4, 2011 Board meeting

Present: Dick Green, Leila Maurmann, Linda Teener, Chuck Marr, Cybil Perkins, Kruger Bryant, Erika Huber, Pat Butler, Jeanne Squires-Lake and Dale Stearns.

Dick called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. Dale reported on the minutes from the August and September meetings. There were additional corrections to the August minutes. Pat moved and Linda seconded to approve the August minutes with the new corrections and the September minutes as presented. Motion carried. Linda presented the Treasurer's report. Pat moved and Erika seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion carried.

Dick gave the Equipment Committee report indicating that \$85 was spent on supplies for the September workday and \$85 was spent on tiller repairs. He also reported that the equipment shed was painted through volunteer help. Dick indicated a need for year-end maintenance supplies. Cybil moved and Pat seconded a motion to authorize the expenditure of up to \$250 for year-end maintenance. Pat gave the Grounds and Maintenance Committee report stating that 3 loads of garden debris was hauled away after the September workday. Also 4 trailer loads of fine compost were hauled by Pat and Dick for fall garden top-dressing. There was no report for the Rules and Safety Committee and the Records Committee. Cybil reported for the Workdays and Socials Committee that she will be sending reminders to October 15th workday volunteers at the beginning of next week. Cybil is maintaining a list of volunteer commitments met and will remind gardeners yet to fulfill their volunteer commitment to come to either the October or November workdays to do so. Dick provided a Compost and Mulch Committee update indicating that due to the City's busy street maintenance schedule, he and Pat rented a trailer for \$104 to haul the new compost. There are no plans to get additional hay or woodchips this year to allow the existing supply to be exhausted. Erika reported that she plans to work on the last printed newsletter to be published in late October. Dale reported that the CROP Walk will be held Sunday, October 9th at 2:00 p.m. beginning at the First Presbyterian Church on Leavenworth Street. A total of \$500 has been donated from the Community Gardens and will be paid with the UFM credit card through the CROP webpage. Chuck reported on the email newsletter and indicated that the last email news for 2011 will be the first week of November.

Old Business: Dick updated the slate of nominees for the 2012 Board including Max Urick, John Rogers and Leila Maurmann as identified through the nominating process. The Board voiced no objections to these nominees and accepted the slate. They will be voted on by the gardeners at the annual meeting. One more nominee is needed for the 2012 Board.

Cybil presented the revised garden rules that she and Ron have worked on and were emailed to the Board on March 16th and prior to the meeting. The document was reviewed and the following additional changes were noted: Item #1 change wording of first sentence to "The amount of rental fees, deposits, and tilling fee shall be determined annually by the MCG Board and

announced before the first registration date.”; Item #3 insert comma after “necessary”; add, Item #6 change the deadline date from June 1 to May 15, ; Item #10 make the word “manager lower case on second line; Item #14 add the sentence “Produce grown at MCG is for personal use only.” , Item #20 add the statement “(including florescent colored fencing)” after the words no unsightly structures, Item #21 Remove the first sentence and the words “only if approved by adjacent gardeners” from sentence 2 and change Grounds Maintenance Committee chair to Board President in sentence 3; Item #22 change the word “plots” to “area”; Item #26 change “June 1” to “May 15”. It was agreed that rather than include the following in the rules, they will be addressed in the first printed newsletter of 2012: a complete definition of acceptable and non-acceptable pesticides, the concerns of cigarette smoking and loud music in the gardens, and good neighbor practices.

Cybil moved and Linda seconded that the Board approve the revisions with the changes discussed at this meeting. All were in favor and the rules were approved. Cybil will incorporate these changes to create the final document.

The discussion moved to the newsletter, since Erika had to leave. She requested that material for the newsletter should be sent to her by next week 12-13th of October. Linda said the newsletter needs to be mailed out to the membership by October 24th (two weeks prior to the annual MCG meeting on Nov. 4th.)

By-Laws Revision: The proposed up-dates to the By-laws that Dick emailed to the Board before the meeting were discussed.

- Cybil noted that the priority for low income families had been deleted. Linda explained that low income families will continue to qualify for reduced fees, but the logistics of providing them priority registration was impossible since we have multiple registrations.
- Kruger asked about city limits in Section 1, Article IV; if any modifications will be made on the by-laws to include county residents when/if a new site on county land is selected for the MCG. Linda and Dick said that alterations to the by-laws can be made when a decision for the new site is finalized.
- Other items in the by-laws were discussed and agreed upon such as more completely defining the sliding scale fee, increasing the quorum number for the annual meeting to 10, adding requirements for minutes for all membership and board meetings, increasing the minimum number of board members to 5, expanding the definition of the Executive Board to include the Past President, and deleting reference to a Finance Committee. There were also other miscellaneous word and punctuation changes agreed upon.

Finally, the Board discussed specifically including an excessive number of unexcused meeting absences as a reason for removal. It was decided to not include this in the By-Laws, but rather develop a separate Board job description to establish expectations for participation. This will be done at a later date.

MOTION: Pat Bulter moved and Linda seconded a motion to approve all changes agreed upon at the meeting. Motion was approved unanimously. Cybil will create the final document and email to Linda and Erika. The revised document will be presented to the membership for their approval at the annual meeting.

The next item was brought up by Dick in regards to tilling fees. The fee of \$5 has been used just to cover expenses with gas. He said it was meant for people that were not capable of tilling themselves, such as elderly or disabled. He felt, however, that it encourages people to use the tilling committee to do their work. It was suggested that the fee be raised to \$10 per plot with the possibility of reduction to \$5 for low-income gardeners. Kruger asked if there has been any request for financial relief from the membership. Dick said there are very few people that mention it. Cybil said that upon registration the members are placed in income categories and that it would be easy to determine the appropriate fee. Linda made the motion to approve and Kruger seconded it. It was approved.

The weed deposit of \$10 per plot was discussed. Dick said the weed clean-up can become costly. Cybil said that because Ron has been careful in taking care of plots that were getting out of control with weeds, and all the work done on plots during the work days, she didn't think this year there would be a big end-of-the-year problem. Jeanne and Kruger said that increasing the weed deposit will give motivation and recognition for the work. Cybil requested that, as in the tilling fee, that the \$20 weed deposit be lowered for low income families. Pat made the motion and it was seconded by Leila and then approved by the board.

The October 15th workday will be coordinated by Erika. Dick will be on vacation but will send a list of work items to be done. Pat will be available, and so is Leila to help and lead groups.

Dick said the shed was painted in September and the sign for MCG was quite old and weathered. He presented mock-ups of 2 designs for a replacement. Most of the group preferred the basket design. A motion from Cybil and seconded by Linda and approved by the board was made to purchase the new weather-resistant sign.

Linda said she has not received any news on the new site on Collins Road. She has contacted Howie's to determine if they are willing to hold on for another year before taking the north gardens. The county members had said they would meet in October to vote on the issue. Dick said parts of the North gardens are still private property and Howie's is interested in this additional part as well.

Pat suggested delaying the sign-up for next year gardening for another time in November and not during the annual meeting on Nov. 4th. Dates were set for registration: returning gardeners will register Dec. 7th and Jan. 4th. New gardener registration will be on Feb. 7th, 11th and March 7th. Cybil requested that registration for returning gardeners be completed by Jan. 4th. Registration by mail will be allowed and checks should be received by Jan. 4th. Returning gardeners will have to register as new gardeners if they fail to register by Jan. 4th. A motion by Cybil was created to set the date Jan 4th as final date for registration for returning gardeners, Leila seconded it and motion approved.

Linda passed out a summary of the preliminary results for the survey sent out in September.

Linda received a complaint by email from a gardener about weeds on plot SW14. She asked that neither herself, Ron, Pat or Dick be involved in the dispute. Cybil agreed to check on the plot and evaluate the weed situation and report back to Linda.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dale Stearns and Leila Maurmann