

**Goldenrod Community Garden
Annual General Meeting
October 22, 2022
7:00-8:00 pm**

Minutes

Attendance

Approximately eight (Matt Doody, Tanya Salewski, Sara Chen-Wing, Dietrich Sider, Diane Morin, Marie-Josée Charron, Evan Sterling) people attended this meeting in person and nine people virtually (Barbara Sharp, Carmela Grande, Eniko Megyeri-Lawless, Erica See, Kayleigh Rick, Kirsten Geissler, Linda Brown, Renee Bowers, Stephen Baird).

Welcome and Introduction

Matthew Doody, Board Member, welcomed everyone to the second Annual General Meeting of Goldenrod Community Garden, provided an overview of the agenda, and asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda.

Vote to accept Agenda

Community Garden members voted to accept the agenda as presented.

Vote to Accept Minutes of AGM 2020

Community Garden members voted to accept the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting as presented.

Presentation of Annual Report and vote to accept

Annual report summary was presented by board members Matthew Doody, Sara Chen-Wing, and Tanya Salewski and pollinator committee member Kirsten Geissler.

Board members at the time of the Annual General Meeting were as follows:

- President: Sara Chen-Wing
- Secretary: Vacant
- Treasurer: Tanya Salewski
- Registrar: Barbara Sharp
- Member: Matt Doody
- Member: Susan McClelland

A **Vision** for the garden was developed in Fall 2021 through consultation with partners, members, and friends of the garden and through input from a visioning session. The garden's vision includes a commitment to support relationships, mental health and wellbeing; act as stewards of the environment; provide opportunities to give; be inclusive and diverse; and provide opportunity to educate and learn.

Highlights since the October 2021 Annual General Meeting Include:

- Implementation of Phase 2 garden plots
- Installation of a first pollinator garden
- Compost pilot project
- TD Environmental Leaders Grant
- Development of an operational framework including bylaws, standard operating procedures and mandates
- Continued collaboration with Garden partners (e.g. Just Food, Parkdale)

Committees continued to support the Garden including

- **Communications** that monitored inboxes, sent out reminders and maintained social media
- **Events** including garden opening, a composting workshop and AGM logistics
- **Membership** that organized and coordinated the visioning process, performed outreach with partners and updated the membership list.
 - The garden currently has 120 plots. 65 (81%) of members from last year returned (including 7 sliding scale plots) and 33 new members joined the garden.
 - Friends of the Garden membership remains at 21.
 - As of October 2022, the waitlist for the Garden included 26 people.
- **Properties** led the Phase 2 build including design development, planning and procuring material, organizing volunteers, and building. The committee also ordered water and maintained the grounds.
- **Fundraising** activities included a grant from the TD Environmental Leaders Program at the University of Ottawa for three projects: sustainable water collections, seating, and pollinator garden. The Grade 6 Class at St. George School also provided a donation.
- **Pollinator Garden** researched and sourced plants, constructed the first pollinator garden, maintained the garden and worked with University of Ottawa volunteers.

Board members emphasized the importance of having volunteers help to run the garden.

Financial Update

Tanya Salewski, Treasurer, provided a financial update.

Work was undertaken to develop an annual budget, workplan, and standard operating procedures in addition to making payments and producing financial reports.

Variances between actual and budgeted expenses included:

- Higher than expected revenue from plot fees and donations
- Lower than expected equipment expenditures

The garden currently has a surplus of over \$17,000 combined from its last two years of operation and future board discussions could focus on investment options including decreasing annual fees and increasing infrastructure expenditures.

Members discussed options for increasing the sustainability of the Garden's water access. Several options have been explored to date including increased rainwater harvesting and accessing water through Tunney's Pasture. Any members interested in helping to explore this further should contact the Board.

Election of New Board Members

The following members were nominated and acclaimed as Goldenrod Community Garden Board members:

- Tanya Salewski
- Sara Chen-Wing
- Dietrich Sider
- Barbara Sharp
- Eniko Megyeri-Lawless

Current board members clarified that being a board member currently requires a commitment of 3-5 hours every two weeks, including participation in board and committee meetings.

Some garden members participating in the Annual General Meeting were disappointed in the low attendance in the Annual General Meeting and suggested the newly acclaimed board send an email asking for additional board member nominations (for up to 4 additional members). An additional call out could specify skills still needed in the board (e.g. Secretary). Members also discussed the possibility of having an additional call out for board members in the spring after plots are allocated for the summer.

Members outlined different strategies to increase participation in the Annual General Meeting and in the Garden more generally. This included making attendance of the Annual General Meeting and committees mandatory to remain a member in good standing, having a mandatory minimum number of volunteer hours for each year, reminding people that participation in the Annual General Meeting is part of their membership agreement, having specific volunteer callouts for well defined projects, and being clear about expectations and commitments for specific roles (e.g. board members).

Other business:

i) bylaws

Tanya Salewski summarised changes to the bylaws. These changes were done to provide increased clarity and ensure bylaws were better aligned with Government of Canada requirements for non-profit associations (in case the Garden wanted to incorporate in the future). Changes included providing a better level of detail for elections, board decision making, processes for AGM and membership, and adding a garden purpose and objectives.

Community Garden members voted to approve the new bylaws.

ii) possible additional garden site

Sara Chen-Wing described an opportunity that Jeff Leiper had brought forward. The development company Richcraft is proposing to build an interim community garden at Parkdale and Bullman Avenue in an empty lot slated for development. The Goldenrod Community Garden was approached to run the interim garden. The current board believes the proposal is appealing as there will be a water source, the location may be more accessible, and Goldenrod currently has a waiting list. Richcraft would design the garden (potentially with consultation with Goldenrod), build the garden, and pay for water. Richcraft is hoping to build for the 2023 growing season. There is no information on how long the garden would be in place. The initial garden design was for horseshoe shaped raised beds and in ground plots. There are other examples of interim gardens like this in the city. There are some indications that Richcraft is motivated to avoid paying higher taxes. The current board is supportive of the initiative.

Goldenrod members voted to support continued discussions with Richcraft on the initiative.

iii) additional items from members

Plot closeout

Board members indicated that October 16 is the date to clean up plots for the season, although hardy plants still growing can remain. Compost can be left in bins unchopped, stakes can be left flat in the bed, and straw can be added.

Closing Weekend Saturday October 22

The Garden will be having a close out work party on October 22 with work including completion of the Phase 2 build and chipping compost. A signup sheet is forthcoming.

Animals in the garden

The issue of animals eating garden produce was raised, particularly voles. If a garden member is willing to spearhead, there is the potential to pilot different options on different plots. A posting for interested volunteers can go out in a future newsletter.

Timing of next election

Members asked whether the fall was the best time to hold board elections, if elections need to be tied to the annual general meeting, and if the annual general meeting needed to be in the fall. Bylaws specify that a board election must happen during the Annual General Meeting, and there must be at least one Annual General Meeting a year. Having the meeting at another time of year, or having special additional meetings, are both possible. Other potential dates for an Annual General Meeting are in the winter, after the fiscal year ends, and in the spring when new members receive their plots. These options will be reviewed and considered by the new board.

Members voted to adjourn the meeting.