

Minutes

Winterville Community Garden Committee &
Winterville Community Garden General Membership Meeting
Monday, September 18, 2017
Location: Winterville Depot

Winterville Community Garden Committee Meeting
6:00 pm to 6:30 pm
Depot

Members present: Brenda Keen, Chair; Laurie Wilder, Treasurer; Sally Elie, Secretary; Averil Bonsall; Linda Russell; Coy Gibson; Nita Matthews-Morgan

AGENDA

Brenda Keen opened the meeting of the Committee

Minutes from the July and August Committee meetings were approved unanimously.

Laurie Wilder, Treasurer provided a typed report of finances.

Balance as of August 24, 2017 - \$ 5,171.30

Current balance as of September 18, 2017 - \$ 5,123.30

Credits: \$ 0

Debits: \$ check # 138 for \$48.00, ACC Landfill Compost

Pending expenditures:

- \$ 500.00 to City of Winterville for tree purchase/plantings
- Expenditures related to food costs for the general membership meeting to follow. Reimbursements TBD

Coy Gibson requests to step down from the Committee at the end of the year due to many other commitments. Committee accepted and thanked him for his service.

A partial load of compost was recently delivered. With upcoming fall/winter bed preparations, the Committee agreed at least one other full load would be needed.

The next rental cycle begins March 1, 2018. A few box rentals will not be offered to the current users due to consistent neglect of the boxes and perimeters.

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Sandwiches, condiments, chips, salad, and beverages provided by the Committee and WCG funds.

20 persons total in attendance

General Meeting opened by Brenda Keen, Chair.

A list of accomplishments over the past year was presented:

- Purchase and installation of a Tool shed
- Testing of the garden soil from the ACC landfill and the well water. Both reports indicated safe soil and water. The report analysis is available for review.
- Installation of a pollinator friendly garden outside the perimeter border (fire station/maintenance building sides)

An invitation for new garden committee members for three-year terms beginning January 2018 was extended. Applications can be requested by sending an email to the WCG email address and Brenda will forward the form. The Committee can be comprised of up to 12 members.

Garden survey

Averil presented a summary of the garden survey results by question and responses. Out of the 59 gardeners, 34 persons responded to the 10 questions.
(see printed document for results)

A garden member couple has taken produce to the small food bank located on Barber Street (near the Habitat store). Produce is a welcome donation at this facility open from 9 am to 1 pm, Monday to Friday. Donated food is placed in boxes for collection.

A suggestion was made to check with the Avery Place Retirement facility concerning food donations.

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Box rental fees:

The current fee is \$30/year from March 1st to March 1st.

A proposal was presented to raise the cost of the beds to cover paid workers to weed. The garden spent \$300.00 for a one time weeding of the main alleyways. Due to the overgrowth of weeds in some of the boxes and perimeters, it was necessary to find, at least, a temporary solution. Members, who have consistently attended scheduled work party days and volunteered additional hours, have spent considerable time and energy caring for unmaintained boxes and perimeters. A few people spoke who would be willing to paying \$ 5.00 up to \$ 20.00 extra/year for help.

There was concern to have provisions for lower income renters.

Standards for upkeep:

- In response to an email addressed to all garden members, the majority who responded would rather hire persons to weed. While this has been done once this year at a cost of \$ 300.00, routine - weeding expenses would be prohibitive within the budget and at the current box rental rate. How much would people be willing to pay for such a service?

Weeds, grasses are easily spread once they go to seed, in and out of the boxes. Boxes that have vegetables growing profusely outside the boxes make it more difficult to weed around the perimeter. If others have to cut back weeds between the beds, garden plants will be cut back as well.

Consistent noncompliance with standards (without a legitimate reason) means that others will pull weeds and bug infested plants from the boxes, and the box cannot be renewed for next year.

- A suggestion was made to use Round-up herbicide for those who didn't object or to set aside a section of the garden for such use. Brenda reminded the group that the use of such products such as Round up or Sevin dust (pesticide) is not compliant with the garden objectives of a chemical free garden. Such products are detrimental to pollinators.
- An organic herbicide comprised of Limonene has been employed in the garden with fairly good success if conditions are favorable; sunny, warm, and if plant material is of adequate height.

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- Placement of a good quality heavy landscape fabric between the individual boxes and covering with new gravel was open for discussion. Landscape material was not utilized when the garden was first established. The old asphalt was removed and pea gravel poured on the compacted earth. Over time, the gravel has thinned and been eroded by water. Spilled dirt provides a medium for seeds to germinate.
- Or, maintain the current pathways and allow the weeds and grass to grow up and continue weed whacking to control and hand weeding to control. Weed whacking was less favorably received.
- The Committee will research the costs of good quality landscape fabric and the gravel to cover. Expenditures for the entire garden, including the large alleyways or just between the beds, is expected to be significant.

Looking forward:

- Committee members proposed to research and offer (at a cost), T -posts or other structures to provide support for vegetables within the garden boxes.
- Averil proposed a field trip for interested persons to the Spring Valley Eco Farm. This farm is an example of sustainable agriculture through soil restoration and is open to scheduled tours by appointment. It involves about ½ mile of walking. Interest was expressed and to be considered during the fall months.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Sally Elie, recording Secretary