

OLDSMAR ORGANIC COMMUNITY GARDEN, INC.

A 501(c)(3) Non Profit

Meeting Minutes

Saturday, January 27, 2018

The meeting of the Board of the Oldsmar Organic Community Garden, Inc. Board was called to order at 10:00 at the Oldsmar Library's TECO Hall by President Joe Ribeiro. Margaret Bonitz, Treasurer and Acting Secretary attended. One officer was not in attendance, Matt Baker, Vice President.

The following were present:

- Current Gardeners: Rachel Marshall, Vince Albanese, Vickie Yasova, Cheryl Ritchie and Margaret Rosar
- Volunteers: Wendy and Miranda Midkiff
- New Gardeners: Pam and Jeff Hunt of Oldsmar
- City of Oldsmar Leisure Services: Brynn Frazier

We started by introducing ourselves.

1. Secretary's report - Margaret Bonitz read minutes from the last two meetings – Aug 29 and Sept 30. Prior Meeting Minutes were read and approved. Motion to approve by Vickie and seconded by Margaret Rosar. Motion passed.
2. Treasurer's Report, 2017 Statement of Activity – Cash on hand Dec 31, 2017 \$5096.65. (report is attached) It was noted that the Open House brought in \$252.
3. 2018 Budget – the operating costs are approximately \$2000 per year. Currently our garden beds generate \$1700. Donations fluctuate depending on fundraising effort
4. A Brief Overview of Mission and history of the garden was provided. It was noted that we began as a Garden Club in 2011-12 and were incorporated in 2014. We then obtained 501(c)(3) status so that we could accept donations as a non-profit. The garden is built on land that was offered to us to use by the City of Oldsmar. The City is interested in formalizing the use by entering into a lease. OOCG has Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Our By-Laws were revised in 2017. The board members serve a one year term. Joe, Margaret and Matt were asked to fill in for the previous board that departed at the end of August. Our term will be up once we elect a new board in March. Margaret will request that our webmaster add the by-laws and meeting minutes and treasurer's report, going forward, to the OOCG website.
5. New Business:
 - a. 2018 Board Meeting Schedule – Our next meeting will be held at the Library on Saturday March 31 2018 at 10:00. We will elect a new board at that meeting. The new board will determine the frequency and dates for future meetings. Our By-Laws require one meeting per year, in the first quarter of the year. Vince expressed interest in serving on the board

although he does travel frequently. Some in attendance said that while they would not want to be on the board they are willing to help out where possible. Over the next two months we will be reaching out to try to engage with other who may have an interest in taking on a leadership role.

- b. Building New Beds – it was noted that Vince’s brother has been working with Joe to determine where to lay out the new beds. Several people at the meeting expressed interest in helping to build the beds once we are ready for the next steps. Several of the beds will be higher up so that one doesn’t have to bend down to tend the garden. We do have funds available to build beds.
- c. Report from Leisure Services Advisory Board Meeting on 1/8/18 – Joe Ribeiro was asked to attend to meet the group and the new director. She is going to be formalizing the agreement for us to use the land. It was also discussed that the residents of Oldsmar should take precedence to have gardens. The City is also interested to know if we will have “Open Access” or if we will post “Manned Garden Hours” for City Residents. Finally - Possible Expansion. Joe shared that the City was interested to know if OOCG had plans to expand beyond the current 10,000 sq ft area. At the meeting it was discussed that Oldsmar Cares would be interested in having a garden bed that could be used for their clients. In addition Leisure Services would be interested in having a bed that could be used by local school groups. Our intent would be to offer two of the new, larger beds at no cost to the entities above. The Advisory Board asked us to come back on Feb 12 to talk more about OOCG. Margaret Bonitz will attend.

During this portion of the meeting there was lively discussion around the topics above. It was noted that currently of the 25 gardeners, we have 12 from Oldsmar however several do live in East Lake Woodlands which is unincorporated Pinellas County and just has an Oldsmar zip code. We talked about the need to engage with the community and reach out to Oldsmar residents to hopefully find more community minded individuals. Vince shared some great ideas, specifically a possibility to build a bio digester which could be used as a hub for programs to teach environmentally sustainable practices. Organic material can be turned into electricity. Vince shared that he is very interested in the Community aspect of the garden and would like to see how we can engage with the City. He is very connected to other organizations – schools and municipalities, both in Florida as well as globally through his work with the UN. He touched on projects that are currently happening in Orlando as well as in Manatee County - a private organic farm, called Jubilee Farm which is a great model. This area is one of only 21 in the world where you can grow almost anything!

We talked about reaching out to local HOAs to see if they will post info about OOCG and our need for board members and volunteers. It was also noted that the students are required to volunteer and it could be possible that we could organize supervised volunteer hours to help get our mowing and maintenance done.

It was noted that for insurance purposes we would want to retain the fence and that the most likely direction would be offering open hours which we’d have to man and provide tours.

Ultimately it would be the new board that will set the strategic vision for the garden.

Other:

It was noted that due to the frost, there are many dead tomato plants with rotting fruit. It's important to have all gardeners stop in this week to clean up to keep animals from invading. Anyone who needs assistance, please email or call.

Several folks were interested in having a potluck. We encourage all gardeners to participate in the community aspect of the garden and if they'd like to pick a date to hold a lunch etc we can get the word out.

Margaret Rosar handed out guidelines of what types of vegetables do well in Florida gardens which is also available at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

At about 11:30 Am we had a Motion to adjourn which was seconded and the meeting was adjourned.