



NLR Community Garden Committee Meeting NOTES

March 25, 2015, 3:30–4:30 p.m.

Committee members present:

Fit 2 Live (Bernadette Gunn Rhodes, Beau Cooper, Sharice Loftin)

NLR City Council (Beth White)

Neighborhood Services (Dan Scott)

Skyline Community Garden (Diane Barton)

Farm and Food Innovation Center (Sierra Fowler)

First Presbyterian Church Community Garden (Robert Fisher)

3:30-3:40 Update on funded projects

Spring 2014

Final reports were due January 30, 2015.

FFIC Food Forest (\$5,000): Spending deadline extended until 3/31/15, has submitted updated budget and all required reports.

Argenta Community Garden (\$505): All required reports. Still has unspent balance of \$203.

First Presbyterian (\$3,500): Spending deadline extended until 3/31/15, has submitted receipts for all but \$142.

Recovery Centers (\$1,300): Closed out.

Baring Cross Community Garden (\$2,500): Closed out.

ROCAN (\$2,500): All reports closed out. Remainder of funding is in City hands and is being spent on food for ARGC's nutrition/cooking education with the children in the afterschool program.

Fall 2014

1st reports were due January 30, 2015. Final spending and reports due July 31, 2015.

NLR Community Farm (\$4,000): 1st report submitted on time, reported no spending. Received spending report for \$3,101.91 on 3/27/15. ALL CURRENT. All funding will be issued now.

FFIC St. Joseph Community Garden (\$4,000): ALL CURRENT. All funding has been issued.

The Field (\$3,000): First \$750 issued. No reports received so far. Bernadette and Josh Fendley following up.

4 The Youth Community Garden (\$2,000): ALL CURRENT. All funding has been issued.

E 2nd St Community Garden (\$1,000): First \$250 issued. No reports received so far. Bernadette following up.

Spring 2015

1st reports due July 31, 2015. Final spending and reports due January 29, 2016.

Shorter College (\$3,500): First \$875 issued. ALL CURRENT.

NLR Academy (\$3,300): No funding issued yet. Still waiting for MOU between school and school district and MOU between school and Fit 2 Live before funding can be issued.

Baring Cross Community Garden (\$3,500): First \$875 issued. ALL CURRENT.

St. Patrick's Community Garden (\$1884.20): First \$471.05 issued. ALL CURRENT.

Recovery Centers of Arkansas (\$1,500): First \$375 issued. ALL CURRENT.

Skyline Community Garden (\$1,000): First \$250 issued. ALL CURRENT.

3:40-3:50 Votes

FFIC's revised Food Forest budget

Proposed spending remaining \$2,381.38 on:

Tree tags, seedlings, plants, seeds, cover crop, surveying tape, making paint, fuel for borrowed tractor, hand tools, wheelbarrows, irrigation, paint, and one-week skid steer loader rental.

VOTE: Bernadette Gunn Rhodes made motion to adopt revised budget. Robert Fisher seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Skyline Community Garden's budget revision

Proposed reducing budgeted amount for mulch and adding cypress lumber to rebuild one decaying bed, and new watering wand.

VOTE: Dan Scott made motion to adopt revised budget. Beth White seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3:50-4:05 Arkansas GardenCorps updates

- Seedlings doing well in greenhouse. This week, starting tomatoes, peppers, herbs and flowers for beneficial insects/companion planting.
- ARGC service members on spring break from Love Your School initiative serving here this week.
- Helped Salvation Army with their spring break program/garden programming.
- Delivering plants and fertilizer to gardens.
- Seed starting/season extension workshop this Saturday at NLR Academy's greenhouse, 10 am – noon.
- Promoted workshop on Friday's KATV Good Morning Arkansas.

4:05-4:15 Discussions

St. Christopher Retirement Home

Planning on-site garden, may request membership in Fit 2 Live garden network in order to receive seeds/starts. Sierra will make connection.

Logging volunteer hours

Gardens logging their volunteer hours will show community support for the community garden program and help secure funding.

Follow-up item: Beau will share volunteer log form with all gardens.

2015-2016 Arkansas GardenCorps service site application

Beau is interested in serving for 3rd term, but since 3rd terms are not eligible for education award through AmeriCorps, we would need to find a way to compensate him for an additional

\$7,500. Easiest way would be through rental assistance, which is how ARGC service members in Little Rock are compensated.

VOTE: Dan Scott made motion to look into having 2 service members next year with \$11,000 reserved for the mandatory ARGC match and an additional \$7,500 reserved for Beau's rental assistance, and direct Bernadette to seek Mayor's and Legal's input. Sierra Fowler seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Since then, AmeriCorps has advised us that all service members must be compensated the same. Committee must decide whether to offer rental assistance to 2nd service member or reduce down to one service member next year.

Gleaning for food relief

Committee members expressed the desire to reduce waste in gardens and contribute excess produce to emergency food outlets, such as food pantries.

- Follow-up item: Beau and Sharice will post notices on garden signs for gardeners to call them if excess produce needs to be harvested.
- Alderman White sent out list of emergency food outlets in NLR that are served by the Arkansas Foodbank.
- First Presbyterian Church fills food backpacks every week for kids at 7th St Elementary.
- NLRCF distributes produce through School District's homeless liaison.
- Sierra put Fit 2 Live in contact with Jeremy Adams, Food Sourcing & Logistics Manager with the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance who runs gleaning program.
- Central Baptist Church in NLR/Sherwood may still have gleaning program.
- Alderman White encouraged committee members to attend Arkansas Foodbank's monthly "Table Talk" luncheon. <http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org/i-want-to-get-involved/table-talk>

Community/business partnerships

Discussed approaching BJ's Plants and Produce and Plantopia (Chris Olson) regarding potential partnerships/advisory relationship so our community garden network may benefit from NLR businesses' expertise. Follow-up item: Fit 2 Live will contact local business owners.

Mayor's Summer Youth Program

One worker would be desired IF the individual has an interest in gardening/working outside in hot weather. Follow-up item: Bernadette will apply for a worker.

4:15-4:23 Updates from committee members

Skyline Community Garden

Mailing to neighborhood went very well. All 5 private plots are rented, and "Friends of Skyline Garden" group has donated enough to cover water bill for 1 year. Beds are fertilized and many are planted. Diane has collected names for work days.

FFIC

Successfully applied for AmeriCorps NCCC team to split labor between garden and food forest. 8-10 individuals will serve at FFIC for 3 months.

St. Joseph Community Garden expansion delayed slightly due to weather. Work days will take place the first 3 weekends in April to move fence, install irrigation, construct beds and re-construct fence. All beds rented, waiting list in place.

Food Forest had work day last Saturday, labeled trees, weeded plots, marked contours for construction. Work days will occur 1x/month from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, with lunch provided.

First Presbyterian Church

Work day last Saturday, all gleaned beds and most private beds ready to plant and fertilized. All private beds have been rented. Expanding water supply to cover beds relocated from Argenta Community Garden. Installing water spouts at each corner. Connected all rain barrels and ran hoses across parking lot to beds.

Follow-up item: Feature garden merger on social media. Bernadette has emailed Communications.

4:23-4:25 Announcements

- Plant starts available: cabbage, kohlrabi, Brussel sprouts, cauliflower. Soon: tomatoes, peppers, herbs, flowers. Contact Beau or Sharice!
- Clinton School Lecture: Monday, April 6, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. (Sturgis Hall)
Tyson Gersh is the co-founder and president of the Michigan Urban Farming Initiative (MUF), a nonprofit based in Detroit's North End Community that uses urban agriculture as a platform to promote education, sustainability, and community in an effort to empower urban communities, solve many social problems facing Detroit, and potentially develop a broader model for redevelopment for other urban communities. Such projects produce nutritious food while teaching the community sustainable farming skills. MUF engages 2,500 volunteers and grew more than 10,000 pounds of produce in the last year alone.
- Next garden meeting: Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 3:30 p.m., Neighborhood Services

4:25-4:30 Public comment

None.