

Prospect Heights Community Farm Board Meeting Minutes, June 4, 2015

Present: Johanna Bauman, Joey DeLeo, Aaron Dobish, Traci Nottingham, Catherine Orrok, Rosemary Palms, Jennifer Richman, Lee Schere, Jennie Spector, Brian Thompson, Virginia Webster.

The meeting began at about 6:35 p.m., at the garden, and was co-chaired by Johanna and Brian.

Box waiting list:

- Following some confusion about who gets a box and when, the board reviewed the guidelines and rules and determined that a clear statement will be published on the website and reiterated at every general meeting, along with updates on the box assignments and waiting lists.
- The policy is this: there are two lists. One is for those awaiting a box assignment, and it is by date of the member's request. The other is for those who already have a box and have requested an upgrade to another box, also by order of date of request.
- These lists are on the website and on an Excel sheet and are passed along whenever a new coordinator of boxes is elected. Further, the two waiting lists will be posted in the shed. Members are responsible to see that their requests are put on the list correctly.

Open Hours Calendar and sign-up issues:

- Acknowledging that we operate on the honor system, please note the clear guidelines posted by Eva Wang on the calendar regarding accurate record-keeping.
- In addition, the "How-to Guidelines" should clearly state that if you don't keep your hours, cross off your name. If you arrive late, correct the time on the calendar to accurately report the actual hours you kept open hours. If you arrive late to your open hours and your name has been crossed off, write your name back in and update it with the time you actually arrived.

Accuracy of our website posting of by-laws, rules, and guidelines: The board is concerned that there may be inconsistencies among the By-laws, Rules, and How-to Guidelines. (Added clarification after the meeting: Regarding the creation of How-To Guidelines, these should be drafted by the appropriate officers and sent to Will Law to post on the website.)

Soil purchases: Will has created a "perpetual calendar" to help us keep track of what needs to be done month by month through the year. The board agreed that soil purchases should be done during April and then as needed, as determined by the master gardeners. Virginia agreed to take responsibility for this.

Open hours exemptions and meeting attendance requirements:

- Those on maternity leave are currently exempted from open hours.

- It was noted that seniors (65+) are also exempted from open hours. This could cause a real problem of fulfilling our open hours commitment of 20 hours per week. Therefore the board will recommend a rule change at the next general membership meeting: “*Seniors sixty-five (65) years and older may request to be exempt from fulfilling service hours in cases of hardship by submitting their request in writing to the board and pending board approval.*” (In discussion after the meeting, there seemed to be a majority view that select seniors who are presently exempted would be invited before the membership meeting on June 14 to ask for a pre-approved exemption.)
- The board feels that attendance at three membership meetings over the course of eight months is not a hardship for either seniors or for those on maternity leave. This requirement should remain in place. Any unusual circumstances necessitating an exemption can be brought to the board.

Requests from special schools to visit the garden:

- A teacher of an autistic class wants to join in order to have her own key. It was agreed that anyone may join the garden who agrees to membership requirements. But this teacher can also request a garden member to meet her class. It might be possible to modify our event form so that the permission can be ongoing for a season.
- Another teacher of special needs adults has asked about bringing her class to a work day. Several suggestions were made, including structuring a work event around a specific project, like the compost process, and having a trial run to see how it goes.

Trimming the dogwood: The dogwood needs severe pruning, to remove a part that is leaning to one side and is in danger of toppling over. The master gardeners will determine the best course of action, bring their recommendation to the membership, and field members’ questions.

Strawberry box: Right now the former strawberry box is a designated stewardship area (“U” on the map). The board recommends that after this season that designation should be discussed. Perhaps it will be suitable by next year to be placed in the regular box rotation, given the long waiting list.

Bulletin board: We need to have a strong, durable, lockable board to put on our fence for the public. We will continue to research by asking BANG and others for suggestions. Initial research indicates that it may cost \$300-500 to purchase a good one.

Hose-protector ramps: The ones we bought are not heavy enough to do the job. We will keep researching. Virginia will ask some contacts at the navy yard for recommendations.

Bat box: Brian and Aaron, with herculean effort, carried a heavy ladder to the garden. Brian and Ted De Barbieri removed the box from neighbor Phil’s wall, re-caulking the holes. Photos and email documentation were sent to Phil. The question of where to re-mount the box will be an item for our next general membership meeting.

BANG: the next meeting is June 11, at our garden. Of special interest to us is that the board will vote at that meeting on whether PHCF can have its own checking account under the BANG umbrella.

Nursery plants: netted \$255 to add to our plant sale profits! Bravo, nursery tenders!

The meeting ended a little after 8 p.m.

Rosemary Palms, co-secretary