

Minutes for SCG Council Meeting September 14th, 7:00pm - 9:30pm

Location: Jill and Clive's Home, 23-2363 Demamiel Drive (The Pointe)

Attendees: Janet Renfroe, Augusta Popovich, Jill Hickson, Val Ross and Christine Eastgaard

Minutes of August 3, 2020 Council meeting considered read, motion by Jill Hickson, seconded by Janet Renfroe. APPROVED

Reports:

Communications/Plot Registrar – Janet

All plots in the north end, new area, have been assigned. There are a few gardeners who are giving up plots for next season. Currently, there are 12 people on the waiting list and as fall approaches there will likely be a few more plots available. In October, Janet will send out a notice for the 2021 plot renewals with final fee due on November 30th.

Food Chi - Jill, nothing to report

Growing for Sooke - Paula, no report

Orchard - Glen, no report

Maintenance - Janet. Thank-you Maurice for replacing all the wheelbarrow wheels! The new wheels should last us a long time.

Compost - Thanks to Doug, Jim and Tom for supplying us with ready compost by keeping the compost inside the garden turned. Lots of hard work and is much appreciated!

Pod Reps - Val, nothing to report

New Business

Fence - Back fence is progressing, thank-you Keith for all your work!

Native Garden - Food Chi has given permission for the dismantling of the former Native Garden to make space for a medium sized plot. Council will discuss the future of the native garden at some point in time. In the meantime, the garden has become rampant with weeds and needs care.

Action Christine to work on cleaning it up.

Out of Bounds Area (old Pod 4) - Three updates for the community:

1. In the last Growing for Sooke report, Paula raised concerns about how the Pod 4 plots were distributed. Janet spoke with Paula, and Paula assured her that everything was fine.
2. Plot owners have moved most of their plants and hardscaping over to their new plots, but there are still some items that need to be moved
3. If the slope, or sections of the slope, prove to be stable, there could be the possibility to redevelop into plots in the future to meet the needs of the waiting list.
4. Community members that are not pod 4 plot owners are advised to stay out of the old area. There are a considerable amount of weeds (including stinging nettles) and hardscaping with rusty nails

Action: Janet and Jill to discuss with Anita plans for maintaining the area long term and a strategy for possible redevelopment

Plot Map - Christine revised the plot map to reflect the new Pod 4, revisions to Pod 5 and out of bounds area. Janet reviewed the map and provided feedback on Pod 5.

Actions:

1. Christine to adjust the map and resend to the council for review.
2. Janet and Jill to collect the plot number signs from the out of bounds areas and distribute to Pod 4 plots.

Pod 5 Apple, Cherry and Kiwi Trees - Glen trimmed the apple tree, thanks! Kiwi and cherry trees will be trimmed by Glen. Issue of shading Pod 5 plots was brought up, council will wait and see if pruning helps to bring in more light before discussing further actions.

Compost Signs - The compost system and what can be composted can be confusing to members. Kimberly has kindly offered to make signs, thank-you for all your help!

Action: Janet and Jill to touch base with Kimberly to talk through the signs needed and answer any questions.

Plastic Usage in the Gardens - Plastic is appearing in the compost and in a number of areas in the garden. The decomposition of plastics introduces microplastics into the food system that is not healthy.

Action: Jill to provide an article for the newsletter discussing the impact of plastics and tips for making sure plastic doesn't enter the soil

Growing for Sooke - Over the years the program has donated a considerable amount of food for the Sooke Food Bank. However, this year we struggled to support the program and there was a lot of food that went to waste. Council recognizes the importance of the program, but it would need to be revised next year to ensure proper volunteer support. Do we have the volunteers and enthusiasm/time to support this endeavor for this next season?

Action: Survey the membership using SurveyMonkey to determine if there is interest in continuing the Growing for Sooke Program.

1. Christine to draft survey questions for the council to review
2. Janet and Jill to ask Fiona if she could provide feedback on the questions and design a survey to send to the community

Fall Clean Up - As we prepare for winter, there are two important clean up activities:

1. Growing for Sooke - the plots, the greenhouse need and other areas need to be cleaned up. **Action:** Jill to discuss with Paula the clean up activities and share next steps for volunteers to help with clean up
2. Garden Clean Up - there are a number of activities to put the gardens to bed for the winter including cleaning the outhouse, trimming the alders along Phillips Road, cleaning up the play areas, adding wood chips to the common walkways etc. **Action:** Janet to organize the garden clean up and share the date with the members

Council Roles and Responsibilities - The council has traditionally been organized into loose volunteer roles and responsibilities. We would like to explore adding more structure to the council positions but still maintain our friendly, welcoming and low administration culture. Thank-you Jackie for drafting the budget coordinator job description! Council discussed the position and the desire to have more visibility into how membership funds are used. Also discussed was drafting roles for other positions on the council and possibly having an AGM.

Action: Christine to draft council roles and responsibilities and share with council for feedback

Plot Holder Guidelines - The current plot holder guidelines did not provide a clear description on what is required for plot maintenance. The council revised the guidelines to include the following:

ALLOTMENT PLOT RENTALS

6). Plots not cultivated and left weedy by May 1st will be reassigned to the wait list participants without refund of plot fee.

7) Should the plot look under utilized ((less than 70% in food production) and/or weedy within the plot, or spilling into adjacent plots with invasives (mint, buttercup, raspberries, strawberries, borage, morning glory, bind weed etc.) by May 31st, the plot will be reassigned to wait list participants, without refund of plot fee.

8) If during the growing season, the plot becomes weedy or produce left unharvested, the plot holder will be notified to remedy the situation. If the plot holder has to be reminded by email twice during the growing season, May to September, to keep weeds under control, and to show at least 70% of the plot in food production, to harvest produce in a timely manner, the plot will be reassigned to wait list participants without refund of plot fee.

9) If a plot holder is deemed by council to not uphold these guidelines, the opportunity to rent or maintain a plot at SRG will be revoked.

*Motion by Jill Hickson to accept the new guidelines, effective September 15th, 2020,
Seconded by Val Ross*

Rubber Tires - Discussion around the use of rubber tires in the garden. As a reminder, tires are not allowed for use in the gardens as per the plot holder guidelines.

Action: Janet to mention the guidelines to the pod reps.

Soil - There is a mound of soil beyond the parking lot at the back of the grass. The soil would be beneficial to the membership.

Action: Jill to look into the cost of renting a bobcat to move the soil into the fenced area of the gardens

Apple Press - Will not be in use this year because it is too difficult to sanitize. Hopefully, the press will be back next year for everyone to enjoy.

Plot Encroachment - Some of the plot owners are encroaching into the community spaces. We'd like to remind the membership that they need to stay within their plot boundaries.

Action: Janet will follow up with the pod reps to talk through plot boundaries.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:35pm

Next Meeting

Tuesday October 20th at 6pm. Location is Jill and Clive's home, 23-2363 Demamiel Drive (The Pointe). Everyone is welcome