

# HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

January 26, 2022

## 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, Aleel Grennan, Mike Trigiano, Gina Tutela, Julie McCarthy; Participant: Wayne Dodge

Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm Via Zoom.

## AGENDA

The minutes of the December 2021 meeting were reviewed.

### Motion #1

**To approve the December 2021 HCG Minutes**

**Voted and Approved.**

## Budget & Sign Project Update

Katye shared her screen and discussed the mock up and new quotes on proposals for the sign that Sunshine Sign has created. The two proposals differ in the materials. These amounts reflect the DPW installing the posts and sign. She will check to see if we can get the price down with a smaller sign than the one in the mock up. She will get updated quotes and follow up with Jessica and John Woodsmall by email.

### Motion #2

**To approve the continuation of this project proposal, and also try to get the graphics to highlight the word "COMMUNITY".**

**Voted and Approved.**

Jessica updated the group on her discussions with Abigail Benoit and John Woodsmall (phone and email communications as followup from the last meeting). The funding from the Holden Cultural Grant has been fully spent on the table and bench project. There is \$1000 in the budget for this year. If we agree to spend it on one of the sign proposals, we can get approval for the wooden sign to be purchased and installed, but the aluminum sign cost exceeds what is available to us. Katie will check with Sunshine Sign

to get an estimate on typical lifetime/expected wear on the wooden sign. Once final estimates are received, Jessica will follow up with John Woodsmall to get a verbal approval.

We also discussed placement of the sign, which may be relocated to ensure optimal visibility of the sign as well as eliminating any visual obstacles at the outlet of the access road. This will be further discussed with the DPW and the building inspector once the sign is purchased.

### **Girl Scout Update**

Julie McCarthy will be attending the "Leader Meeting" in March where the Girl Scout leaders come together to discuss upcoming badge projects. She will try to establish a list of opportunities for badge work at the garden.

Conor Dillon has been in touch with Jessica by email to communicate that he has been working on an estimate for his table and bench proposal at the Davis Hill site. He has not come up with a plan on funding. He was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to a track meet. Also, there was no response regarding his project ideas from the school.

There is a Worcester Garden Club (WGC) grant cycle open now. They have been generous to the garden last year with our proposal. The committee discussed asking Conor if he would like to write a proposal for this grant opportunity to support his project. Gina will contact him on this, and Jessica volunteers to assist in writing it. Katye will contact the WGC to let them know that we are working with a scout on a proposal.

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

Jessica reported that she reached out to Davis Hill, Dawson and Mayo teachers/garden leaders to discuss the winter sewing project. So far, Mrs. Piasano has responded and Aleel will be in touch. Gina will reach out again to Mrs. Duffy.

### **Grant Updates**

Worcester Garden Club discussed above. Katye and Jessica to follow with researching additional opportunities. All members are invited to research and submit ideas for grant/funding opportunities. Each project must be approved by the town or the school that the grant would be intended to support before being submitted.

### **Community Harvest Updates**

No new updates, but Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry throughout the winter months. Next collection by Feb. 17 please.

### **Old/New Business**

Michael Trigiano announced that he is resigning due to the sale of his home and upcoming relocation out of town. The committee thanks him for his service, invites him to return as a VIP guest speaker and participant, and invites him to submit his resignation to the Town Manager's office.

Aleel is ready to move forward with the winter sewing at the garden as well. Jessica has let the DPW know that the milk jugs on site are intentional and should remain there.

Re: New Applications and Former Participants Returning-

Wayne Dodge is present at this meeting and has introduced himself as a new gardener with the HCGC for 2022. There is another new couple joining us, with the application received and paid for. Mark Thorngren, Jessica Cosenza, and Aleel have all applied and paid for their plots. 8 plots remain, plus the standing tables. Expansion of the plots has not been planned or budgeted for 2022. Expansion discussions could be considered if necessary in 2023. All gardeners who plan to return are encouraged to get their applications to the Town Hall with payment ASAP.

Community building and communication of participation expectations were discussed. All members contributed ideas on clarifying ground rules, composting guides, organic practice guidelines, and encouraging community participation from all gardeners using the plots at the HCGC.

**Motion #3**

**As approved- this summarized guideline will be sent**

**Voted and Approved.**

- Monthly meetings will continue throughout the winter via Zoom and hopefully return to in person meetings at the garden in the spring. You do not have to be a committee member to attend, but we are asking all participants to try to attend the meetings and at least one of the community clean up events this year. We recognize that not everyone can make every meeting or event, but we feel that it is important for strengthening communication and community involvement, 2 of our goals for the year.
- In an effort to improve communication and conservation practices at the garden, we will be sending emails with guides to gardening and composting at the site, ground rules, and organic soil improvement guides to all participating gardeners. The emails will be sent in late winter and throughout the season. Each person participating will be responsible to make sure that everyone using their plot is knowledgeable in these practices. We will ask participants to send confirmation of having received and reviewed these guidelines, as well as any questions they may have about these.
- Gina attended a Community Garden Virtual Forum this week and notes that many gardens in the state have someone from the Conservation Committee on the Community Garden Committee or advising. We will reach out to Glenda Williamson about this.
- We will update the application yearly to reflect the expectations of organic and conservative practices at the garden as well as community involvement.
- The information kiosk and application box will be updated to include copies of the application, recent photos, and guidelines.

Gina also provided further information gathered at the meeting she attended, including ideas on creating a Native Pollinator Meadow. UMass Extension offers a "Weekly Crop Notes" newsletter. Gina encouraged everyone to review and subscribe.

Information from "Crop Notes", the winter sewing, and application access may be shared on social media. Katie is also still working to contact gardeners to discuss their ideas and advice for interest.

NEXT MEETING: February 28 at 6pm via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:05pm.