

April 4, 2023

Attendees: Valerie Battle, Eileen Cobb, Jim Fisher, Ken McCoy, Billqece Naqawe, Alex Ortolano, Bill Steinhart, Joe Vergona

- All new board members introduced themselves.
- Meeting called to order 6:14PM
- Agenda adopted.
- Minutes from March 24, 2023 approved.
- **Financial report:**
 - No expenditures in March
 - Holding 67K in bank.
 - It was discussed that we should use some of that funding for new projects and possible garden expansion.
 - It was revealed that plot expansion plans already exist, and we could potentially expand the garden and get people off the waiting list
- **Projects/Events**
 - Boy Scout Projects
 - Carter Ring's pea gravel play area and picnic table replacement is easy for the city to support
 - Michael Kye's water table project is more complicated, and the city would need to see plans and understand more about what is required
- **Calendar Review**
 - Given Easter, Gwinnett Spring Break, and the terrible weather forecast, it was determined that the work day should be pushed to April 15. Kristen will send correspondence via Facebook and the Harvest Garden email group.
 - Bill will review any tasks that may be needed, otherwise we will do the usual activities of weeding, straightening the barn, cleaning chalk boards, etc
- **Event Updates**
 - Valerie noted that the egg hunt was a success, though there were not additional games. It was just a standard, old fashioned egg hunt, but the kids had a great time.
- **Orchard Updates**
 - It was noted that the orchard often has work days that coordinate with the garden days.
- **Education and Grant Discussion**
 - The last education talk that Bill presented had only 4 attendees, and it was the same people that always attend his talks. He had put a lot of preparation into the talk and had hoped for more attendance. Eileen noted that the work was finished so quickly, people may have left well before the talk even began. It was suggested that education be done before the work begins so we don't lose gardeners.
 - Next education session will therefore be May 13 at 9AM.
- **New Business**
 - **Orchard Maintenance**
 - It is hard to stay on top of pests at the orchard. Bill suggested that we hire a horticulturist to get on top of this with Neem applications before the fruit starts to bud. It is too late now for the initial application that really should have been

done in January. The expense would be relatively minimal...probably \$300 an application 4 times a year.

- Billqeece noted that the orchard does seem to have its own board and funding. She will follow up with Roger and the city budget analyst to see how the orchard is run and funded, but a motion was made and approved to investigate turning over orchard maintenance to a private horticulturist.
 - Eileen asked if this service could be provided for the garden, but this isn't possible since each garden plot is individually maintained. Bill said that he can easily walk through the garden plots and note what pests are attacking each garden. Correspondence could then be sent to that gardener.
 - Ken wondered if there could be marketing signage in the barn noting the garden's mission.
 - There was general discussion about whether the garden should be advertised as a banquet or wedding venue.
 - There was also discussion about whether the garden could partner with a charity to provide fresh produce to local food banks. It was noted that a boy scout project could perhaps include building a food collection box.
 - It was mentioned that a wish list for Kristen N had been an improved greenhouse.
 - Alex expressed concern that emails might get lost and that perhaps the board should consider an alternate method of communication such as WhatsApp or Remind. The board is in agreement. Alex will set it up for the group.
- **Old Business**
 - Valerie asked if there was a list of known social events. Billqeece said it is just whatever the board plans.
 - Meeting adjourned at 7:03PM.