

Hyatt Park Community Garden (HPCG)  
Spring 2016 Meeting: March 20, 3:00 - 4:00  
Hyattsville Municipal Building

## Meeting Minutes

### 1. **Introductions** – by Katie Ablard, HPCG co-lead

- Executive Committee – Katie and one other (to be named); Nathan Santry, Treasurer; Janet Griffin, Secretary; and Judy Kendall, Membership Coordinator. (Judy serving as secretary for this spring membership meeting.)
- Nathan reports that all members have paid in full. No need to collect additional dues amounts as there are no major garden upgrades/projects on the horizon.
- Team Leads

Work Day Team Leads: Chris Doyle, Jenny Lesselbaum, Jen Kubit, Falani Spivey and Raja Nadarahjah

Plot Monitors: Lisa Davidson, Maggie Mills, Lisa Walker

Pest Control: Dave Roeder

- **Support Leads**: Ilona Wolfe, Website Administrator; Marci LeFevre, Communications/Outreach; Events (garden party), Gretchen Imahori. Marci plans to start a monthly newsletter that will include a gardening tip and a recipe each month. Gretchen plans to send out a poll to garden members for choosing a fall weekend date for the potluck garden picnic.

**New Members** were introduced by Judy Kendall: Melinda and Bob Baldwin, plot #24; Amanda Austin and Jessica Port, plot #37. There are currently 14 on the wait list.

### 2. **Vote for New Co-Leader** – The garden members present at the meeting voted unanimously to approve Cathy Anderton as garden co-lead. Cathy will continue as co-lead in 2017 and another member will be elected to take over for Katie Ablard next year.

### 3. **Thanks and Requests- Katie Ablard**

Members are asked to pitch in to pick up trash in and around the garden (bags, wrappers, etc.) There may be a need to put out bulk trash soon – tomato cages, stakes, etc. Michael Gorman has agreed to take out the trash on Wednesday evenings for the Thursday pick-up.

The old hand-made ceramic signs have been repaired. Volunteer(s) wanted to put up on the gates again. The latches on the gates are hard to open/close; anyone who is handy is welcome to take a look and repair them.

**4. HPCG Website Administrator- Ilona Wolfe**

Ilona asks that members report any issues related to the website to her using [webadmin@hyattparkgarden.org](mailto:webadmin@hyattparkgarden.org) . Members can also contact Ilona directly at [ilonatwolfe@gmail.com](mailto:ilonatwolfe@gmail.com)

**5. “Best Producing Plants”- Chris Doyle**

Chris reported that his attempts at “companion gardening” didn’t go far. His snow peas and sugar snap peas are an early crop that is coming up now, growing along 2 sides of chicken wire structure. Chris had problems with beetles on the bush beans he planted last year, but had very good luck with kabusca squash and sweet potatoes. Nathan reports that he has “tons” of garlic that are up now after over-wintering in the soil. In the past, the braided garlic that he’s kept in his home has extended from ceiling to the floor. Only problem with garlic is that you can’t put winter cover over it. Members report that visiting Riccardo’s plot is like visiting an “Italian hill town”. Radishes, carrots and beets are companions to garlic. Judy, Nathan and others reported great success with butternut and other squash last season, but caution not to put in many plants as they take over the entire plot. Kale and spinach have also grown well – some plants even survived the winter months. Falani mentioned that her okra plants have always done well. Julia, Katy, Nathan and others discussed their success with growing potatoes. Potatoes can also be grown in 5 gallon buckets! Smitty let other gardeners know that he will have extra tomato plants (different varieties) to donate in May and June. He will put them out on the garden’s picnic table.

**6. Work Days- Katie Ablard and Chris Doyle**

Members are required to give 4 hours per year in work hours at the garden. Generally, work days are for weeding, spreading woodchips, turning compost, making needed repairs. Members can sign up for workdays on the website. Three dates will be scheduled each month, some weekend days and some week days. One-hour evening weekday sessions will also be scheduled.

**7. HAP Project 2016- Claire Storck**

Claire and other volunteers coordinated a surplus produce delivery to 17 seniors in Hyattsville. As we get further along in the growing season – late July and into August and September, garden members will be able to donate produce on Sunday mornings.

A cooler will be kept out on the picnic table. Claire could use help with bagging produce. Her team is also happy to pick from plots of gardeners (with their permission) who will be out of town/on vacation.

#### **8. Water- Nathan Santry**

As of this writing, the water main break in the garden has been repaired! Water has not yet been turned on, but will be soon. Nathan discussed the primary watering tip which is to use cans for direct plant watering rather than using the hoses for broadcast watering of plots. The main advantage here is to keep down the number of weeds but spot watering also cuts down on fungal growth. Another tip is to water in the evenings because the soil will stay wet longer during the warm summer days. Also, hoses tend to knock over plants. Julia mentioned the idea of possibly investing in hose guides that help control where hoses go when being used.

#### **9. Compost- Raja Nadarajah**

If folks are weeding their plots now, they should use one of the 2 bins that are currently being used. Make sure you shake off the dirt from the weeds first to minimize the loss of topsoil from your plot. Long wire grass should NOT be put in the compost bin but in the trash. Also, stalks from plants (e.g., sunflowers) should be put in the bins in small pieces or not at all. Whole tomato plants should not be put in either – please cut these down to small sections first. Cardboard sheets should also be broken up into small pieces. Coffee grounds brought from home are ok. Leafgro pile is currently at the garden. Members should use three large wheelbarrows full or five of the small wheelbarrow full to work into their plots. Please use as soon as you can, preferably in the first 2 weeks of April but definitely no later than tax day – April 15.

#### **10. Plot Inspections- Lisa Davidson**

Members can find a list of possible violations on the garden website. Generally, members must keep weeds down in their plots and around the perimeter of their plots. There are also restrictions on shading your neighbors' plots with tall plants and allowing trailing plants to spill over into adjoining plots. Garden inspectors conduct inspections on the last Wednesday of each month and warnings are given to plot owners who are given a short amount of time to correct the problem. The only major plot violation is not maintaining your plot at all.

#### **11. Garden Support Structures- Julia Stadler and Ryan Sours**

Julia and Ryan gave great demos with props that they use in their plots. One of Ryan's structures is used in his plot to grow peas and the other trellis is used for zucchini or other squash. Advantage is that you can grow greens in the shade underneath the trellis. Julia's is used to control tomato plants once they get tall and unwieldy. She uses 8 ft. poles in a 2 ft. trench. The poles have drilled holes towards the top through which long dowels can be used to drape the tomato plant "antennae" – just remove suckers and train the plant up to keep leaves off the ground. Yarn can be used to tie up plants. See Julia or Ryan at the garden if you want to learn more about using similar structures.

## **12. Mosquitoes- Mary Graham**

Who knew that Mary knew SO much about mosquitos!?? Mary was once employed by the Maryland Dept. of Agriculture where she learned about pest control (specifically mosquitos). She spoke about the various species of mosquito using names we couldn't ever hope to pronounce and that I couldn't possibly try to spell here. Some facts: The Asian tiger mosquito is an invader species (*aedes albopictus*) that is known to transmit viruses that cause dengue fever. These mosquitos have not ever successfully overwintered in Maryland yet. West Nile virus seems to be fading. There was just one death due to West Nile (a form of encephalitis) last year and none the year before. There will be a meeting in Annapolis on April 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Zika virus. The state of Maryland has a year-round pest control program with great entymologists. Public health workers in the state are very actively looking at mosquito vectors like standing water, etc. The state does not use pyrethroids or organophosphates for pest control. The best mosquito control defense for residents is to control sitting water – biggest culprits are gutters, tarps placed over items in yards and water in pots, etc. Smitty had heard that tiger mosquitos do not need water to lay eggs. Mary said that there does have to be some water source present: They use bamboo, cattails and small woodland pools and like to rest in ivy during the day. The female mosquito only needs to have sex once, but needs blood each time she lays eggs.

## **13. Rules and Bylaws- Patrick Sternal**

Rules and by-laws are currently being revised to include language about rule-breaking that can result in the termination of memberships. The executive committee is doing a final review now and the revised by-laws will likely be ready for those joining and re-joining the garden next spring.

14. Snacks, socializing, t-shirt sales from 4:00-5:00

