

# Harvest Farm Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

6:00PM



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## Opening items

Attendees: Alex Ortolano, Valerie Battle, Billqece Naqawe, Kristen Shappert, Joe Vergona, Ken McCoy

- Call to Order [The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM.](#)
- Adoption of Agenda [Ken motioned to accept the agenda, Kristen seconded](#)
- Approval of Previous Month Minutes [Kristen motioned to accept the minutes, Ken seconded](#)

## Recurring Topics

Section	Owner	Latest Update	Next Actions / Discussion Points
<b>Financial Report</b>	Eileen	Garden is still in good financial health. There have been small purchases of new bins, paint, hose repair items, and the rock for the pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Send Alex the supplier and cost for pathway rock (Ken)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Develop a list of “garden approved” suppliers (Alex)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Calendar Review</b>	Kristen	Next workday is June 10 <sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM. Alex to present at City Council 06/15/2023.	
<b>Learning Sessions</b>	Alex	We will start with a walk-around learning session with Bill Stinehart called, “A Garden Walk with Bill & his Green Thumb.” 06/01/2023: Bill confirmed attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ask Bill about planting orange day lilies along the back fence. Will they thrive in this location? (fall work day activity) (Alex)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Orchard Updates</b>	Roger	The Eagle Scout water tables are in place, but it will take the city a few more weeks to run the water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Provide update on water table (Roger)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Confirm horticulturist approved for orchard (Bill)</a></li> </ul>

## Board Business

Section	Owner	Latest Update	Next Actions / Discussion Points
<b>Workday</b>	All	<p>List of what needs to be done:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rolling bin assembly &amp; painting</li> <li>2. Spreading gravel</li> <li>3. Weeding (weeding, weeding)</li> <li>4. Fixing netting to protect snakes</li> <li>5. Clean signs</li> </ol> <p>Note that Bill’s Garden Walk will take at least 30 minutes.</p> <p>Ken and Kristen have travel plans and will not be at work day this time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">July work day activities may be determined remotely via our group chat (All)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Provide update via app on work day accomplishments (Alex)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Plot Warning Stakes &amp; Plot Transfers</b>	Eileen	<p>Plot 26 stated intent to keep and maintain garden. Plots 43 and 57 have been assigned to new gardeners, and the plot assignment spreadsheet has been updated.</p> <p>Board discussed the need to be trained on the plot allocation process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Arrange for board training on plot assignments and invoice processing (Billqece)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Take picture of discarded hoop house and post on Facebook page requesting removal (Alex)</a></li> </ul>

Section	Owner	Latest Update	Next Actions / Discussion Points
		Someone discarded their hoop house poles next to the water tank.	
<b>Salad Bar(n) Buffet</b>	Alex	The inaugural Harvest Farm Bar(n) Buffet was a delightful gathering attended by 10 enthusiastic participants. Even though he couldn't make it, Jeff Blanchard generously donated his lettuce. The salad comprised the freshest possible ingredients such as lettuce, yellow bell peppers, spring onions, a tiny beet, a Cajun bell pepper, and broccoli sprouts. The dressings were fabulous, and we used them as door prizes. The fresh mint water—sweet mint, peppermint, and chocolate mint—were a hit among the attendees. The event started promptly and concluded in under an hour. It served as a wonderful example of like-minded individuals coming together to savor the abundance of our community.	
<b>Board Grill Out</b>	Valerie, Elle, & Sara	It was determined that the board grill out will be too difficult to coordinate with summer travel plans. However, the social committee has come up with several ideas to share with the entire community, and they were wondering what type of budget they may have. They tossed out a preliminary budget for the first event at around \$150. This is easily supported, and we can likely support more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Generate a list of proposed activities for the year with preliminary budgets. Funding can then be earmarked for support. (Valerie, Elle, Sara)</a></li> </ul>
<b>New Signs</b>	Eileen, Ken, Kristen S.	<p>We have added clean signs to the June work day. Those that cannot be cleaned will be replaced.</p> <p>Ken looked at the original Harvest Mission statement and came up with a more icon oriented sign. Alex wants to put on his marketing spin and take a look at the overall mission statement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Provide update on Berry Patch sign (Eileen)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Provide update post work day on how many signs need to be ordered (Alex)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Provide Public Works contact so board can order new signs (Billqeece)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Review mission statement (Alex)</a></li> </ul>
<b>Stand Up Garden</b>	Kristen	<p>Given how late it is in the season and the desire to keep this plot open for future community outreach, it was determined that we will just plant flowers in it this season and reach out to groups in the fall. Anyone on the board is welcome to jump on this.</p> <p>We also decided to formally call it the Stand Up garden, since it isn't necessarily accessible to someone in a wheelchair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Reach out to local Exceptionally Abled adult group and see if they would like to take this on</a></li> </ul>
<b>Garden Quilt</b>	Kristen	Board determined that we still don't exactly understand the origin of this garden quilt, but we love it. We would like to send Rita a formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Reach out to Jackie (who knows Rita) and understand the original concept. (Kristen)</a></li> </ul>

Section	Owner	Latest Update	Next Actions / Discussion Points
		thank you on Suwanee letterhead from the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring a Suwanee thank you note to next board meeting (Billqeece)</li> </ul>
<b>Greenhouse</b>	Varies	We will table green house construction right now as we consider plot expansion, which allows for more inclusion	
<b>Garden Plot Expansion</b>	All	Adding 30 plots to the garden is a big undertaking. We would need to approve the entire expansion, even if we only added 10 plots at a time. This would take up about half of the existing field space, which seems like more than we need right now. However, we will keep this plan in mind for the future if we need more space.	<p>See expanded discussion notes on the next page.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean up plot request form and determine exactly how many are on the waiting list (Kristen)</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>		<p>Hoses: Conferred with a professional landscaper. Goodyear hoses from The Home Depot are excellent. You get what you pay for. Also, the metal ground faucets need to be turned off or the hoses will continue to wear out quickly due to the constant pressure. (1) remind people via email / Facebook and or (2) add signs on each metal ground faucet to remind people.</p> <p>Gate: Closest to the creek is rickety and the latch continues to break. Alex and Jeff Blanchard would like to replace it with an exact replica (except for the rickety part and the broken latch...ha).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send Facebook reminder to turn off the water so hoses don't blow (Kristen)</li> <li>Check with Public Works on replacing the gate (Billqeece)</li> <li>Get updated cost and timing from Roger for garden expansion (Alex/Ken)</li> </ul>

## Discussion: Potential Harvest Farm Garden Plot Expansion

<b>Overview</b>	<p>Harvest Farm currently has 75 plots. We have the space and money to install 30 more plots, but we are not sure if we should expand. We do think that there is demand for more plots, as Suwanee is growing. However, there are also potential downsides to expanding, such as losing use of the current grassy greenspace.</p> <p>The decision of whether or not to expand our community garden should be made after careful consideration of the potential benefits and drawbacks. We will need to weigh the potential benefits against the potential drawbacks and make a decision that is in the best interests of the garden and Suwanee.</p>	<p><i>Opportunity does not equal obligation.</i></p> <p><i>Stewardship is using resources wisely for the benefit of others.</i></p> <p><b>Quotes to consider....</b></p>
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Section	Potential Benefits	Potential Drawbacks	Discussion Points
<b>Increased capacity</b>	<p>Accommodate more gardeners</p> <p>Meet the growing demand for community gardens in Suwanee</p> <p>Provide more opportunities for people to learn about gardening and healthy eating</p> <p>Promote community health and well-being</p>	<p>Loss of green space</p> <p>Additional Board burden (?)</p>	<p>How has the green space been used in the past?</p> <p>How can we estimate demand? (wait list time, etc.).</p>
<b>Increased revenue / costs</b>	<p>Generate more revenue for the garden</p> <p>Fund additional programming or improvements</p>	<p>Increased maintenance costs</p>	<p>Increased revenue is not our primary goal.</p> <p>As good stewards, we should have a plan on how we would use the funds (ideas?).</p> <p>Alternatively, we could reduce fees.</p>
<b>Increased community engagement</b>	<p>Provide more opportunities for community members to get involved in gardening.</p> <p>Promote social interaction and civic engagement.</p> <p>Build a sense of community pride.</p> <p>Provide a space for people to learn about and appreciate the environment.</p>	<p>None (?)</p>	<p>Let's revisit our current mission statement.</p> <p>Also, Ken's ideas on revising it.</p>
<b>Increased environmental benefits</b>	<p>Provide increased habitat for pollinators.</p> <p>Promote sustainable agriculture.</p>	<p>None (?)</p>	

Section	Potential Benefits	Potential Drawbacks	Discussion Points
	Serve as an example regarding the importance of environmental stewardship.		