

# Hyatt Park Community Garden

## Fall Meeting Minutes

### November 11, 2015

Katie Ablard, Co-Leader, opened the meeting and welcomed gardeners. Katie noted that there are ten on wait list and two open plots

- Garden Winterization-- Dave Roeder reported:
  - Protecting the soil and preventing loss of topsoil. Dave stressed the importance of covering our plots in one way or another—to prevent weeds mostly, but also it will help with soil fertility. Try cardboard, which then could be covered with chopped up leaves. Newspapers may blow. Simplest of all is to put a thick layer of straw. More proactive is to sow green cover crops. Google Winter Cover Crops for alternatives: rye grass or annual grass; mustard in bulk; mixes of legumes, oats, etc. You can protect late-sown seeds with white row cover. Winterizing will save a lot of work in the spring. You can over-winter greens. (See Fall Minutes 2014 for more information.)
- Compost—Raja Nadarajah and Cathy Anderton: Cathy, new to garden this year, introduced herself and reported:
  - Four bins are now full of tomato plants. The fifth one is pretty empty. As composters, we struggle to get browns; coffee grounds are actually green. It was suggested that we rake and layer in leaves from surrounding trees. Please bring leaves to the garden to add to the compost bins at the fence facing Hamilton St. We could also get a weed whacker and reduce the leaves.
  - On Saturday, November 14, there's a work session from 9:30 to 11:30, when we will work to turn and/or mulch or shred. Julia will bring mulcher. If you bring bags, just leave them by the bins.
- Garden Leadership—Katie reviewed officer and team leader rolls:
  - Mary Graham—outgoing Co-Lead (2013-2015) thanked individuals for collaborative work. “Everyone has done so much, and that’s what makes a community garden great.”
- Executive Committee- Vote taken
  - Co-Leads: Katie Ablard and **Vickie Boone**—voted in
  - Treasurer: **Nathan Santry** (previously: Riccardo Cassalini 2013-2015)—absent, but voted in
  - Secretary: Janet Griffin staying for a third year
  - Plot Coordinator: **Judy Kendall** (previously: Laura Reams 2011-2015) Not present, but Bob, her husband, said she was willing—voted in.
- Team Leads
  - Perimeter: Jenny Lesselbaum and Chris Doyle will continue (Thank you.)
  - Compost: Raja Nadarajah and **Cathy Anderton**
  - Landscape and Maintenance: (Millard “Smitty” Smith) was thanked for his previous work. **Falani Spivey** and **Jen Kubit** stepping in

- Pest Control: Dave Roeder volunteered to continue to be rat king. Dave reported that we went through 12 lbs of poison. Dave thinks that the rats come from the store across the street, but that they are being reasonably controlled. This year the sweet potatoes were not eaten, which is a good sign.
- Plot Monitors: Lisa Davidson, Maggie Mills, and joining is **Lisa Walker**—they have a good system and Lisa D said; the team appreciates everyone’s efforts. Casual final inspection on this Sunday, Nov. 15. We understand that things are still bearing, but gardeners should show that they are starting to make an effort to winterize and still taking care of plots.
- Support Leads
  - Website- **Ilona Wolfe** has relieved the original lead Ryan Sours (2011-2015)—Ilona has been managing and she has agreed to continue.
  - Events: (previously Dave Roeder and Janet Griffin) **Gretchen Imahori** volunteered to coordinate the Harvest Potluck in the fall
  - Communications and Outreach-(previously: Judy Kendall) **Marci LeFevre** volunteered to take over. Judy and Bob were thanked for the new signs this year. We may want business cards, brochures, or perhaps t-shirts.
- Community Outreach
  - Hyattsville Aging in Place (HAP) program Veggies for Seniors—Lisa Walker reported on the program organized by Claire Storck, Janet Griffin, Lisa Walker
    - About 150 bags of vegetables were delivered from the garden to 17 or so senior members of HAP, many of whom are house bound.
    - The vegetables were gathered on Sundays and packed by garden members and then delivered by HAP members—headed up by Mary Cummins, who is helping lead initiative in HAP for healthy eating
    - The city council members, among others, commended the Hyatt Park Garden for establishing the program; *“This is the best of Hyattsville, and really just an amazing project. Thanks so much for the update and keep up the good work!”*
    - Lisa reminded gardeners that it is also a good way to have your plot usefully picked when you may be away for vacation. She said that a clearer contact for communicating contributing vegetables in this way will be provided next summer, as we plan to continue the program.
  - Other support opportunities:
    - Felegy Elementary might start a community garden and would like to learn from our garden. [http://www1.pgcps.org/edward\\_m\\_felegy\\_elementary.htm](http://www1.pgcps.org/edward_m_felegy_elementary.htm)
    - Dave Roeder is part of Chesapeake Natives and we can support the planting native plants
    - City Gardens train people in community gardens
    - Perhaps prospective gardeners at these other proposed gardens could join us for a workday.
    - It was suggested that at the spring meeting we might revisit whether the gardeners would like to do any mentoring or training.

- Garden Management
  - Budget Report- **Riccardo Casalini**, treasurer, reviewed the budget:
    - Riccardo stepped through this year's actuals and budget for next year (attached below). He suggested that we likely will continue to have about \$500-\$550 in reserve each year with this kind of budget.
    - Gardens funds went to a variety of purchases: 24 cubic yards—four loads--of compost for everyone; Paypal account fees, new signs, border plants, rat food, fence, truck rental. Though we planned on buying more beneficial insects, we bought only mantis eggs for \$16 as it was a light insect year.
    - There was a discussion of ideas for the future allocation of an anticipated surplus:
      - Save for unanticipated expenses?
      - Make a small donation to future Heurich Park Community Garden? Horticulture Society gave \$500 donation (in addition to a small loan) to us when we started.
      - Increase quantity of Leaf Grow Compost ordered, but it was noted that there was some left over.
      - More ideas: Maggie suggested speaker series; more equipment; enhancing the pot luck; Perhaps there could just be donations by gardeners to the new community garden.
    - Vote There was motion, a second, and a vote in favor of saving the surplus for any unanticipated expenses.
  
- Legal issue and Liability Insurance--Katie noted that there has been discussion of the benefits of purchasing liability insurance for the leadership team. The discussion included:
  - Varied estimates of the cost (from \$800 to \$950) to the efficacy of such insurance (whether having insurance would actually make it more advantageous for someone to sue.) Some steps might require the Hyatt Park Community Garden to become a 501C3, and there are effort/costs to taking this step, which may be more than onerous.
  - Certain other legal concerns were discussed, including making sure that applications for garden plots, which have to be renewed annually by all members, include a waiver of the right to sue the garden and its leadership.
  - The creation of Rules and By-Laws committee was announced. It will be headed by garden member and attorney **Patrick Sternal**. Other members had agreed to be on the committee or volunteered during the meeting: Mark Graham, Katie Ablard, Riccardo Casalini, Maggie Mills, Dave Roeder, and Laura Reams (important as she can also represent the city). Potential considerations for the committee:
    - Clarification of rules/by-laws
    - Process by which members join the garden
    - Procedures to follow for the revocation of membership
    - Policies for renewing membership

- Police oversight at garden, with the note that it is the Park Police, rather than Hyattsville City Police, which has jurisdiction over the garden.
- Certain items were brought to the members for a vote:
  - Age requirement to join as a member? There had been an applicant for garden membership who was under the age of 18. While Dave Roeder noted that we have had young people working in the garden while being mentored by adult gardeners, it was moved by Diane Bongiorno that all members must be 18. Voted and agreed upon.
  - Residency requirements were discussed. If a legal resident of Hyattsville with a drivers' license or other official documentation which shows a Hyattsville address, one can be a member. Voted and agreed upon
  - Are Spring and Fall meetings mandatory or just expected? Consequences? Rewards? Dave Roeder suggested that the original intention was that the meetings were mandatory, rather than individual members' attendance. The new Rules and By-Laws Committee was asked to clarify.
- Compost was discussed. While not all the purchased compost was used by garden members this year (the first year that the cost was supported by the garden budget), it was decided that the importance of adding it to the garden plots annually would be stressed and a workday might be scheduled to move left-over compost into the garden.

Meeting adjourned with refreshments enjoyed after the meeting.

| <b>Account Balance</b> |  | <b>\$ 561.65</b>   | <b>Proposed budget for 2016</b> |   |
|------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Income</b>          |  | <b>\$ 1,983.96</b> | <b>Income</b>                   |   |
|                        | carryover from 2013                        | \$ 933.96          |                                 | balance as Nov 2015 561                             |
|                        | Garden dues                                | \$ 1,050.00        |                                 | garden fees 2016 1020 (31 full. 2 half plots)       |
|                        |  |                    |                                 | total income 1581                                   |
| <b>Expenses</b>        |  | <b>\$ 1,422.31</b> | <b>Expenses</b>                 |   |
|                        | paypal payment fees                        | \$ 41.26           |                                 | Paypal fees 40.09                                   |
|                        | compost                                    | \$ 659.50          |                                 | Compost 700 (4 trucks, 24cy, about \$170 per truck) |
|                        | praying mantis 5 pack from planet natural  |                    |                                 | Rat poison 60                                       |
|                        | 4/20/2015 (spark boy ent.)                 | \$ 16.50           |                                 | Flowers for border 50                               |
|                        | 23-Apr signs                               | \$111.00           |                                 | Beneficials insects 100                             |
|                        | 19-Jun plants for the border (Dave)        | \$99.00            |                                 | web hosting 2yrs, Arvix 96                          |
|                        | 19-Jun rat poison                          | \$18.50            |                                 | total expenses 1046.09                              |
|                        | 18-Jul rat poison                          | \$20.95            |                                 | balance as Nov 2016 534.91                          |
|                        | 12-Sep Fence parts                         | \$386.90           |                                 |   |
|                        | 12-Sep Rental truck to pick up fence parts | \$ 60.73           |                                 |   |
|                        | 12-Sep Gas for rental truck                | \$7.97             |                                 |   |