

MARCH 2024 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Time: 5:00 to 6:35

Place: ZOOM

Attendees: Ren Gobris, Deb Bruce, Jessica Beychok-Boyer, Leslie Alexander, Clara Logue

Absent: None

Special Guests: None

Meeting Purpose: To conduct our regularly scheduled March Board Meeting. In preparation for the meeting, an agenda was sent out as well as the following documents for board meeting approval.

1. February 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
2. February Statement of Activities Report
3. February Statement of Cashflows Report
4. Roles and Responsibilities of Gifts and Grants Committee

Announcements:

- It should be noted that Ren Gobris and Leslie Alexander are now the only people who have full online banking access and bank debit cards.
- It should be further noted that Ren Gobris and Leslie Alexander are now listed as authorized representatives, with Ren being the primary, at the Secretary of State's office.
- Clara Logue informed the Board that she would not be returning to Estes Park this year as the Park Service did not renew her contract.

Review and Approval of the following:

The following reports were approved. Deb made the motion to approve and Leslie Seconded it.

1. February 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
2. February Statement of Activities Report
3. February Statement of Cashflows Report
4. Roles and Responsibilities of Gifts and Grants Committee

Contract and Revenue Discussion:

As of Monday, March 11th

- Contracts sent out on 2/16/24.
- 50 gardeners have said they will return but not all have paid to date.
- 23 contracts have been paid.
- 77 of 91 (85%) responded so far.
- 27 gardeners have said they would not return.
- 18 did not return last year and 5 abandoned their plots in 2023 (total of 23)
- \$2,500 has been received to date.

- 14 gardeners (60% of contracts received to date) have given \$1,310 in extra donations.
- The deadline for returning gardeners to submit contracts is March 31st, after that we will go to the waiting list.
- There was considerable discussion about the new \$80 fee and its possible impact on returning gardeners. To date, only one person specifically mentioned the new fee as being a negative determinant in their decision.

Actions:

- An email will be sent out reminding people to please respond if they plan to garden with us this year so that we can move to the waitlist and begin searching for new gardeners to fill the vacancies.

Sponsor Discussion:

- The list of Sponsors from last year include:
 - Barbara MacAlpine (donated this year as well)
 - Alexander -also this year
 - Claire Hanson
 - Mary Sampson
 - Dr. Rauk
 - United Methodist Church
 - Claire's neighbor (name unknown. It's thought she gave \$60 cash to Claire)
 - At the current time we're in need of sponsoring 15 garden plots.

Actions:

- Ren will draft an email/letter to be sent to last year's and this year's perspective sponsors.
- Ren will personally follow up with Claire, Mary, and Dr. Rauk.
- Leslie volunteered to follow up with United Methodist Church.

Recent Garden Communications Discussion:

1. An email to all gardeners was prepared during the month to partially explain the 2024 price increase, and to ask gardeners for their generous donations to help the Garden defray costs. This email was never sent however, largely due to too many emails already having been sent, and not yet being fully aware of the effect the new fee is having on contract renewals. It was determined that it was best to hold the email for the time being until more is known about the new fee acceptance and/or potentially rolling back some fees should the VTS grant be awarded.

- **Contract and Policies Emails**

- Of the 27 gardeners who will not return, this is what we have learned for their reasons for not returning:
 - 18 - no reason given.
 - 3 are going to try home gardening.
 - 2 are too busy.
 - 4 moved.
 - 1 health reasons
 - EVICS has a lack of interest (last year they had 2 plots)

Actions:

- Leslie is to send out an email to those gardeners who will not return this year to ask why they will not and to remind them that financial aid is available.
- **Garden Survey**
 - We reviewed the actual survey results as a team.
 - The results of the survey were extremely encouraging.

Actions:

- An email would be sent to remind people that there is still time to respond to our 2024 garden survey and that the deadline for plot contracts is March 31.
- Another email would be sent to ask those who replied favorably to the survey for wanting to volunteer for tasks needed to be done at the garden, and/or to join our finance committee, to get into touch with us so they can be placed on our 2024 volunteer lists.
- After giving people another few weeks to complete the survey, the survey results will be moved to Drive for ease of future retrieval and reviewing. At that time, we will also decide how to directly provide the results to the gardeners.

Recent call to fix the gate.

- Due to high winds, the east gate was blown down. The following people offered to repair it as soon as the weather cooperates.
 - Jim Redman
 - Jason Watkins
 - Dave Boon

VTS Grant Application Update

- Application is due March 31
- The financials and Secretary of State materials were prepared for submission.
- Doyle will begin the actual application when he returns (week of March 25).

- It was determined that we'd ask for funding to replace 16 low beds with raised beds. It's anticipated this would occur in two stages... 8 in May and 8 in the fall.
- It was established that the Board would like to "roll back" plot license fees should the grant be won. The exact amount will be determined should the grant be won.

Estes Valley Sunrise Rotary 2024 Grant Application

- Application is due March 31.
- Deb Bruce has gotten the application stated.
- The finance committee would help prepare the financials.
- Some discussion was heard on using the funds for a sun shelter. But immediately following the meeting, it was determined that a grant would be sought to fund 12 sponsor plots at the community garden as well as the construction of 8 raised beds at a housing project as chosen by the EP Housing Authority.

Other Topics:

- Deb reports that the trifold design was successful but that the font will be reduced on future orders for visual purposes.
- The Newcomers Meeting on March 13th was reported as being successful with several new future volunteers having been identified. Deb/Jessica to follow up with more details for communication purposes.
- The school appears excited about the possibility of EVCG offering an Assistant Treasurer Internship. But they reported it being late in the year, and that they would like to revisit the program in August.
- Jessica met with Kim Slininger of EVRPD to discuss his Interns. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 5th.
- Update on Erinn Wharton's offer to help improve the children's play area.
- It's reported that our web developer can easily add buttons to allow third parties to donate online but to do so a PayPal account must be set up. This should become a priority as the finance committee develops is able to lend support.

Treasurer and Finance Committee Discussion:

- Despite a special plea to gardeners seeking a Treasurer or people willing to join our finance committee, we got no takers.
- The following people have agreed to sit on our new finance committee.
 - Jim Redman
 - Ren Gobris
 - Deb Bruce
 - Neil Alexander
- The first formal finance committee meeting will be conducted ASAP. Topics to include:
 - The establishment of a system to obtain committee approval of monthly reports.
 - Review of the 2024 Budget

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- Review of financial information being prepared for the VTS and Rotary Grants
- Completion of Form 990-N (e-postcard) to fulfill IRS tax filing needs.
- Charitable Registration Renewal – due April 30 - \$10 Fee –
- Financial Info/EIN#/Board Names and Addresses - \$10 fee
- Periodic Report – is due soon- \$10 fee.

New Business:

- Orientation dates and an agenda was discussed for the new gardeners meeting (but all gardeners are welcome).
- It was decided that a program AT THE GARDEN as opposed to a Power Point meeting format, as we done previously, would be best.
- The format could potentially call for an Educational Program presented by the Larimer County Extension Office, or perhaps EVCG gardeners such as Joan Saap; Nannett Chisholm.
- Meeting at the garden would allow for demonstrations on how to properly use the garden’s infrastructure while also seeking volunteers for annual Garden needs.
- Jessica offered to write up a preliminary agenda.
- The “Annual Startup Day” was briefly discussed. But it’s a bit premature to be thinking about it given that the YMCA Elevate Gap group will be at the garden for 8 days in May and some of the “usual” startup activities may be performed by them.
- Finally, Deb reports that the library has been booked for the rest of the year for EVCG monthly meetings.

Review of highlighted priorities:

This Month’s (Between March 14th and April 10th) Priorities:

Item	Responsible Person	Action	Due Date	Status
1	Ren	Follow Up with Terminix on their quotation to rid the garden of voles using CO2.	ASAP	
		Fix the East Garden Gate when we get a break in the weather.	ASAP	
2	Leslie	Email gardeners reminding them to please respond if they plan to garden with us this year so that we can move to the waitlist and begin searching for new gardeners to fill vacancies.	ASAP	
3	Leslie	Send an email to those gardeners who will not return this year to ask why they will not and to remind them that financial aid is available.	ASAP	

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4	Leslie	Send an email to remind people that there is still time to respond to our 2024 garden survey and that the deadline for plot contracts is March 31.	ASAP	
5	Leslie	Send an email to ask those who replied favorably to the survey for wanting to volunteer for tasks needed to be done at the garden, and/or to join our finance committee to get into touch with us so they can be placed on our 2024 volunteer lists.	ASAP	
6	Leslie	Move the 2024 Garden Survey results to Drive for easier retrieval and viewing.	ASAP	
7	Ren/Deb	Prepare and submit the 2024 VTS Grant Application	March 31	
8	Ren/Deb	Prepare and submit the 2024 Sunrise Rotary Grant Application	March 31	
9	Ren	Conduct the first Finance Committee Meeting	ASAP	
10	Ren/Leslie	Contact last year's Sponsors to see if they would consider a sponsorship this year	ASAP	
11	Ren	Completion of Form 990-N (e-postcard) to fulfill IRS tax filing needs	April 15 th	
12	Ren	Continue to investigate the cost of QuickBooks and if, because the Board used it in the past, whether we can renew a past subscription or must start from scratch.	ASAP	
13	Ren	Investigate creating a PayPal account to allow online donations.	ASAP	
14	Jessica	Follow up with EVRPD's Kim Slininger to discuss their new interns and EVCG's role.	ASAP	
15	Jessica	Work out a preliminary agenda for new gardener orientation.	ASAP	
16	Deb/Jessica	Follow up with a written summary of the March 13 th Newcomers Meeting	ASAP	
17	Ren	Prepare the Job Responsibilities of the Garden Operations Committee	ASAP	
18	All	Continue to prepare a design for the sun shelter for future grant purposes	ASAP	

Last Month's (Between February 14th and March 14th) Priorities:

Item	Responsible Person	Action	Due Date	Status
1	Leslie	Immediately send out the new 2024 Garden Contract with cover letter and garden policy update.	ASAP	Done
2	Leslie	Approximately 5-7 days after the contracts are issued, send out the email containing the annual survey.	ASAP	Done
3	Leslie	And approximately 5-7 days after the survey, send the email asking volunteers for the Treasurer and Finance Committee.	ASAP	Done
4	Leslie	A final email, requesting donations to fund additional tall plots will be sent last to allow gardeners the time to respond to the previous emails.	ASAP	Temporarily on hold.
5	Deb	Forward a copy of the Gifts and Grants Job Responsibilities to Board members for discussion and approval at the next Board Meeting	ASAP	Done
6	Jessica	Follow up with EVRPD's Kim Slininger to discuss their new interns and EVCG's role.	ASAP	Done. Next potential meeting April 5
7	Ren	Schedule the YMCA Elevate Gap Program for these eight days: May 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, and 23.	ASAP	Done
8	Leslie	Order the metal markers for renumbering all the garden plots.	ASAP	Done
9	Ren	Ask the Estes Park School Superintendent, Ruby Bode, if the school would be interested in our offer to create an internship for a junior or senior high school student to become an EVCG Assistant Treasurer	ASAP	Done
10	Ren	Notify and work with Doyle Baker to structure the 2024 VTS grant proposal to continue building additional raised beds versus trying to seek money for a sun shelter.	ASAP	Done
11	Ren	Follow Up with Terminix on their quotation to rid the garden of voles using CO2.	ASAP	Ongoing. We learned that our sales rep

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				is no longer with the company
12	Ren	Prepare a communication to announce the formation of our new Finance Committee. That committee consists of Ren Gobris, Deb Bruce, Neil Alexander, and Jim Redman.	ASAP	Pending
13	Ren	Prepare the Job Responsibilities of the Garden Operations Committee	ASAP	Pending
14	All	Continue to prepare a design for the sun shelter for future grant purposes	ASAP	Pending
15	Ren	Investigate the cost of QuickBooks and if, because the Board used it in the past, whether we can renew a past subscription or must start from scratch.	ASAP	Pending
16	Deb and Jessica	Prepare to attend the Newcomer’s Meeting on March 13 th and create a trifold for a handout.	ASAP	Done
17	Leslie	Introduce Jessica to our website developer to enable donations to be made online.	ASAP	Need to setup PayPal. Check w/Claire.
18	Jessica	Follow up with our website developer to enable donations to be made online.	ASAP	Ongoing
19	Deb	Purchase two grow lights to begin growing plants for this year’s garden.	ASAP	Done
20	Ren & Leslie	Follow up with the Boons and the construction of raised beds at a Housing Authority site.	ASAP	Done