

# HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

June 14, 2021

## 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: Katye Brier, Tracy Acito, Mike Trigiano, Gina Tutela;  
Garden participant: Candy Graham  
Absent: Julie McCarthy

Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm.

## AGENDA

The minutes of March 16, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

### Motion #1

**To approve the May 2021 HCG Minutes**

**Voted and Approved.**

## Sign Project/DPW Update

Jessica reported that she emailed John for updates since the last meeting and spoke to him by phone today. This was reviewed with Katye as she has been the active organizer of the project. Each of the companies who we have been working with have gone up on their prices since the initial quote, and the Serrato company is the only option available to us, with current costs limiting our options to a smaller aluminum sign.

Jessica explained that we currently have 2 options which require a decision at this meeting:

- (1) The committee could accept this sign proposal and have an alternative sign produced, using all of our current budget available, resulting in a smaller sign of a different quality than what was initially proposed, or
- (2) The committee can decide instead to use our current funds to move forward with another project on the goals list: to obtain seating on site. This project was scheduled to be researched and purchased with the 2022 funding, however if we can make a decision to move forward, submit that decision by June 15, and allow Chris and John to choose and purchase seating (request for an ADA accessible picnic table and a separate bench), we can apply the funding from this year and not lose that budgeted money.

Jessica explained all of this information, as provided by email and phone call from John, and Katye provided her insight from her work with the sign project. Jessica reminded the committee that if we delay the sign project, we can still apply for funding or raise money for the project in the future to meet the cost of the product initially proposed. There was agreement among the group that members would like to see the final sign be to the standards of what was initially envisioned.

#### **Motion #2**

**To delay the sign project and move forward with the seating project, giving the decision to John and Chris by June 15th, with the idea that we are requesting to use the current budget for an ADA accessible picnic table and separate bench. Proposed by Katye Brier.**  
**Voted and Approved.**

#### **Girl Scout Project Update**

Julie unable to attend. The bridge is installed and will be used for a bridging ceremony.

#### **Davis Hill/School Updates**

Jessica paid for and applied the amendments to the gardens as per the USDA soil testing and advice. Jessica will be contacting the DH Office for reimbursement. Some clean up performed, and Katye has moved more plants into the perimeter of the garden. We now have 2 families participating for the summer, each with 2 raised beds. Jessica reminded Katye to pass along the remaining application form signed with the waiver for use of town property for gardening. This needs to be on file with the town and we need to have an active and updated contact list. The sign and birdbath are installed, but we still haven't heard anything about the compost tumbler or equipment access. Kate and Jess to followup.

#### **Community Harvest Update**

Gina Tutela will continue collecting for the Wachusett Food Pantry. A social media post will make note that we will be collecting on the 3rd Friday of the month for senior distribution (including fresh produce) or the 3rd Saturday of the month for general distribution. Volunteers can contact Gina for information on where to drop off donations.

#### **Motion #3**

**To approve the posting of invitation to collect for food pantry, with Gina as the contact person.**  
**Voted and Approved.**

#### **Old and New Business**

1. Raised beds- Jessica Planted the first raised bed for the food pantry project (tomatoes, carrots, greens). She requested help to fill and plant the second bed, or we should take this down to store it. Gina and Mike both discussed interest in planting this second bed. They will followup.
2. Plot Numbers- Katye printed a test copy and has not noted any significant fading. She will print the remaining plot numbers and email Abigail Benoit in the town office to order stakes for these, She is working to create the perennial plant markers, but likely will need more time to complete this and other laminating projects.
3. Mike shared that his plot was fully dug and tilled in late May by a new gardener who did not recall the correct plot assignment when she came to the garden to prepare her plot. The new gardener has replaced all of Mike's plants, and donated more.

4. Jessica reported having noticed that someone has started a new planted area off to the side, at the perimeter area of the garden. This was done without request or permission from the committee or town. That area has not been assigned, soil has not been tested or amended, and there has not been a discussion of water requirements for that area. Therefore, Jessica requested permission from the group to send an email to illustrate these concerns to all participants, and to request that anyone with ideas of further development of the property be present at a community garden meeting to have these ideas discussed and reviewed.

**Motion #4**

**To approve the sending an email to illustrate concerns about the newly developed, unapproved perimeter garden area.**

**Voted and Approved.**

5. Regarding Instagram/Facebook- Katye requested content help. All gardeners were reminded that they are invited to participate in the gardener of the month project.
6. Michael reports that he will be spreading Diatomaceous earth. This will be communicated to gardeners by email.
7. Candy briefly described plans to clean and plant her plot (#11).

**Next Meeting**

TBD

**Adjourned 7:35 pm**