



## NLR Community Garden Committee Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2016, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

### Committee members present:

**First Presbyterian Church Community Garden** (Robert Fisher, Don Chambers)  
**Iris Park** (Judy Cromwell)  
**NLR Academy School Garden** (Jim Edwards)  
**NLR City Council** (Beth White)  
**NLR Fit 2 Live** (Bernadette Gunn Rhodes, Beau Cooper, Sara Webb)  
**NLR Neighborhood Services** (Dan Scott)  
**R.O.C.A.N. Community Garden** (Jean Baltz)  
**Skyline Community Garden** (Diane Barton)  
**St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden** (Ruth Landers)  
**St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Hunger Relief Garden** (Sandy Decoursey)  
**St. Joseph Universal Institute of Theology Community Garden** (Michael Merritt)  
**St. Patrick's Community Garden** (Robby McAllister)

### Applicants present:

**Fresh Veggies Idlewild** (Jeanne Hyde)  
**Iris Park** – see above  
**NLR Academy School Garden** – see above  
**Skyline Community Garden** – see above  
**St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden** – see above  
**St. Patrick's Community Garden** – see above

### **2:30-2:40 GardenCorps Updates**

From Sara:

- Workshops & Work Days (*Saturdays from 10am-12pm*)
  - Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop at Skyline **February 20<sup>th</sup>** (across street from 257 Skyline Dr.)
  - St. Joseph Hunger Relief Garden plant date – volunteers needed **March 12<sup>th</sup>**, 9a-12p (6800 Camp Robinson Rd.)
  - Seed Swap **March 23<sup>rd</sup>** (directly after committee meeting! Neighborhood Services, 3427 N Magnolia St.)
  - Soil Health **March 26<sup>th</sup>** (Location TBD)
  - Spring Gardening Basics **April 23<sup>rd</sup>** (Location TBD)
  - Smart watering **June 25<sup>th</sup>** (Location TBD)
  - Seed Saving **July 23<sup>rd</sup>** (Location TBD)

NOTE: I will be including these dates in the monthly [newsletter](#) and on the Fit 2 Live calendar at [www.nlr.ar.gov/fit2live](http://www.nlr.ar.gov/fit2live)

To sign up for the monthly newsletter, click the link above or visit <http://eepurl.com/bAJzFP>

- Available garden plots at First Presbyterian (\$25/year)
- Soil testing for heaving metals
  - Raven Turner: rturner@uams.edu
- [Ample Harvest](#) (find local pantries that accept donated garden produce)

**NOTE:** Next committee meeting will be **March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2:30-3:30. SEED SWAP** following the meeting, from 3:30-6:00 PM at Neighborhood Services.

From Beau:

- **Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop!** This Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00am-12:00pm (-ish). Join us at Skyline Community Garden to learn techniques for pruning your fruit trees. Garden is located at 257 Skyline Drive. This workshop is free and open to the public.
- **Plant English Peas and Spinach this week.** These plants are ready to be directly planted (if you haven't already). Plant peas 1"-3" apart, in rows 30" apart. Give them a support to trellis up. They're ready to harvest by about the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May. Spinach should be spaced 3" apart in rows 18" apart. Ready to harvest by about mid-April. Fit 2 Live has seeds of both of these to share with any of our gardens! Email or call us if interested. We'll bring them to you!
- **Indoor starts.** We've started our brassicas, and this week we will be starting lettuces. We will let everyone know when these are ready to be planted outside, so keep your eyes open for that email! We'll also update the FB page.

**2:40-3:40 Spring 2016 Community Garden Funding Proposals**

Discussion

The committee discussed each proposal individually using the Proposal Summary (Attachment A) as a guide. Applicants were present to address many of the questions raised. Representatives of Dark Hollow Community Garden were not present, but Mr. Edwards of NLR Academy had been assisting Dark Hollow and was able to address some questions.

Funding decisions

**Dark Hollow:** Robert Fisher made motion to fund at \$1,200. Jim Edwards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Fresh Veggies Idlewild, St. Joseph Community Garden, and Skyline Community Garden:** Don Chambers made motion to fund all projects under \$1,000 in bulk, and to increase St. Joseph Center' funding to \$600. Ruth Landers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**NLR Academy:** Don Chambers moved to fund at \$1,200. Michael Merritt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**St. Patrick's Community Garden:** Don Chambers moved to fund at \$5,000 with recommendation to paint lumber touching inside of beds with oil-based paint. Sandy Decoursey seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Iris Park Community Garden:** Don Chambers moved to fund at \$2,300. Robby McAllister seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Summary of Spring 2016 Funding

Dark Hollow Community Garden: \$1,200.00

Fresh Veggies Idlewild: \$805.00

North Little Rock Academy: \$1,200.00

St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden: \$600.00  
Skyline Community Garden: \$500.00  
St. Patrick's Community Garden: \$5,000.00  
Iris Park Community Garden: \$2,300.00  
**TOTAL FUNDED: \$11,605.00**

### **3:40-3:55 Other Business**

#### Mantis Tiller

Don Chambers suggested that City purchase Mantis tiller (approx.. \$350) for use in raised garden beds. Jeanne Hyde moved to approve purchase. Diane Barton seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Vinyl from Lamar Billboards

Don Chambers suggested that someone contact Lamar about acquiring old billboards for use as weed barrier. Jeanne Hyde offered to contact Lamar. Dan Scott offered to store vinyl at Neighborhood Services.

#### Christmas Parade

Beth White suggested that NLR Community Garden team enter NLR Christmas Parade.

#### Compost

Don Chambers requested 12-15 yards of compost. Fit 2 Live will contact Street Department.

#### Extra Strawberry Plants!

Don Chambers (First Pres/Argenta) and Jean Baltz (ROCAN Garden) have strawberry plants to give away. Contact Don at 501-487-8176 or Jean at 501-376-1991.

#### Herb Cuttings Needed!

Jeanne Hyde (Fresh Veggies Idlewild) is looking for herb cuttings. If you have any to offer, contact her at 501-375-8669.

#### Large Tiller and Fertilizer Spreader for Sale!

For more information, contact Robert Fisher at 501-392-6396.

**3:55-4:00 Public Comment** -- None.

**4:00 Meeting Adjourned**

### **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

- **Workshops and Work Days coming up! See GardenCorps updates above.**
- **Next Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 23, 2:30-3:30 PM.**
- **SEED SWAP after next meeting! March 23, 3:30-6:00 PM.**
- **St. Joseph Center's Farm Stand opens May 7!**

# Attachment A: 2016 Spring Community Garden Funding Summary of Proposals - \$11,933.96

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## **Dark Hollow Community Garden**

Amount Requested: \$1,760.00

Average Score: 114.5

## **Fresh Veggies Idlewild**

Amount Requested: \$805.00

Average Score: 105.25

## **North Little Rock Academy Garden Based Learning Center**

Amount Requested: \$ 1,112.71

Average Score: 111.5

## **St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden**

Amount Requested: \$ 486.25

Average Score: 123.5

## **Skyline Community Garden**

Amount Requested: \$ 500.00

Average Score: 113

## **St. Patrick's Community Garden**

Amount Requested: \$ 5,000.00

Average Score: 106.5

## **Iris Park Community Garden**

Amount Requested: \$ 2,270.00

Average Score: 114.25

## Reviewer Comments

### Dark Hollow Community Garden

- Need signature on license agreement. Need to print out licensed area for Exhibit A.
- Need business license for DH CDC

GARDEN PLAN – Might need a new birds eye view and garden drawing that reflects the new plan (only using half of garden right now). I think garden layout should be updated for the new garden plan (i.e. indicating which beds will be for flowers and for vegetables).

WATERING – They reported that they hand water, but have requested parts for an automated sprinkler system which is also not part of their proposal. Need more details for watering plan-- sprinklers, timers, etc are listed in the budget but not in the watering plan. I would like the watering and maintenance plans to be more specific (i.e. watering as needed may be interpreted differently). Maybe the volunteers could create a spreadsheet outlining who will water on specific days. I think this will help organize the group and ensure that one person does not become solely responsible for watering/maintenance work. Additionally, the water plan does not mention the sprinkler system or the irrigation timer, two items included in the budget. Who will be responsible for setting this up and checking to make sure it remains functional? Watering plan talks about hand watering, but their budget form looks like they are moving to more automated watering - which is good, but not the plan that is described.

OUTREACH – Would like more details and planning for outreach.

ORGANIZATION – 11 volunteers listed but only two were discussed by Ms. Martin. Are all of these volunteers expected to work in the garden over the course of the year? Maintenance plan has seemed to work so far, but when Mr. Burney left for the summer the garden became really overgrown – who is maintaining property and is there a backup plan? Would like to see more thought about recruiting and maintaining volunteers and clarification on garden manager. Ms. Martin listed as manager, but does she have clear vision for the garden that she can share with new volunteers? Are regular garden meetings happening? Would be good to review rules with each gardener annually, similar to how St. Joseph does it. The garden rules are on file, BUT they have not been updated since 2011. Should DH CDC consider writing new rules?

FUNDING – They are requesting a lot of money and I am not familiar with the size of the garden as its on file. Their goals did not match their funding request. I assume they have repair work to do but that was not listed. Health education and increasing healthy food is listed as their proposed goals and I guess some of the funding indirectly supports this. I do not think their funding breakdown is realistic. Some items seem excessive and some inadequate. Gloves, trash bags and soil costs could be lowered or donated. Think they are an important group to support due to limited avenues for resources but not at the proposed amount.

### **NOTES:**

*NLR Academy has plan to plant in two full Fridays. Suggestion for water timer security: build a box around.*

## **Fresh Veggies Idlewild**

GENERAL – Sounds like a great organization well supported by the community.

WATERING – Do community members know who to contact if they see that the water is turned off or not working properly?

OUTREACH – Need a little more structure with volunteer engagement to take pressure off of other members, as well as reaching out during workdays. More engaged people = less weeds. Do you plan to seek community involvement in ways other than the FB page and the PHNA meetings? Ideas: newsletter, workdays, workshops, block party at the garden. The garden volunteer hours seem a little low to maintain the garden. The red ribbon to notify neighbors of workdays is a good idea.

GOALS – How do you plan to feed people fresh produce - donations, handouts, free food basket?

FUNDING – The requests seem reasonable but not sure about the seeds and started plants request. Can the gardeners not use free seeds and buy their own starters? Recommend for full funding. Budget is reasonable and should be fully funded.

### **NOTES:**

*None.*

## **North Little Rock Academy Garden Based Learning Center**

GENERAL – Great to see more school age children getting their hands in the dirt! Support this funding and would ask if there is cheaper soil amendment options and if this includes the discount the city has. This is a great opportunity to increase involvement for the students and the surrounding neighborhood.

ORGANIZATION – No garden manager/organization contact information. How are students accepted to be on the "Green Team"? Does the group change every week? Are the other volunteers as committed as Mr. Edwards? Tanya Philips was the last person to draft rules for the garden. I think new rules should be written out by the current manager (Mr. Edwards). Need an update on rules and garden drawing since they've changed since original funding.

GOALS – How will you measure middle school involvement? (i.e. number of people, amount of produce, etc.) Do you plan to build different beds for the middle school students? If so, will those be watered on the same watering system as the other garden?

OUTREACH – What information will be included on the flyers? Will you have planned work days for volunteer or any other events? Where is the garden expanding? What are the gardens that you and your students are helping reestablish? Need more explanation about how they are expanding the garden to include the middle school and how they are working with other gardens.

FUNDING – Recommend full funding once sponsor organization issues are worked out.

### **NOTES:**

*Green Team is incentive for students and only students with good behavior are allowed. Classroom teachers often take students out to garden for instruction, especially for math and science. Mr. Edwards wants more community involvement and is planning to hand out flyers to surrounding neighbors.*

### **St. Joseph Center of Arkansas Community Garden**

GENERAL – All good with this one! All looks good!

OUTREACH – Would love to get in touch with the people on their waiting list and get them out to the other gardens. Glad to hear about the partnership with The One Inc.

FUNDING – Recommend for full funding. Clearly describes what the funds will be used for, plus the garden has a great management plan.

#### **NOTES:**

*None.*

### **Skyline Community Garden**

GARDEN PLAN – Idea: rebuild beds with the plastic recycled lumber that will not degrade.

GOALS – I like the goals, I'm just not sure how they will be measured.

OUTREACH – Would like to share Diane's mail-out ideas with the rest of the gardens. I know one of your gardeners is a Master Gardener - would he want to do any workshops?

ORGANIZATION – Maintenance plan is good and works for now, though I think a 'plan B' should be thought about in case their volunteer stops helping out. Should participants sign that they have read the rules?

FUNDING – Support the request for funding. Recommend for full funding.

#### **NOTES:**

*March 24, 8:00am-3:00pm: Putting in irrigation with Home Depot's help.*

### **St. Patrick's Community Garden**

GENERAL – This appears to be a well-run garden and think it's great they are expanding and supporting handicapped gardeners with suitable beds.

GARDEN PLAN – Consider asking Home Depot for help with irrigation. Application seems to be missing a lot of info, but what is here is perfect.

ORGANIZATION – They list 15 hrs/volunteer, but I'm wondering if that's just an average. I'm sure they're there more than that because the garden is so well-maintained.

OUTREACH – Would like to refer their waiting list to other gardens. I'm glad to hear you have a waiting list, but I would like to know how you reach out to the community. Phone calls, flyers, emails, announcements at church? They don't seem to need outreach since all beds are full and there is a waiting list, and some of the other questions weren't answered, but the need for more beds and a better water source is obvious. It might have been a glitch in the PDF, but I don't see any ideas for education opportunities. Was this accidental or do you need ideas for/help organizing educational opportunities?

ORGANIZATION – Are the rules posted as a reminder? How do participants get rid of diseased plants? Is there any restriction on herbicides/pesticides used in the garden? Is there any rule if gardeners neglect their beds for a season - will their bed be given to someone else?

FUNDING – Funding request seems reasonable for their proposal. I wonder if the Garden Shed could be partially supported as they are a parish community and have other potential funding options.

**NOTES:**

*None.*

**Iris Park Community Garden**

- Need articles of incorporation.
- Need originals of license agreement and garden layout? (scan is very grainy)

GENERAL – I am really happy that Judy was able to get this together, with the non-profit corporation and everything. There is a lot of opportunity in this neighborhood, but I'm glad to see they are going to start small and build from there.

GARDEN PLAN – I think they'll need more growing space to accommodate the amount of volunteers they have listed. I'm sure the garden lay out is realistic but I cannot see it well.

WATERING – I think you need to have a better idea of the irrigation plan. I know you say that a plan will be implemented as the garden progresses, but what exactly are you planning? (i.e. hand watering, drip irrigation, soaker hoses) Also, what is considered "too high" for the volunteers to pay and what other ways would you supplement the water bill? Will you let participants know water conservation techniques?

MAINTENANCE – Will there be a designated spot for compost or diseased plants?

OUTREACH – Encourage making plans with outreach to the school and neighborhood groups like Seis Puentes. I like where you are going with the outreach. I think the Latino community is undeserved by the garden program. How do you see yourself partnering with the Ridge Road School? If children come out to the garden during the day or after school, will a garden volunteer be there to supervise?

FUNDING – This is the only garden that is a new garden and would anticipate their funding request to be higher. I think their funding request is low considering all they hope to achieve and think it is a financially reasonable request. I also hope we can share resources to help them get off the ground. Budget seems reasonable, although I'm sure they can get more than 2 beds constructed with \$1500. Are they planning for more beds in the fall? Would suggest doubling the bed budget for 4-5 beds.

**NOTES:**

*Establish water service as sprinkler meter so there is no sewage fee.*