

Heights Grows Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2023 6:30 pm

Location: library meeting room

Facilitator: Dave McCollum

Present: Beth Messina, Adrienne Evans, Miriam Mlynarski, Maureen Joos, Sue Wasienko, Dave McCollum, Tracey Miller, Sadie Fitzpatrick, Deb Gaglioti, and Karen Harbin.

Refreshments & Introductions- Tracey brought refreshments for the group. Introductions were made. This was Beth Messina's first meeting, although she's been out to volunteer before.

Budget Report – Dave distributed a current budget status as of 6/30/23. The actual income from the garden tour is not listed yet. What is listed as garden tour income is reimbursement from gardeners on the tour who ordered wholesale plants on our account. They reimbursed the borough.

Borough budget line-item request- We asked for a line item from council back in the winter. All our funds come through fundraising. Dave recently received an answer from councilperson Russo that a line item in the next budget would be established based off expenditures from this year. We will continue to work with council towards funding.

Garden Tour –

- Appreciation to the entire group's effort for the success! Thank you to Chris Walter from the library, Annette Castiglione, Karen Harbin and Cyndy Mullineaux for their role as planners. Thanks to Annette for coordinating day of details, obtaining the aprons and keeping us moving forward. Thank you to Karen Harbin for her excellent graphic design and marketing work. Thank you to Tracey & Adrienne for their work on social media posts. Thank you to our volunteer greeters and guides. Maureen sent out handwritten thank you notes to each of the gardeners on the tour.
- Review of the numbers:
 - Checks - \$195
 - Online - \$915
 - Total: \$3300
 - April Robin Flower Making Donation: \$100
 - **Grand Total: \$3400 (These funds will be split with the library after expenses are paid)**
- Feedback – Lots of positive feedback. Consensus was it was a hit and worthwhile to do it again. There was a discussion about providing more plant labeling &/or lists and a discussion about establishing a criterion for gardens in the future. Cyndy will distribute a short survey to the gardeners and all involved volunteers for additional feedback.

Discussion of watering methods/needs- Discussed the issues related to watering needs before new plantings are 'rooted in', past methods, and what other groups/boroughs do to water their planters. We landed on looking into storage space for watering equipment in town (possibly the fire department) and exploring a borough owned 'golf cart' with a mounted tank that volunteers could use.

Status of downtown maintenance efforts – Maureen reported on current weeding/watering/planting efforts. There may be two students who will be weeding independently for service hours. Maureen will follow up. Shout out to Pat Ferguson who cares for the plot in front of Antics Skate Shop. The annuals planted there look good.

Clean Communities Grant –

- Tracey reported on the June 11th Tunnel Clean up. It was a huge improvement, including paint and lots of work by the students and school staff. Discussion on ongoing issues/maintenance responsibilities for the community at large.
- next date (s) – possibly October. Follow up needed with Annette who coordinates this effort.
- Question raised about if the grant funds of \$500 has been received yet. Some confusion as it appears to have not hit the borough account yet. Follow up needed with Annette &/or the county.

Sponsor a Planter Update-

- Cyndy reported that all sponsors have received thank yous. There were two new sponsors this cycle. We are behind in getting new signage (two new sponsors & one replacement) due to losing our contact at Gateway HS who suddenly resigned. Cyndy will follow up with ArtSign for quick turnaround for 3 signs needed.
- Dave has a contact at a trade/tech school who may be a lead for new signs next year.
- Deb offered to coordinate the sponsorship renewals and new sponsorships for the next cycle. Emails go out in the spring for renewals. The new cycle will start with the summer of 24 planting. Cyndy will share letter samples and timelines with Deb who will be taking over the role next year.

Review May Planting

- Cyndy reminded the group of the importance of having the entire group meet for the short demonstration usually at 9 am. This is important for group cohesion and communication. Volunteers who may start on beds early need to stop what they are doing to attend the demonstration, so we are all on the same page. With a two-block area and multiple planting locations it's apparent that we need everyone to hear instructions.

Fall Planting tentative date 9/23

Next meeting August 7th Monday 6:30 pm Library meeting room