

PROSPECT HEIGHTS COMMUNITY FARM – ANNUAL MEETING
March 5, 2017, 12-2 p.m., at Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Present: Johanna B, Stav B, Alex B, Louise B, Michael C (new), Joey D, Joanne D, Aaron D, Martha E, Dan F, Michelle F, Casey F (new), Anna Rose H, Alex H, Rachel I, Will L, Ruth M, Rosemarie M, Traci N, Catherine O, Rosemary P, Luke R (new), Gary R (new), Michael R (new), Melissa R (and guest Josh), Selina R, Lee S, Kayla S, Jeff S, Jennie S, Oillia S (new), Jessica S, Brian T, Eva W, Virginia W, Tiffany W (new).

Johanna chaired the meeting, starting at 12:15 – as soon as attendees had stocked up on refreshments.

I. Welcome and Introductions: We introduced ourselves by telling the group what we liked best about the garden.

II. Minutes:

The **October 2016 general meeting minutes** were approved after a correction in wording of the smoking ban: rather than smoking being allowed only “in the front of the garden,” it should read “in front of the garden”-- that is, outside the gates.

The **November 2016 general meeting minutes** were approved as submitted.

III. Officer reports:

Treasurer (Brian): Our current balance as of 12/31/2016 was \$2,867.20. In petty cash we have \$232.97. This past year we collected about \$1,100 in dues. Brian reminded us to pay our dues (\$5-25) by May 1, and a paper receipt is required to obtain reimbursement of expenditures.

Service Hours Coordinator (Aaron): We did well by almost reaching the goal of 80 hours/month open hours -- we averaged 76 hours/month. We were reminded of the service hours requirements for box-holders and general members – at least 3/5 of our service hours must be open hours. Compost work counts toward open hours requirements.

Communications Coordinator (Will): Our listserv is our main means of communication, along with our website. New members will be invited to join the listserv.

Compost Coordinator (Jennie): Compost is processed every Sunday – 10-12 in the warmer months, 12-2 in the cooler months. The team needs more volunteers.

Box Coordinator (Joey): Five boxes are in need of repair. The first five persons on the waitlist for boxes will get them this season. Fifteen more are on the list. The first six of those will be invited to share the community boxes. In order to speed up the waitlist, box holders are asked to consider sharing their boxes, and all members are asked to brainstorm ways to shorten the wait time for boxes.

Brooklyn Alliance of Neighborhood Gardens (BANG) land trust representative (Brian): BANG consists of five community gardens, each sending two representatives to business meetings. The 2017 budget was presented and ratified unanimously. Brian will bring the 2016 figures of actual

income and expenditures to the April meeting. BANG reps will be attending member garden meetings this coming season.

Master Gardeners (Catherine, Traci, Virginia): Work days were announced. These gardeners are there to help us garden more effectively, and to guide us as we prune correctly and pull undesirable weeds, not cherished plants.

Stewardship of Public Areas (Traci): No gardeners submitted proposals for use of public areas, so a map of the garden was circulated for signing up for joining area teams.

IV. Proposed changes in by-laws and quorum requirements (Will and Jeff): Will and Jeff presented reasons to amend the by-laws regarding quorum requirements, how “members in good standing” (those who have completed requirements for the preceding year – dues, service hours, and meetings attended) are determined, and by what dates. See Will’s attachment for a complete report. Briefly, we need to know who is in good standing at every ordinary meeting in order to establish whether a quorum is reached, which is virtually impossible to do under our present rules. Secondly, the math makes it possible for a very low number of voting members to pass motions of some importance. Finally, the late date for determining “good standing” (May 31) means that two or three ordinary meetings of the season have already been held.

The motion proposed quorum requirements and majorities for votes in all member meetings as follows: to vote on by-laws, rules, and board elections, 33% of members in good standing must be present. By-law matters require a 2/3 majority vote. Rules and board elections require a simple majority vote. For other issues, a simple majority vote of members present suffices.

See Article II Section 5 Part D for the rules and Article V Section 1, the very end, for by-laws. The amended by-laws will read as follows:

“Section 4 – Quorum

“A quorum shall be determined on March 31 of every year for meetings held over the following twelve months. A quorum for the purposes of the Annual Meeting, regular meetings and special meetings shall consist of 33 percent of Garden Members in good standing.

“The good standing of Garden Members in Article II Section 6 above shall be determined by the Service Coordinator no later than the Annual Meeting and will be based on the Garden Member’s fulfillment of Member responsibilities during the previous Garden Year.

“Section 5 – Voting

“All issues to be voted on shall be decided by a simple majority vote of those members present at the meeting at which the vote takes place.

“In ARTICLE IV – GARDEN BOARD, *Section 1 – Amendments*, omit the clause “Given the lower quorum requirements for regular meetings.”

This motion passed, with 26 for, one opposed, and one abstaining.

V. Proposed bylaw regarding a proxy ballot (Michelle): After some discussion of issues involved in her proposal, Michelle made the following motion:

“Proxy voting shall be allowed for members in good standing with health related disabilities. To be approved for a health related proxy vote, the requesting member must appeal to the general coordinators in writing at least one week prior to the vote. Allowances will be made for a defined period of time and may be extended at the discretion of the general coordinators. A proxy voter does not qualify for calculating quorum.”

The motion failed with 6 for, 11 opposed, and 10 abstentions.

VI. Elections of officers: There were no contested elections.

General coordinator: Michelle (3 abstentions)

General co-coordinators: Traci (2 abstentions) and Virginia (1 abstention)

Secretary: Rosemary

Co-secretary: Martha

Treasurer: Brian

Co-treasurer: Martha

Master Gardeners: Catherine, Traci, and Virginia (1 opposed). Tabled was the nomination of Joey until a study of the position is made.

Compost Coordinator: Lee

Compost Co-coordinator: Jennie

Communications Coordinator: Will

Service Coordinator: Aaron

Co-service Coordinator: Anna

Box Coordinator: Joey (1 opposed)

BANG Land Trust Representative: Joanne

BANG Land Trust Alternate Representative: Louise

Emeritus/-a Board Members: Catherine and Johanna (ex officio)

At the end of the voting, we thanked departing board members with enthusiastic applause.

VII. New Business:

Chipper (Jennie) – an item to consider: the garden could use a chipper to tackle our brush pile. Maybe the five gardens of BANG could share one machine. The BANG reps will pursue this idea.

VIII. Announcements:

“Making Brooklyn Bloom” (Traci) – Next weekend this huge garden fair comes to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. It’s fun, it’s free, it’s educational, and participants take home lots of goodies. Traci will send out information on the listserv.

A series of presentations at PHCF (Jeff) – Send Jeff ideas for events at our garden – workshops, how-to presentations, music, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Palms, Secretary