

CCGA April 2023 Coordinating Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: April 18, 2023 - Virtual Meeting, CCGA Zoom Room

In Attendance: Barb Dennis, Mamie Gray, JW Glass, Lorraine Kells, Angela Taylor, Elizabeth Berkeley, Julie Samuels, Marsha Wyatt, LaVerne Morris

Welcome and Call to Order

JW Glass presented the agenda and last meeting minute notes for review. While reviewing the agenda Lorraine K. proposed having the next monthly meeting in person, possibly at a community garden. Motions were made to accept the agenda and previous meeting notes. The meeting started at about 6:14pm

Committee Reports

Resources & Distributions

Barb Dennis reported on the Resources Committee's next few events.

The Spring distribution of hardy annuals, seeds, seed potatoes, etc.. held on April 15 was attended by representatives from approximately 60 gardens. Nick from Westover Farms was on hand providing advice about the seed potatoes. Mention was made of the work of Eva Venable and others for their efforts to prepare smaller sized packets of certain seeds for allotment-sized plots from larger packets of seeds.

The next event is the May vegetable and flower distribution for community gardens only and the date is to be determined.

Mamie Gray mentioned that Ellen Newcomer had inquired about access to the volunteer list. At this time JW Glass logged-in to the CCGA Google account and we found and checked the sign-up list. There have been recent additions, 4 so far in April. We did not look at the actual form or any settings. JW Glass indicated we would review the form setup, add an email alert and re-publish the link to the list.

Lorraine K. mentioned that if anyone is replying to an email sent to one of the 5 CCGA mailing lists please when you respond use the **Reply To All** feature so everyone else on the list knows the email has been responded to.

Advocacy and Outreach Committee

Only Marsha W. was on-line at this time and she indicated there was nothing to report.

Education Committee

Lorraine K. presented the status of the latest discussions with the Obama Foundation (OF). The OF is announcing their 2025 Roadmap on May 20, 2023 at the **South Merrill Community Garden** and has asked if CCGA could be a part of the process. The South Merrill garden is a long established NeighborSpace garden with lots of programming. Lorraine made the point that many other gardens on the south and west sides could be elevated by a connection to the OF. LK indicated that Education has had about 3 meetings with personnel from OF and that Education is trying to establish what the role of CCGA would be. The OF roadmap that they plan to announce on May 20th is focused on art, sports and community gardening and have called their roadmap an 'organic build-out' focusing on the south side at first. Below is a link of an OF video announcing the Eleanor Roosevelt Fruit & Vegetable Garden at the Obama Presidential Center that Lorraine provided:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQuDKJeUnhg>

LK also discussed a recent conversation she had with Ellen Newcomer where they discussed the importance of pollinators. Out of those discussions it was decided that a series of informational postings would be created that features a '*Pollinator of the Week*'. Similar to the old 'Pest of the Month' series but more of a seasonal chronology of what the important pollinators are including their specific wildlife appeal, pollinator status and companion plants - all in support of better education on pollinators.

Communications Committee

JW Glass reported on two ongoing communication projects:

- updating the community garden list - this is to support the process of fielding queries from the public to find a community garden in their neighborhood to participate in or find a plot;
- review using multiple user accounts to access our MailChimp portal.

JW indicated he will soon send out an invitation to anyone to join the team who will update the garden list and restart this effort from 2022.

LaVerne M. asked who in CCGA sees any email from the public? JW Glass said that CCGA has only 1 email address and that is: info@chicagocommunitygardens.org, and that all email to info is forwarded to the communications mailing list. There was some discussion then about what type and volume of mail is received from info and what are the processes to handle or respond to any emails. JW explained that we have one best approach if we want to allow a broad group of CCGA volunteers to view this mail which is to create a new mailing list and use it just to handle mail forwarded from the info address.

Finance

Angela T. stated there has been no major change to our financial position since the last coordinating meeting and the current balance in our fiscal account is \$13,485.14.

Mamie G. asked if separate balances were maintained for the working groups. Angela T. said that yes there were separate accounts but that she did not have those specific numbers and asked anyone to email her with any specific questions.

Project/Event Updates

Lorraine K. said she felt we should hold our next monthly meeting in-person and if possible at a community garden. Discussion followed with the majority in favor of meeting in person. It was asked whether those that can't meet in person could still attend virtually and that would depend on the meeting venue. If we are outside then an internet connection and noise could potentially be issues. It was decided to try and find an event venue for the May meeting.

Community Event Series Update

Lorraine K. said that several proposals had been received for the proposed Spring series and announcements of events are expected to start soon. Angela T. said that there would be about 4 in-person and 1 virtual event in May and generally discussed the coordination between the CCGA ad-hoc staff and the gardens. All was positive contact and the ad-hoc team were impressed by the proposals and what the garden hosts had done to promote their own events.

The final dates are still being worked out, but these gardens have committed to an event. All are in-person except the Field Museum event.

Field Museum, 1400 South Lake Shore (Zoom virtual event)

The Land, 2888 E. 94th Street

Imagine Englewood If - Peace Garden, 6407 S. Honore, 60621

Monarch Community Garden, 1050 N California

Bush Community Gardens, 8501 South Buffalo

Jeffery Manor Community Garden, 2401 E. 100th St. (inside the library meeting room)

Mamie G. said that capacity could be an issue at the Jeffery Manor event in the library as only 40-50 people could be seated. Otherwise work is ongoing to determine what needs to be done to help the host sites. Some requests have been for technical/registration assistance, food, table/chairs, etc..

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

The next monthly coordinating meeting is **Tuesday May 16 2023**.

Tasks From Meeting

- Find a meeting venue for May in-person meeting (ALL);
- Check volunteer sign-up form(s), add email alert when new record is entered, circulate access to list (COMMUNICATIONS);
- Review multiple user accounts for MailChimp porta (COMMUNICATIONS);
- Setup new mailing list to distribute public mail from info account to members of all working groups (COMMUNICATIONS);