



## SHELTON COMMUNITY GARDENS COMMITTEE

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### Meeting Minutes, Monday, February 5, 2018

Present: Sharna Kozak (Chair), Allison Menendez, Patty VanSickle, Teresa Gallagher, Theresa Syc,

Absent: Stacia Monahan, Mary King, Ann Singletary

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:05 pm by Chairman Sharna Kozak.

**1. Meeting Minutes: Theresa Syc made a motion to approve the minutes for September 25, 2017. Seconded by Allison Menendez. All were in favor.**

**2. Public Portion.** No one wished to speak. Sharna Kozak wanted to follow up on a request for port-o-lets the Committee received during the public portion at the previous meeting. The Committee had said it would poll the gardeners to see if there was a demand, but this hasn't been done. She expects port-o-lets would be very expensive and the garden fees would need to go up substantially to cover the cost. She will look into the cost, calculate how much the fee would need to be increased, and poll the gardeners.

**3. Registrations.** Sharna Kozak wanted to thank Rosemary McClain for sending out the registration forms. The registration deadline is February 23 for existing gardeners and this year she doesn't want to give a lot of breaks for people who don't get their paperwork and checks in by the deadline.

**4. Shelton Lakes Garden (Soundview).** Sharna Kozak stated that City crews did a lot of work in November. They flipped the compost pile and moved a portion of it; took out some big rocks; placed mulch around the apple trees; took out two huge rocks from the laneway, and spread woodchips along the edge of the laneway. The lane needs more millings, but the City is out of millings. So the City has done their part. Teresa Gallagher noted they will probably have more millings next summer when road construction projects are underway.

Committee members discussed plot maintenance. Sharna Kozak has been receiving many complaints about some gardeners who did not maintain their plot, but because she didn't give them three written warnings, she did not feel it was fair to deny them a plot in 2018. However, she did want to move them to a less visible location and possibly downsize them to a half plot. Teresa Gallagher suggested telling them they would be on probation in 2018.

It was agreed that Patty VanSickle would conduct the written monthly inspections at Shelton Lakes next year, and the inspections will provide a foundation for determining whether gardeners are sent written warnings and if they are eligible to receive a plot in 2019.

**5. Long Hill Garden (Longview).** A minor expansion of seven plots is scheduled for the spring. City crews need to turn over the hayfield first. Sharna Kozak said she wanted to wait to sign up gardeners for the plots until after the ground was turned. There are a number of gardeners who need to put in their community service hours for last year, so there should be a good workforce. Teresa Gallagher noted that Randy York did the inspections at Long Hill in 2018.

**6. Nells Rock Garden (Dog Park).** Parks & Rec had a memorial bench installed in the Shade Garden. Allison Menendez was contacted very last minute, the day of installation, and managed to have the bench pulled away from some young plantings which would have eventually grown over the bench. She would prefer to have more input in the installation of benches in the garden. Sharna Kozak and Teresa Gallagher both said that it would be appropriate for proposed garden benches or other 'improvements' in the gardens be reviewed by the Garden Committee. Teresa Gallagher said they have learned with the Trails Committee that plans for benches, tables, bridges, and kiosks need to be looked at very carefully before they are approved. Memorial benches and Eagle Scout projects have sentimental importance, and if something is installed and for whatever reason doesn't work out, no one wants to remove it. You're stuck with it. The Conservation Commission has been opposed to memorial benches on the grounds that if you approve one, you need approve everything in the future and it can become too much. People like benches. At the same time, unless the bench is highly visible, groups begin to hang out at the bench and have parties. Beer bottles and fire pits have been a real problem at trail benches, and who maintains the bench?

**7. Eklund Garden.** Teresa Gallagher reported that Mary Scuilla, a Master Gardener, has volunteered to help manage the garden. It has been difficult to find experienced gardeners who are willing to help manage a native species garden.

**Next meeting:** Committee members discussed having a guest speaker at the April 9 meeting and inviting all the gardeners. Allison Menendez said she had a Master Gardener in mind who was a good speaker and would make inquiries.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

*Meeting minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher.*