

Biogaian Meeting Minutes

May 28, 2012

Facilitator – Helen

Scribe - Douglas

Present – Brent, Brian, Doug, Helen, Katie, Michael, Patricia, Sadhana

Guests - Kevin

Check In – What has been the most wonderful aspect of the garden this week for you?

Katie – The 9 new fruit trees that were planted this past week.

Patricia – The remaining tomatoes got planted.

Doug – The rhododendrons that are blooming, e.g. President Lincoln on north side of barn, Grace Seabrook on north side of unit 7, Mary Fleming.

Helen – The beets I planted are sprouting now.

Brent – Saw the queen bee and saw how healthy she looks and what that will bring to the hive.

Michael – More energy in the garden.

Ongoing Business:

Operating Budget Report

Not all receipts are in and chipper cost was quite a bit over what we budgeted for it. (Actual Cost = \$492.75, Budgeted=300). Current balance in operating budget is \$850. That will decline once receipts come in.

Compost Workshop

Planning is well under way. Flyer and advertising needs to happen ASAP.

Limiting class size to 20. Outside participants will pay \$45 per person, couples \$60, Songaians can attend with a good will donation.

Michael agreed to compose a flyer.

The following people will review Doug's slide show and comment -

Patricia, Sadhana, Michael, Brian

Cob Workshop

We are thinking sometime in July. It will probably be two weekends, probably back to back. Now looking for a trainer to present it. Please forward ideas for trainers to Brian.

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Plans for goats/bee and honey report

Bees

With two active hives, we are still using sugar that FFF purchased for us last year. The bees cost us \$110 and we made about \$100 on honey sales from last year's honey.

Goats

A task force consisting of Michael, Brian, Kathleen and Brent are working on a business model for the goats. Michael reported that with our present approach we will recover costs in 5 years. They have considered milking the goats for additional income. A comment was made that to make raw milk sales legal we would need to sell ownership shares in the goats.

Compost Donation to Journeys from Cedar Grove Compost

Cedar Grove has agreed to donate 10 cubic yards to Journeys. Delivery cost for 10 yards will be \$120. We could purchase additional yardage up to 30 cubic yards total at \$18 per additional yard with no additional delivery cost, i.e. delivery would still be \$120. So 30 yards would be \$360 + \$120 delivery for \$480 total.

After discussion we agreed to stay with the 10 yards and a delivery cost of \$120. The piglets will discuss and decide where to put the compost.

The monetary value of this donation will reduce Journeys' debt to Songaia by \$230.

Annual compost donations from Cedar Grove and similar vendors are possible and will be actively pursued each year.

Reserve Spending Recommendations

The sub-committee met and made some initial decisions, i.e. a new riding mower has been purchased.

The sub-committee is still investigating repairs to other mowers as well as purchasing garden carts and wheelbarrows. Several shovels, rakes and other broken hand equipment will be replaced as needed.

Final Reserve Spending recommendations will be made to the Biogaians when investigations are complete

Intern update

We have only one of the intern positions filled so far. For the 2nd position we have been talking with a number of candidates.

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One woman, Rose from California, initially was interested but then changed her mind. In the past couple of weeks, a couple from New Zealand, who are in the states for about a year, interviewed with the piglets and toured our property. Several of the piglets found them wonderful and we were hoping they would apply. But after their tour they decided that their availability didn't quite match the commitment we were asking for.

Katie and Patricia both thought that we could revise our expectations. There was talk of re-contacting them and asking what type of commitment they could fulfill.

It was thought that perhaps the living arrangements we are offering interns was not as hospitable as we could make it. The principal feature being that if an intern(s) was staying in the yurt, they would need to vacate for 2 weeks during the summer while one of the journeys programs used it.

But there was also talk that to take on a couple for a single intern position would require revising the intern agreement that we have with the community. Such a task, while possible, would take time. No decision was reached on whether to make such a modification.

Website Creation

Patricia and others are creating a new web page for the Songaia garden. A number of Biogaians commented on how beautiful it is so far.

Mowing

It was stated that there isn't enough energy in the community to do all of the mowing. Patricia asked that anyone willing to do any amount of mowing please contact her. She will compile the information for later dissemination.

New Business:

Aquaponics

Kevin came and gave an impassioned plea for help in pursuing Aquaponics at Songaia. He highlighted several benefits as well as first steps needed to get started. He mentioned Harmony Hill, a local site that is already doing Aquaponics and suggested we visit to see how they are doing it. Also, Will Allen, who has been doing Aquaponics for years, will be in Seattle on June 7.

Several Biogaians spoke to Kevin's request and all are in favor of exploring this concept at some future point. But generally we believe that now is not the time since our energy is elsewhere. Kevin offered to do the bulk of the construction labor but as several Biogaians pointed out, this project would require a significant amount of

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energy from both Biogaians as well as the entire community. The amount of energy needed to research, design, write a proposal, present a proposal, get feedback, modify as needed and so on would take a lot of time.

Sadly, we wished Kevin well and hope that at some point we will be ready to pursue Aquaponics at Songaia.

Parking Lot Topics

- Mushroom Log
- Design Charrette for Outdoor Cooking/Gathering Space
- Bastyr Presentation Recap

Action Items

Doug will do the following for the Compost Workshop.

- Complete the slide show
- Setup Paypal for workshop Payment
- Advise Sadhana and Patricia how they can help with registration
- Chip materials for workshop on Friday, June 8

Michael will finish the Compost Workshop flyer and distribute.

The Piglets will discuss where to put the 10 yards of compost that Cedar Grove is donating.

Next meeting:

June 25, 2012. Scribe – Brent, Facilitator - Doug