

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

July 13, 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, Julie McCarthy, Gina Tutela, Michael Mazloff; Participants: Wayne Dodge, Samantha Baron; Absent: Mark Thorngren

Meeting called to order at 6:32.

AGENDA

The minutes of the May meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the May 2022 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Scout Project Update

Holden Girl Scout Troop 11706 has started the path through the woods. The rock used was donated, Holden donated the chips. They have plans to do a painted rock display, signs, and educational components. Nothing is needed at this time from the committee.

Julie McCarthy will be ordering more rock for the front perennial garden. Will need assistance with cleaning the area and placing those rocks.

*See DH Update for new scout proposal.

Sign Project Update - The sign has been installed. Photo to be taken with the group at the end of the meeting. Wayne Dodge suggested solar powered lights. The committee agrees to look into this.

Davis Hill/School Updates

Max Tutela has submitted a proposal to rebuild the raised beds at Davis Hill to complete his Eagle Scout project (see attached). The committee reviewed Max's proposal. Katye also has sent you an email to the school principal and staff recently with some ideas on project proposals (hoop houses, rebuilding) and available funding. Michael Mazloff has been reviewing grant projects available for consideration. The

committee members would like to invite Max to complete his project if Mr. Norton will allow it, and if the school remains dedicated to using the garden. Max will need to do a cost analysis on the materials required before we can know what is needed for funding the project. He is responsible for finding the funding, but just as when the tables were built, the scout is allowed to accept the funding from the school. The school staff should let Max know if there is a preferred model so that he can start an estimate.

Our committee is prepared to assist in applying for grants to support garden projects. It is helpful to know the cost, the number of students the project will benefit, what specific student needs are met, and how the school plans to implement the project into the curriculum. The information is standardly required when applying for funding. Specific examples citing the curriculum, as well as general benefits such as sensory stimulation and appreciation for the environmental benefits can all be helpful in attaining funds.

We would like to plan a Zoom or in person meeting if that is possible with Mr. Norton and with the teachers who are interested in participating in using the garden. Katie has reached out to the school staff and will follow up. Emails will be shared with the chair.

We also discussed the possibility of getting the school committee involved as much as possible.

Grant/funding Updates

The chair asked for a consensus on agreement and interest regarding the expansion of available plots in the garden. All are in favor, provided that there is public interest. After discussing some of the necessary details including:

- Measuring interest and cost
- Surveying groups and organizations who may receive benefit (senior ctr., elder services, churches, food pantry, etc.)
- Gathering a list of needs to include cost of materials, labor, outreach/advertising, water and maintenance costs

Motion #2

A proposal to explore expanding the garden to include more plots, loosely based on the original plan, combined with raised beds and additional water sources.

Voted and approved.

Community Harvest Updates

No new updates, but Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry. Ethical Community Harvesting is encouraged this year. Participating plot members will be asked to donate anything they may not need to use when ready for harvest. Email will be sent by Jessica this evening with Gina's contact information.

Old/New Business

Jessica discussed communication to the chair and attendance at meetings. For those with general garden questions, please bring your questions to the meeting. Texting should be for emergencies. If

there is an issue that has been communicated to the participants by email, further action may not be possible or immediate. Specifically, if the chair has made a request to the town that the tanks be filled and communicates this to the participants, additional calls/texts/emails to the chair may not be necessary or lead to quicker response from the town.

Gina suggested that Jessica assign another committee member as a contact person if she is away or unavailable.

Katy would like information on where the \$25 fee is applied, how it is processed through the town.

One participant has emailed/texted 2 questions to the chair. That participant is not present at the meeting. Jessica has presented the questions for discussion:

1. Q: Can a participant call the Animal Control Officer for removal of rabbits from the garden?
ANSWER: No. Participants may place fences around their own plot (subject to approval by the committee), and Michael suggests sharing information on PlantSkydd which is an all natural product that will deter animals from the garden. Jessica will email this to the group.
2. Q: Can participants be allowed to use the Davis Hill beds this summer for rambling plants?
ANSWER: No. The beds will likely be broken down and rebuilt within this year, and therefore there should not be an effort to use these for plants that have a long growing season before harvesting.

Wayne mentions that the tarp is ripped. He continues to remain active in trying to remove the knotweed. Julie may have a tarp to donate. A new tarp may be beneficial but is not immediately necessary. The loam can be dispersed, now or at the end of this season.

Next meeting August 17, 2022 at the garden with a backup Zoom access to be used if weather does not allow for meeting in person outdoors.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:31 pm. Group photo with the new sign followed the meeting.

