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Wayland Leonard

KILLINGLY COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING / WORKSHOP MEETING WITH AGRICULTURE COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, December 06, 2017
7:00 p.m.
Killingly Town Hall
172 Main Street, Killingly CT 06239
Room 102

Amended – Minutes

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

- A. **Welcome and Introductions**—Meeting called to order by chair, Wayland Leonard, at 7:01pm.
KCG: Wayland Leonard, Jess Viens, Samantha Abbamonte, Brittany Evans, Carrie Carter and John Colbridge. Heather Goodier – absent with notification.
AG: Frank Anastasio, Chris Shaw and Virginia Keith
Staff: Jonathan Blake (KCG), Ann-Marie Aubrey (AG)

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. **November 01, 2017 Regular Meeting** – Discussion ensued regarding some of the language of the minutes and the requirements for posting minutes with the Town Clerk.

A motion was made by Sam Abbamonte to table approval of the minutes. Seconded by John Colbridge. Approved unanimously.

III. Citizens' Comments- Kyle Spalding, 33 Lyon Hill Road Woodstock, CT, a member of the Quiet Corner Democratic Socialists of America; introduction only.

A motion was made by John Colbridge, seconded by Carrie Carter to suspend Citizens Comment rules for this meeting. Approved unanimously.

(7:21 – Killingly Agriculture Commission called their meeting to order. Roll call: Frank Anastasio, Chris Shaw, and Virginia Keith present) Byron Martin – absent with notification, Cristina Salisbury – absent without notification.

IV. Ongoing Business – review/discussion/action

- A. **Workshop Meeting with Agriculture Commission Members**
c) **Plus/Delta Exercise - (review/discussion/action) –**
Plus (Items that went well), Delta (Items that should be improved upon).

Carrie Carter reviewed a list of Plus and Delta items that she had drafted.

Plus: Literature for Tomato Festival / brochures, New Gardeners / Members (Samantha Abbamonte (Treasurer), Heather Goodier (Unofficial Media Person) and the people from Democratic Socialist group; pollinator garden (Linda's Garden) is designed / in the ground; some herbs growing well; shed cleanout / organization; class on winter gardening; pathway project is almost done; new signage in front of garden; new tools (weed whacker); new Town Liaison (Jonathan Blake); help from Agriculture Commission member Virginia Keith; watering was done; soil tests were taken; wood mulched around garden; planted approximately 500 bulbs at the garden; planted bulbs at Friends of Assisi Food Pantry and Pomfret Community Garden; site visits to other gardens (Putnam, Pomfret, New Haven); website is up and running.

Delta: Watering system; gardeners not caring for plots and none / little follow up with them; not much fertilization; advertising and media; little food brought to food bank; some unhealthy plants especially tomatoes and watering schedule not being adequate.

How to improve for next year (Discussion of turning Delta items into Plus):

Watering Issues: Mulching – salt marsh hay / straw in garden beds to extend time between watering; utilizing water barrels on site; rotating weekly schedule for officers to water; having the barrels available for gardens to fill watering cans (keeping it assessable).

Gardeners not caring for plots: Following up with them; possible roll for Volunteer Coordinator; Subcommittee / working group for a few officers to reach out once a month which could include following up with gardeners; Town Staff (Jonathan) is available to follow up with gardeners if it is believed they have abandoned a plot; having an incentive program or contest to keep gardeners focused and active; keeping garden rules / best practices fresh for gardeners.

Advertising / Media: Staying consistent and fresh, addition of Heather Goodier as a possible Media Coordinator officer position (there has been an increase with web traffic since her involvement; 458 Followers on Facebook and 57 on Instagram).

Fertilizing: Getting back to composting; spot fertilizing with blood meal; possibly introducing water soluble nutrients into barrels; staying organic; organic certified fish emulsion.

The Group reviewed the Soil testing at this time done by The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. And will look to make the recommended changes for next season.

Education / Classes: Looking to do more informal (onsite at garden) classes and formal (offsite or at garden). Canning classes, herbal products classes, looking for near points of contacts for running classes, advertising for instructors, basic gardening class, organic gardening class, perennial division class, seasonal planting classes.

Food Bank: Set times to make donations during the week, planting more, being more accountable, utilizing more of the garden space, adding a standing agenda item of donations for each meeting, keeping track of donations in a log book (Friends writes a letter, and / or receipts), checking with Friends (Food Bank) to see what items are desirable, partnering with other organizations for donations (other food banks), encourage gardeners to bring in extra product from their gardens for donation or even from their plots at KCG, adding a donation drop off point at KCG.

Plant Health: Fertilizing, selective spraying, be more attentive of possible pests affecting the garden, KCG would be the main control for spraying, possible class / workshop regarding pests and plant health.

(8:01 PM – John Colbridge left meeting)

d) Putnam Community Garden Visit Recap (review/discussion/action) –

An email was passed out to the group from Virginia Keith (Dated: Monday, October 23, 2017 7:31 AM) which summarizes Putnam Community Garden Visit from October 16th.

A copy of Putnam Community Garden's rules and regulations, application form and contact information was also passed out.

Carrie Carter said that her notes on the Putnam and Pomfret Community Garden visits have been emailed to KCG with a spreadsheet with information / ideas.

Frank Anastasio said that John Larusso at Pomfret is a great contact with his involvement with the Master Gardener program, since they are required to do projects and could be beneficial to the garden.

Discussion was had regarding the operation structure of Putnam and Pomfret Community Gardens. How Putnam advertises the garden and the role / incentive of managing the garden. Wayland Leonard suggested that manager role for KCG would correspond with the earlier watering schedule, rotating oversight by the executive board.

Carrie Carter suggested updating the garden rules to include minimum maintenance of garden hours. Virginia Keith recommending that KCG review the Community Garden Management Toolkit which had been emailed by Carrie Carter (October 17, 2017 at 1:57 PM), that has a lot of great ways of handling garden rules and waivers. Discussion was had regarding the current rules and regulations and gardening application. The original forms should be kept with Town Staff, and should be re-signed by gardeners every year. Wayland Leonard said that he would email over the most current forms to Staff.

e) Review Goals – short and long term (review/discussion/action) –

Short term: Outreach – Advertising bring in new gardeners / volunteers. Discussion was had regarding the Volunteer Coordinator position; their role and how AG would be able to measure success. Frank Anastasio suggested that if the AG Commission approves the Volunteer Coordinator position then a subcommittee would have to be formed to review and discuss that position's role and stipend. An alternative was also discussed as a gardener filling that role, with possible incentives being waived garden space fees or a stipend.

Discussion was had regarding the overall goal of the garden being a hybrid of what Putnam (rent garden plots) and Pomfret (pure donations) do. That education was a key aspect of KCG goal that isn't offered at other neighboring community gardens. KCG expressed that a Volunteer Coordinator could help coordinate the day to day aspects of the garden to allow the Executive Board to focus on other aspects of the garden, including educational classes and open houses. Discussion continued regarding the role of the Gardeners, Executive Board, and Volunteer Coordinator.

A goal regarding book keeping and finance procedures was also discussed, making sure that the Treasurer, Staff, and Finance are in communication.

Jonathan Blake suggested that each Executive Board member take the time to review their roles according to the bylaws especially if they are looking to bring on a Volunteer Coordinator position. Chris Shaw suggested adding new roles / executive positions, for example the Social Media Person.

Adding language to the rules regarding that clarifies who can be involved with the garden and seed requirements (Certified Organic). Discussion continued regarding the amount of garden space available (Max number of gardeners), advertising for more gardeners and timetable. Further discussion regarding outreach and advertising will be added to the agenda for the January 03, 2018 Meeting.

f) 2018 Growing Season – goals, plans, suggestions (review/discussion/action) –

Covered during goals (agenda item e)

g) Community Outreach / Educational Programs (review/discussion/action) –

Covered during plus delta exercise / goals (agenda item c & e)

h) Grant Requirements (review/discussion/action) –

Jonathan Blake summarized some basic grant requirements that had been discussed in previous meetings pertaining to the Beacon Grant (Elks). Quantifying volunteer hours, keeping track of expenditures, community impacts including but not limited to donations, number of gardeners using space, statistics of who utilized the space (veterans). Overall best practices for measuring results for future grants or donations. Sam Abbamonte suggested thank you letters being a good practice moving forward with donations.

i) Management Review (review/discussion/action) –

Covered during goals (agenda item e)

j) New Business (review/discussion/action) –

2018 annual meeting dates have been posted with the Town Clerks office and copies were made available.

The water lines (irrigation system) at the garden were winterized by Frank Anastasio, Carrie Carter, Eric Rumsey and Jonathan Blake. One shutoff valve was replaced; a second valve will also need to be replaced. Carrie Carter has the second valve with her and is purchasing a replacement. A small leak was found and has been temporarily taped over; that will be patched by Carrie Carter. The hose that connects the building to the irrigation system is missing a clamp.

Note: Agriculture Commission adjourned at 9:03 PM. Motion by Chris Shaw, Virginia Keith second, all approved.

V. Next Meeting – Wednesday, December 06, 2017

VI. Adjournment – Sam Abbamonte motion to adjourn at 9:04 PM. Jess Viens second, all approved.