



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Draft COMMUNITY GARDENS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 26, 2011

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL120 - Madison Municipal Building

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Scaife at 5:05 p.m. with a quorum present.

Present: 7 -

Nan Fey; Betty Chewning; Kevin Schiesser; Melissa Gavin; Joe Mathers;
Nicole M. Craig and Nancy A. Dungan

Excused: 1 -

Charlie R. Sanders

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Nan Fey moved to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Kevin Schiesser. The minutes from March 22nd.were unanimously approved

PUBLIC COMMENT- None.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS - None.

NEW BUSINESS

Schiesser reported that the rooftop garden on the Central Library was discussed at the April 19th Common Council meeting. Alder Marsha Rummel suggested an alder be added to the Gardens Committee. Schiesser wanted to know if a letter should be drafted to the Mayor requesting this? Fey suggested this item be put on next month's agenda for discussion. Fey will discuss with the Common Council President in May.

OLD BUSINESS

[20739](#)

Recommendations for Updating the Committee Report of 2004-2007

Fey and Schneider suggested a few minor changes to the report - Jason Clay will send the final draft to Lisa Olmsted for distribution to the committee for review in advance of the May meeting, at which time it will be on the agenda for approval.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

15100

Garden/CAC Reports

These are new gardens at Blackhawk (using Fiskars grant money), Balsam-Leland, Fitchburg, Monona, Atwood, Reynolds. WYOU wants to do a 60-90 minute documentary about gardens in the area and would like to show it at the Madison Film Festival next year. They would also include interviews with gardeners. She also mentioned that the Fiskars Project Orange Thumb will be taking place at Blackhawk School all day on May 26, 2011.

Craig reported that additional space has been added to Central Park for 20 x 10 gardens plots, thanks to the letter of support drafted by the CGC. Mathers mentioned the creation of a downtown gardens group, although Alder Mike Verveer indicated this could not be budgeted for.

18897

CDBG Update

No report - Sanders was absent.

21800

CSBG Budget Discussion

Craig reported there is 2.9% CSBG cut for 2011 and discussion of a 50% cut for 2012.

08283

New Garden Fund

Chris Brockel from CAC and Paul Houseman from the Madison Community Foundation (MCF) started the discussion of whether the funds should be moved to an interest bearing type of account. Brockel explained that CAC currently "stewards" the fund and asks for donations to fund four year grants to expand gardens and food pantries. Expanded gardens now include areas in Dane County including Oregon, Stoughton, Cottage Grove and Sun Prairie. There is more interest from other areas as well. The monies are currently held in a "pass through" fund and he's suggesting the committee consider moving it into an "endowment fund" which could begin earning interest.

Houseman provided some background on the Madison Community Foundation, MCF focuses on giving grants in Dane County and the Greater Madison area - approximately \$1.3 million annually and they manage \$135 million for charitable services and non-profits like CAC, for new gardens. They also work with land trusts on easements.

Regarding the New Garden Funds, approximately \$7,450.00 has been distributed from the current account in the past 5 years for community gardens in Madison. New funds into the account are generated by garden plot fees paid by gardeners in city-supported gardens. The New Garden Fund has been spending 5% or less of its value a year (\$500 - \$2,000 a year) which means it would qualify as an endowment fund that could be earning interest, so MCF approached CAC about possibly changing the type of fund the money is kept in. MCF prefers endowment funds, but there is a minimum balance required of \$10,000.00. The fee for administering any fund is 1%, and it's important to note that the fees are distributed to the community, not used to pay staff salaries.

Fey asked for background information on the "anonymous donation" that was used to start the fund. Dungan recalled many of the details and Craig circulated a Council resolution (Legistar #00938) confirming that \$10,000.00 was noted in 2001. The money was placed in a city Segregated Account (SO11) and use of the funds was approved by the Community gardens Committee. About \$4500 was spent to start gardens and fund a work study program for students. In 2006, the New Garden Fund Committee has been inviting and evaluating applications, choosing appropriate projects, and (with the approval of the Community Gardens Committee) been awarding funds (up to 25% of the fund) to create new gardens in the city; CAC has been writing checks from the MCF fund to the recipients. According to the resolution, there was \$1,000 left in the Community Gardens account, which should be investigated further.

Dungan asked whose money has been spent, and whether it is possible to know if it was CAC's or the City's, also about the role of MCF. Houseman said that MCF owns all the money once it's in their fund, and doesn't keep it separate for accounting purposes. Making it a full endowment fund would be an opportunity for the funds to earn interest on the balance. Brockel expressed a desire for CAC's funds to be available to projects throughout the county, and said it would be easier to administer the funds if they all came out of the same account, as it is, the funds that came from the Community Gardens account are limited to gardens within the City.

Fey asked if a decision needed to be made right away? CAC would like to see it made sooner than later because it has a substantial bequest it would like to begin earning some interest; potentially \$20,000 could go into an endowment fund and be working by the end of 2011. Is it possible to prorate whose money is being spent - no, but guidelines could be written into the fund agreement.

Schneider asked if the pass through fund is stewarded by CAC? What is the future of the fund? What is the purpose and perimeters of the funds? This needs more discussion.

Fey suggested that members of the New Garden Fund Committee be contacted about questions that have arisen over how the funds can be used. Issues would include geography, timing and qualifications. Possible people who could help answer these questions are Annette Nekola, John Bell, Betty Chewing and Alice Anderson. Craig will send an email to them to ask questions. Brockel suggested writing down options from committee members regarding this and bringing them back to the committee.

Dungan reminded the committee that the question "What is a community garden" has arisen because of some non-traditional applications for funds, and suggested the full CGC committee should help with that questions: CAC can also have a role in this, too. The other major question that has been asked is "what is the scope of the Garden Fund?"

The next step is to produce a list of key questions for the committee to evaluate and discuss.

[08281](#) Parks Update - Support Letter from Central Park Garden

[14868](#) Planning Update

Fey stated the zoning code text was approved by the Common Council on March 29th, but will not go into effect until the zoning map has been approved by the Common Council on March 29th, but will not go into effect until the zoning map has been approved, hopefully by the end of this year.

COMMUNICATIONS

Fiskars sent out scissors and a letter to Fey and Scaife regarding the Project Orange Thumb ribbon cutting on May 26th. Fey checked with the City Attorney's office about accepting the scissors and it was recommended that the scissors be sent back to Fiskars or sent to the Parks Department, since it is potentially a violation of the Ethics Code for a citizen member of a policy-making body to accept such a gift.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fey will be out of town during the May meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Fey moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Schiesser. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.