

Heights Grows

Meeting Minutes February 7, 2022

Location: Haddon Heights Library

Present: Tracey Miller, Maureen Joos, Pat Ferguson, Carol Larro, Adrienne Evans, Miriam Mlynarski, Cyndy Mullineaux, Dawn Reilly (HHSD).

1. HHSD Mental Health Awareness Initiative – May 2022

HG is participating by planting yellow flowers in the bed edges by the railroad gardens and at the library. Previously discussed silk/faux flower garlands may now be more like swags to accommodate the budget of taking on an additional site (the library). Estimated costs for planting and garland/swags prior to adding library \$1600. May add a few flats of annuals for the library. Otherwise, will try to work within that estimate.

Collaborative partners include: 3HS Clubs (Active Minds, Gardening, & Ecology), businesses along Station Ave, the library, HHSD, & HG. Theme colors: Yellow (suicide prevention awareness) Green (mental health awareness). The library will host a 'Selfie' photo board the clubs/school will work with the businesses to decorate the store windows on theme.

Additionally, HG will focus a series of FB posts on the mental health benefits of gardening/nature/green spaces during this month. It would be ideal if the district and other partners could use their social media in the same way or repost. Cyndy will reach out to Heights Living magazine about coverage.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: to help plan the garlands/swags & planting now. If like floral arranging or are creative & crafty **email Cyndy**. Design & planning help is needed **now**. The actual work will take place in **April**. Of course, we will need hands on help then. The plan is to have several work dates in April. HG & students will be encouraged to sign up for both the planting and floral creating.

2. Community Cleanup

Recap of 1/22/22 Community Cleanup

40 volunteers (largely students), 40 bags of trash, 3 locations

Positive feedback, no recommendations for changes at this time

Next Community Cleanup for Earth Day 4/23/22

Discussion of additional locations/areas, add partners (Sustainable Heights, Environmental Commission) Dave to follow up.

3. Spring Planters

Target date 3/26 Saturday with plan to remove old plants Friday evening before. Plant options limited so early, pansies for that date, possibly more (i.e. geraniums) if we plant later. Anyone who wants to help with the planning phase, email Cyndy. Look for a sign up closer to the date.

4. Budget

Due to meeting date so early in the month Dave discussed requesting reports from the borough earlier in the month and not waiting until the close of the month. Rough balance \$2160. \$500 from the County Clean Communities Grant did come in. \$1500 is allotted to the spring planting.

5. Water at the Railroad Area Gardens

Ongoing need for water in that area. Existing water source needs repair. DPW (Dave Tarashi) plans to follow up with the water company. The repair request is quite old. Cyndy sent Dave and members of Council an email recently in an effort to resurrect the issue. Others to reach out to the Mayor, Tom Ottoson. Discussion of funding repair if necessary and possible other options to getting water to the area. The May installation will need to be watered by volunteers with our tanks.

6. Reorganization of HG

Dave reported that the term cycles are staggered. Dave will monitor when new appointments are needed.

7. Volunteer Outreach & Retention

Cyndy created a 'New Member Welcome Letter' (based on the HG info on the borough page) to be sent out in a welcome email to all new members along with a 'Year at a Glance' document that outlines our work over a year.

Tracey will monitor new volunteer sign ups from our Google form, add their email to our list, and send out these materials regularly from our HG email account.

Tracey converted our email list to a Google sheet. All voting members can access and edit. Follow up needed on removal of 'inactive' names.

Maureen and others are welcome to 'reach out' to volunteers on a regular basis whether it be a personal welcome or just to catch them up on what the group is up to. We can use more follow up on this.

8. Sponsor-A-Planter

Need to begin solicitation. Draft an email to current sponsors to see if they will renew. 26 sponsorships needed for the next season which begins with the summer planting. Sponsorships last season were \$200/year (4 seasons).

Discussion of not using the borough's system for credit card payments due to technical issues. Check (or cash) to the borough would be clearer to track.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: to help draft a letter, flyer, planning target dates. If you are interested **email Cyndy.** It would be ideal to have a small team working on this **ASAP.** Who wants to **join Maureen, Adrienne & Cyndy** in a few chats about how to pull off getting our lovely planters funded for another year?

9. Other upcoming activities

Plant Sale – target May, discussion needed on type of plants, location, etc.

Weeding Patrol – begin in April. Social nature & benefits of regular weekly patrols discussed with the option of adding a larger 'Sign Up' event on a monthly basis.

Planter Patrol – begin in April. Looking forward.. discussion needed on how to organize. Possibility of assigning specific planters, planting beds.

DIY Workshop/fundraiser – possibly in the summer

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Don't forget to **contact Cyndy** to help with the MH Initiative or Sponsor-A- Planter

Email: cynejm@gmail.com (best email to use)

or heightsgrows@haddonhts.com

(856)323-0887 (mobile)