

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

April 13, 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: Wayne Dodge, Aleel Grennan, Michael Mazloff, Gina Tutela, Katye Brier; garden participants George Klicka, Matt Glavickas, Don and Deb Flynn; absent: Julie McCarthy

Meeting called to order at 6:21

AGENDA

The minutes of the March 22, 2023 meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the March 2023 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

BUDGET AND GRANT UPDATES

Announcements from the chair:

1. The Holden Garden Club has generously offered to donate \$500 for the development of new plots. John Woodsmall offered to allow the committee to use up to an additional \$500 in funding for the purchase and delivery of loam. After discussion with the owner of Sterling Peat and Loam, and coordination with the DPW, it was decided to spend \$713 total for delivery of one truck load (22 yards), which will be spread by the town using DPW equipment in mid-April. This should allow for coverage of the area required to build out 3 new plots to be assigned to the 3 currently paid applicants, and possibly a 4th new plot which has been requested by a 4th new applicant (pending spread of loam and payment from the applicant).
2. The Mass Cultural Council/ Holden Cultural Council \$500 grant is by reimbursement only. John Woodsmall has reported that he can allow the purchase to be funded, and the reimbursement will go back to the town. The committee must agree on a raised bed model to be purchased and make the request through the town.
3. In addition to the usual \$1,000 that would be available on July 1, we will be able to allocate an additional \$2,500 due to some changes in the current submitted budget. That would provide a total of \$3,500 for FY24, or July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. That would be used to cover water usage in addition to anything else the committee wishes to do. Estimate for water is \$150-200 a month, for May-Sept.

APPLICATION 2023 update

Plot assignments for the 2023 season were shared.

Motion #2

To approve the plot assignments (see attached)

Voted and Approved

RAISED BED MODEL DISCUSSION

Two models were discussed for consideration: The Veg Trug Model proposed by Michael and the 5 gallon bucket raised bed system proposed by Mat Glavickas. No other model proposals were presented. Gina offered that she has reached out to other community garden groups but did not hear back. Pros and cons of each system were discussed.

Motion #3

To approve the purchase request for 2 Veg Trug Raised beds

Voted and Approved

SCOUT PROJECTS, EVENTS, PERENNIAL PLANT SALE

1. Max Tutela is planning to move forward with re-building the beds at Davis Hill. Gina announced that Max should have more information next week on an estimated start date for the project.
2. Town Wide Yard Sale- Julie will be working with the Holden Girl Scouts to divide perennial plants which will be used at the Girl Scout's plant sale during the TWYS. HCGC may contribute some seeds and pamphlets informing the community about the garden. Julie and Aleel will go through the saved seeds and make a plan for this. Katye may be able to contribute an informational handout.
3. The Punny Path has some storm damage- broken branches are on the ground. Aleel will work with the WRHS/NHS students to clear the path.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM- COLLABORATION WITH WRHS

Aleel is working with the staff of the MakerSpace/Engineering Classes/Partnership program, but no new information has been shared. We are holding on for news from the school on details, but they have approved us to promote the project in the press. We will need the student design plans to create a material list and estimate cost before funding can be explored further.

DAVIS HILL WINTER/SPRING PROJECTS

The front fence has been damaged by the winter storms. Gina, Mike, Katye and Joe will work to remove the broken pieces of fencing, Don is available to help if needed. Gina will email Mr. Norton about disposal of the broken pieces. She will also inquire about the kindergarten beds, if there is a plan for use and rebuild. We will plan to use saved seeds for planting once the beds are re-built by Max. Katye will put together an update for the school newsletter, inviting families to participate. Jessica suggested a handout as well and challenged each community garden member to come up with an idea for a handout to be supplied each month at the DH and main garden sites.

SPRING CLEAN UP

Proposed dates for spring clean up were discussed, but Earth Day Saturday April 22 was agreed on, 10am. Aleel will coordinate WRHS student volunteers. Jessica will notify all garden participants and the DPW. Katye will create a social media post.

Don would like to clean out the tanks. Aleel will take a water sample for analysis of what the substance

is within the tank. Jessica will also try to coordinate materials to fix the loam sifter.

COMMUNITY HARVESTING UPDATES

Gina will be available. Ethical harvesting in 2023 was discussed and will continue to be encouraged throughout the growing season.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Katye and Joe would like to improve the sign by staining the posts.

Motion #4

To allow Katye and Joe Brier to stain the posts on the HCG sign

Voted and Approved

Katye also announced that she will start to research some options for replacing the plot # and informational signs with a more waterproof model.

Aleel is working with a research team from Worcester State University to survey native plants and pollinators. The study will include assessment and recording of soil, plants and pollinators on site, and installation of beneficial plants.

Motion #5

To approve the survey and work to become active on site.

Voted and Approved

ADJOURNMENT: 7:20; **NEXT MEETING:** 5/3/23 at 6:15, at the garden.