

**Manhattan Community Garden
Minutes of December 7th, 2011 Board Meeting**

Present: Dick Green, Ron Downey, Linda Teener, Pat Butler, John Rodgers, Leila Maurmann, Erika Huber, Cybil Perkins and Max Urich.

Dick called the meeting to order at 5:45 P.M. The minutes of the November 2nd Annual Meeting were reviewed. Cybil moved to approve the minutes with no changes and Ron seconded the motion. Linda presented the Treasurer's report. She noted that some returning gardeners already submitted their plot rentals for next year's gardening. Linda reported that expenses have increased due to the development for the Collins Lane Gardening Site. Pat moved to approve the Treasurer's report and John seconded the motion.

Dick had requested that the Committee Reports be sent to the board prior to the meeting. Not all reports were submitted beforehand and Dick requested that, due to time constraints, that the discussion the Committee Reports be delayed to the next Board Meeting. The reports are listed:

Committee Reports

Equipment: Dick Green

Members: C. Fontenot, D. Green, D. Hicks, & J. Hanna

Ad Hoc Members: P. Butler, J. Mainey, J. Rodgers, & M. Urick

The Equipment Committee performed end of year servicing on 10 pieces of power equipment on November 19th and cleaned the sheds. Expenses for year-end servicing totaled \$142.46. All equipment is in good working order. The black Craftsman tiller at the time of servicing was found to be out of oil due to a missing oil filler plug. This machine has been on the 'watch list' for some time and this may be the last season for this tiller. Replacement of the lawnmower blades was deferred until after the 2012 Spring Clean-up.

The Equipment Committee performed 7 mid-year oil changes for the tillers and mowers along with 24 repairs during the gardening season. These repairs ranged from replacing starter cords and carburetors to flipping on starter and fuel switches. The total cost of repair parts during this gardening season totaled \$325.73. Fuel costs for the gardening season were \$73.76 and current gasoline supplies on hand are minimal.

The Equipment Committee's inspections of the equipment noted in addition to the borderline 'Black' tiller that both 'Red' front-tined tillers are starting to show their 'age' due to the high number of hours they are used and a catastrophic or sudden failure for any front-tined tiller would not be unexpected. One 'Red' mower is showing signs of engine wear by blowing blue oil smoke at start up. The Equipment Committee is surprised that our mowers last as long as they do considering the aggressive use they incur at the gardens. The Equipment Committee noted that the 'Tilling Committee's' Snapper tiller received token use due to the availability of the Craftsman rear-tine tiller and recommends that this tiller be placed into routine service. The Equipment Committee also recommends the disposal of the Lawn Chief shredder due to the low usage and the fact that this shredder cannot handle our garden debris.

Rules and Safety: Ron Downey

The Rules and Safety Committee adopted a modified approach to dealing with plots that were overgrown with weeds or appeared abandoned. Contact (e-mail and calls) was made when a plot was identified as being too weedy or otherwise in bad shape. In addition to a warning, an offer was made to help if the individual was having a problem (e.g., health, personal problems, etc). All

individuals in general responded or in a few cases, a problem was noted and help was found to clean up the plot.

It was noted that there were only a few plots that needed cleaning during the last cleanup day. This suggests that the above approach was helpful in keeping down the number of abandoned plots.

I would like to thank Cybil Perkins for monitoring the North Gardens and giving me a heads up when there was a problem. I would also like to thank Dick Green for all his help in this area.

Communications: Cybil Perkins

1. Worked with Linda Teener to finalize the Registration Form
2. Ordered the registration form from Staples (Carbonless copies)
3. Composed and sent to all gardeners an on-line survey, then composed and send a follow-up email to all non-respondents.
4. Composed and sent to all gardeners an up-date regarding Collins Lane and the North Gardens
5. Sent emails to many survey respondents to clarify their responses.
6. Sent emailed reminders to all gardeners who needed service hours regarding the November work day.
7. Sent emailed reminders to all gardeners who were signed up to work the November Work Day
8. Recorded and analyzed all survey responses
9. Telephoned non-respondents to survey (with help of Erika & Dick)
10. Analyzed entire 2012 data available to determine which gardeners had and had not fulfilled their service hours to the gardens
11. Responded to all emails coming into the UFM Community Garden site
12. Up-dated correspondence list

Compost and Mulch: Dick Green

Chair: C. Feit

Interim Chair: D. Green

The Compost Committee obtained 11 loads of compost from the KSU Compost stockpile for the fall composting season. 4 loads were delivered by MCG volunteers due to the unavailability of City Public Works personnel and 7 loads were delivered by City Forester personnel. There are approximately 3 ½ loads of high quality compost stored on site for next year.

There is a possibility that MCG will be required to pay a \$10 loading charge for each truckload of compost in the future. At the end of the season, on one occasion, we were requested to pay loading charges. MCG was successful in obtaining the compost loading at no cost due principally to use of City trucks and the presence of a MCG volunteer to request wavier of the loading charges. Compost loading charges were not requested at the most recent loading cycle.

Records and Crop Walk: Dale Stearns

CROP stands for Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty. The annual CROP Hunger Walk was held October 9, 2011 in Manhattan. Funds contributed from the Walk help fight poverty in our local community and throughout the world. Church World Service is the organization that administers the aid globally. The 25% of the raised funds that remains locally goes to support community efforts to stop hunger such as the Flint Hills Bread Basket. The Manhattan Community Garden also receives an annual donation from CROP to subsidize the leasing costs of gardeners who have a financial need. The amount that the Community Gardens received from CROP in 2011 was \$834.50. Over 20 gardeners benefited from the subsidy.

There was much improved support for the CROP Walk in 2011 by the gardeners. Since the donation to CROP was highlighted in the gardener plot registration process, 65% of gardeners donated to

CROP, a total of 71 gardeners contributing. The total donated to the CROP Walk was \$500 for 2011. This is a huge increase over the 15 gardeners who donated a total of \$150 in 2010. I walked at the CROP Walk but am not aware of any other gardeners who did so. The Walk is not nearly as significant as the donations. I applaud the gardeners for their generosity in 2011.

These reports will be discussed in the next Board meeting, Jan. 5th, 2012.

The discussion moved to Old Business. Dick gave an update on the Collins lane area:

Collins Lane Status Report:

UFM and Riley County have finalized the lease agreement and UFM has a fully executed copy of the lease. UFM and Howie's have reached an agreement on services to be provided in exchange for UFM surrendering their lease on the North Gardens. Work activities have commenced at Collins Lane. Basic surveying is complete, Howie's has started clearing operations and the electric service power pole was installed by the Electric Power Club from MATC. In addition to Howie's exchange services, Bayer Construction has agreed to donate limestone screenings for the parking area with MCG paying the freight charges. Westar will mount the transformer and install the electric power service drop at no cost to MCG. Robert's Electric is preparing their quotation to complete the electrical service from the Westar transformer to the Collins Lane power pole.

Dick reported that a power pole was installed at the Collins Lane Site and that he needed approval for a donation to the Electric Power Club of the amount of \$100. Pat motioned to approve the donation and John seconded, motion approved.

The parking lot for the Collins Lane Site has been completed and a Geotextile fabric was used to improve drainage and stability of the parking lot. An Invoice of \$600 needed to be approved for the placement of the Geotextile. The motion to approve the invoice was made by Max and seconded by Linda. Motion approved.

Dick gave details about the installation of electrical power at the Collins Lane Site. He submitted a proposal from Roberts Electric for installation of an electric power panel in the amount of \$1,167.00. Dick said Westar Energy will later install the transformer and power up the site. Pat moved to approve the quotation and Cybil seconded. Motion approved.

Dick said that setup of the Collins Lane Site has been moving quickly. Ron said that Dick, Pat and John have been spending considerable amount of time at the area working with Howie's to get trees removed, site cleaned, parking lot construction, shed site setup, and electrical power. The configuration of the well is being determined, if weather permits work will continue in the area to make the site available for spring.

Dick said the water distribution lines will be installed and he asked for a budget of \$600 to get it done. Ron motioned to approve the budget request and Leila seconded. Motion approved.

The agreement with Howie's Recycling and UFM Community Learning Center regarding the gardening site at Collins Lane was detailed by Ron. The agreement includes a number of projects that Howie's will perform, such as cleaning up trees and debris, leveling the ground for sheds, purchase of a shed/steel box, installation of a well and hydrants. Howie's will also use their Brush Hog to mow the site and prepare it for plowing. John said the plowing may be done by one of the neighbors (Jack) of the Collins Lane site. However, it will depend on weather and if Jack is available. John and Dick said they rather not ask Jack to do this right now, since he has put away his equipment for the year, and it would be a considerable work.

Ron said 2 acres of land have been cleared. Howie's will install one hydrant and MCG will cover additional hydrants and the installation of electrical power.

Dick is taking care of all the permits required for the well installation and any other permits required by the Riley County.

A target deadline to surrender the North Gardens was set for April 1st, 2012. Howie's has agreed to allow gardeners to retrieve perennials from the garden area. Metal stakes and other structures will also be removed. Cybil said the majority of North Gardeners would like to do spring gardening at the North Garden site. Ron said that Howie's and MCG reached a compromise on the deadline due to the substantial work that will be done by Howie's at the Collins Lane site.

Erika asked about deer fencing for the Collins Lane area. Dick and John said they have not noticed many deer tracks in the area and at this point it is hard to determine if deer will be a problem. Ron also said the area is surrounded by open land used for agriculture and it would require deer to move through significant area to finally reach the new garden site.

Erika added that it is important to request that the city change the zoning for the South Gardens at Riley Lane in order to avoid possibly losing the site as well. Linda said she has already talked to the city staff and so far they have not been interested in changing the zone for the area. Cybil asked about the open space zoning used previously. Linda said the area is now a residential zone and the likely hood of development is minimal. She has requested the city to secure the South Gardens and suggested that the MCG Board speak to the city commissioners in the spring to discuss the zone changes.

Dick moved to the New Business item for the MCG board meeting. Nominations were taken for new MCG officers.

Dale had said he can remain as secretary, Linda moved to approve and Ron seconded. Motion approved.

Ron said he can remain as vice-president. Dick moved to approve and John seconded. Motion approved

Linda remains as treasurer.

Dick said that historically the MCG president is a person on his/her third year on the MCG board. Pat was then nominated as president. Linda moved to approve and John seconded. Motion approved. No other nominations were made for any of the MCG officers.

Cybil submitted the survey results, regarding returning South and North Gardeners. A significant amount of work was done by Cybil, with the help of Erika and Dick in order to contact all the gardeners. Only one person was not contacted, phone number and emails were either not available or incorrect. Based on the survey, 20 plots would need to be available at the South Gardens to accommodate all North Gardeners, with the current number of plots they have.

Linda and Ron suggested that the limit of 2 should be set for the number of plots to all gardeners. Considering this as a transitional year and in order to accommodate all North Gardeners it would be fair to reset gardeners to 2 plots only. Gardeners may be able to add more plots if they become available, after new gardeners registration. Ron made a motion to approve the limit to 2 plots per household, John seconded. Motion approved.

The household was also defined as gardeners from the same mailing address.

Ron said he will prepare a letter with Linda's help to address the 4 gardeners that have larger number of plots and were not willing to give them away. Schoenweis, Rader, Hitcham and Boyko/Rhodes will be asked to determine which 2 plots they would like to keep and that additional plots need to be surrendered.

An email will be sent to the MCG members about the April 1st, 2012 deadline, to allow gardeners to move their perennials or any other items from their plots, as well as an update regarding the Collins Lane Gardening site.

Max asked about transition costs and suggested contacting Service Clubs for donations for new equipment for the gardens. The board agreed and the subject will be addressed in following meetings.

John moved and Leila seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.