

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

November 15, 2023

Mission Statement:

The Holden Community Garden Committee is a volunteer organization working to provide and support Holden residents, individually and collectively, to grow food, flowers, fruits, and herbs on town land including the redeveloped property on Highland Street. Our efforts will enable residents to enjoy the beauty of our town while developing a sense of community through cooperative action, learning about sustainable and environmentally conscious gardening as well as ethical harvesting.

The Holden Community Garden Committee also exists to foster the education of the children of Holden through the support of community gardens in local schools and community groups. These gardens will help to develop the appreciation of future generations for the importance of agriculture and responsible environmental practices, and provide education and positive experiences through gardening and physical activity.

In Attendance: Jessica Cosenza, Chair; Members present: Katy Brier, Julie McCarthy; Gina Tutela, Aleel Grennan, Michael Mazloff, Wayne Dodge; garden participants: Matt Glavickas, George Klicka

Meeting called to order at 6:18

AGENDA

The minutes of the October, 2023 meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the October, 2023 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

GARDEN CLEAN UP REVIEW

November 5, 10am-2pm. We used cardboard and chips and marked out the perimeter for plots #17-22 using a no till method. Jessica will follow up with the DPW on loam delivery and placement. Jessica will send volunteer letters to High school students for proof of involvement. Wayne and Michael suggested that we consider using equipment vs volunteers to move extra loam to top off existing plots in the spring.

APPLICATION REVIEW

The committee went through the 2023 Application line by line to suggest edits for 2024. The plan is to move forward with the updates and have the application ready by January 2024.

- Remove single fence line
- No need to specify materials used for structures
- General report of theft to be discussed each meeting versus chairwoman responsibility to collect and report.
- Add information on how to report concerns. Concerns are theft or improper use of property.
- Garden work days are 8 hours per season-specify that the work days are to maintain common areas
- Legal page to remain

Michael volunteered to be a point person for insect & weed questions, and can provide input to gardeners.

Next year consider adding signage if sprayed with organic insecticide. Not everyone reads the emails. No further suggestions for application. The application will be updated and presented for final approval at the December meeting. It will be available on the shared Google Drive as well.

Motion #2

To approve the edits as noted.

Voted and Approved.

WATER PLANS

John Woodsmall has confirmed on site that a third spigot will be placed at the back edge of the garden to reach the last row of plots. Jessica will ask that the DPW will push back the perimeter to allow access. Wayne is point person for placement questions with DPW.

A water collection unit (#3) and tank will be placed by the road side to allow access by HFD. Final decision on location will be made in Spring 2024. Mike Tutela and Joe Brier have volunteered to build. The funding will come from the budget as previously agreed.

FUNDING UPDATE

Michael drafted an initial email to Jessica which will need to be reviewed and edited before presentation to the Town Manager. This will serve as a request for permission to explore the possibility of 501C3 in 2024.

Michael has been receiving guidance and suggestions from members of the Friends of the Gale Free Library as well as Friends of the Senior Center.

Preliminaries were discussed including the process to create a non-profit entity, incorporate as an organization, create bylaws which honor the open meeting laws required in MA, register with the Attn General's office, manage forms and receipts, recruit board members vs consider dual roll members from the HCGC.

Michael will reach out to Anne Sadick to collaborate, define the entity, and research support. Further details to be presented at the next meeting.

COMMUNITY HARVEST

Gina is collecting for the Food Pantry this week. Katye will create and publish a social media notice for donations to reach Gina by 7:30 AM on Friday.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

- Jessica discussed the police report that has been filed with the Town. She may have to request an amendment for the property to reflect "community garden" instead of "farm".
- Allison Grady is returning with a plan to improve the area that she started to build, with stone seating to prevent theft, signage to encourage participation and discourage damage and removal of installation pieces, and to eliminate the train portion of the plan.
- Michael asked about publicizing the new plots that will be available in 2024. He suggested that the Holdenma.gov links be updated, and the flashing sign at the center of town could be used to let people know when the application is available. Jessica mentioned that she has a wait list currently. Present participants and Holden Residents who have made a request will be reached with the application first when approved, and then a campaign can be discussed at a future Meeting.

- George would like to collect home addresses for sending Holiday Cards. Jessica will email the group with his request.
- Aleel has created a shared Google Drive as an archive for shared documents. She will be emailing the invitation out to all participants; committee members have received the invite and they do not need a Google account to view. Everyone will have the ability to view; committee members will have editing privileges.
- Cards from the Community Garden discussed. There may be money in the budget. It would be difficult for Katye to get this completed by the end of the year. Jessica will look for something to send to the donors of 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:20; **NEXT MEETING:** December 13 at 6:15 at the Starbard Building