

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

August 17, 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, Gina Tutela, Michael Mazloff, Wayne Dodge; Absent: Julie McCarthy

Meeting called to order at 6:32.

AGENDA

The minutes of the July meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the July 2022 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Committee Seat Update- Wayne Dodge is replacing Mark Thorngren who has stepped down due to lack of time to attend meetings.

Scout Project Update

Holden Girl Scout Troop 11706 has finished the woodland "Punny Path". We will ask for an update on what is required to sign off on that project. Julie unable to attend. Lena weeded at the perennial garden this week. Bryar and Christina Dale would like to help with a project that supports and communicates the importance of supporting pollinators, particularly butterflies. Milkweed seeds are being donated, and we discussed a scavenger hunt in the garden for pollinator supporting plants, seed paper projects, and seed bomb project. Katye will work with Christina, and Aleel will add support.

Davis Hill/School Updates

A meeting took place with Mr. Norton. Attendants included Mr. Norton, Max Tutela, Gina Tutela, Katye Brier and Jessica Cosenza. Max proposed his plans for "Renovation/Replacement of Davis Hill Community Garden Beds" (see attached). Max has proposed that he will be able to fund the project with his own

resources. Ties to the curriculum included addition of rain/temp. gauge, wind chimes, illustrations on water preservation, math concepts, seasonal changes. Security- discussed motion lights, lamp posts at night. Programs may include Hoop House, After School Projects, Garden Club, Student Council. Mr. Norton will email the staff to notify everyone of the availability of the space and the committee members willing to help secure funding and assist with planning. Dedicated pollinator and wildlife support, sensory stimulation components will be highlighted with signage.

Grant/funding Updates

Followup from the last meeting:

- Measuring interest and cost- Members reached out to the community and surveyed the current participants, finding that we have enough verbalized interest to support the plan to expand the garden to double the number of plots.
- Wayne and Michael will head up the research to find what other community gardens have done in the past to expand, and to assess available funding sources.
- Goals include outreach to gardeners with limited physical abilities- standing gardens, water access, adding towers vs irrigation from the water lines on the property.
- Jessica got an estimate from the town regarding possible cost based on water use at the cemetery. Approximately \$460/year is spent to water the cemetery.

Community Harvest Updates

Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry this week. 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. Wayne volunteered that the Vintage Vagabonds are doing a community harvest cooking event with Cathy O'Connor. Katye may reach out to do a featured Gardener of the Month.

Old/New Business

1. Theft at the garden has been reported- pumpkins and watermelon have been cut from the vines, and zinnias have been dug out of plot #2. We discussed motion sensing lighting, trail cams, signs that discourage stealing from the garden/explain the plot participation. Jessica will reach out to the Town Manager's office and the HPD for guidance on what is allowed.
2. Squash Beetles have still been a problem. Natural Pyrethrin Concentrate may be a good way to discourage the beetles, and manual removal.
3. Wayne asked about chicken manure as a soil amendment, and peat moss. Chicken manure properties and benefits agreed upon by the committee. However, Katye and Jessica cited reports that harvesting peat is detrimental to the environment and animal populations that depend on it. We would advise against using peat moss in the garden and suggest that other alternatives be found.
4. Katye wants to update the Kiosk Information Board. She will be working on this in the upcoming weeks.

