

**LONG BEACH COMMUNITY GARDEN ASSOCIATION (LBCGA)**  
**Minutes of the June 3, 2024 Board Zoom Meeting**

ATTENDEES: Greg Marcotte, Douglas Budd, Mary Sue O'Melia, Carol Meyer, Bruce Lissak, Alan Coles, Anita Cordova, Chuck Davis, Frank Dayak, Dan Freleaux, Milton Johnson, Karyn Maag-Weigand. ABSENT: Nancy Bernstein, Doug Mullin. MEMBERS PRESENT: Laura Otenti, Emilia Rogowska, Nancy Alperin.

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
Call to Order – Greg M.	Greg M. called the Zoom Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.	Call to order
Minutes of February 5, 2024 Zoom Meeting	Motion to approve the minutes of February 5, 2024 by Milton J. and second by Chuck D. Minutes approved.	Motion approved
Garden Member Comments	<u>Traps In the Garden</u> – Nancy A. discussed how a juvenile rabbit's leg got caught in a snap-trap. Nancy is opposed to snap-traps as they kill animals that are part of the Nature Center. Nancy A. requested that the Board of the LBCGA vote to ban kill traps and snap-traps. Karyn MW thanked Nancy and said that she supports such a ban. Emilia R. said that she also supported a ban on traps.	
Report of the President – Greg M.	<p><u>Introduction of New Officers</u> – Greg M. introduced Karyn Maag-Weigand and Bruce Lissak to the Board. Karyn is responsible for the butterfly garden and assisting Alan with the Orchard. Bruce is responsible for valve repairs and assisting Mary Sue with tracking Work Party hours.</p> <p><u>Tours of Garden &amp; Interviews</u> – Greg M. reported that he provided tours to the Long Beach Health Department (15 people), Dana Point Community Garden, and student volunteers from Mayfair High School (students did 2 ½ hours of service work in the garden). Greg also did an interview with Nate Martinez, a student at CSULB, for an article in Dig Magazine.</p> <p><u>Wheelbarrow Inventory</u> – Greg M. reported that four gorilla carts are missing, and one gorilla cart has missing/broken wheels. Four gorilla cart tires are required for repairs.</p>	<p>No action</p> <p>No action</p> <p>No action</p>
Report of 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President – Nancy B.	<u>New Membership &amp; Plot Vacancies</u> – Greg M. reported for Nancy B. who was on vacation. There are five people on the wait list and seven plots cleaned up and ready to be assigned. Currently, there are 10 – 12 new garden members, some of whom were given plots that were not in the best of condition and may require extra work starting out.	No action
Report of the Treasurer – Carol M.	<u>Treasurer's Report &amp; Renewal Update</u> – Carol M. reviewed revenues and expenses relative to budget. Revenues are over budget due to plot upgrades. Insurance and tax preparation expenses have gone up; we are in the process of getting a new tax accountant. Income at \$54k compared to \$57k expenses. Deficit of \$3k is low enough that we do not need to raise dues for FY 2024-25. Donations will help offset this amount. Current year-to-date budget has a surplus of \$14k. Everyone expected to renew for 2024-25 has done so. Motion to approve Treasurer's Report by Doug Budd; second by Milton J. Motion approved.	Motion approved

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<p>Report of the Treasurer (continued) – Carol M.</p>	<p><u>Payment for Community Service</u> – Carol M. reported that 32 plots purchased hours bringing in \$3,010 in additional revenue. While the revenue is appreciated, we need help to keep the garden clean. Carol M. moved to increase the hourly rate for Community Service hours from \$25 to \$50 with the purpose of encouraging participation rather than payment. Second to motion by Dan F. Discussion followed. Karyn MW. suggested that the Board inform members of the need for work party participation; that listing specific tasks makes it more attractive. Anita C. said that the monthly letter could be used to encourage increased participation, but did not expect people to change as work is hard. Anita said she supported raising the rate but not the amount; \$40 would be better. Doug B. said that the fee seems high given that we want people to participate rather than make money. Alan C. noted that the monthly newsletter is a good option that we could try for a year. Carol M. noted that on the first letter regarding service hours, she would not give the option of payment in lieu of work hours. Anita and Greg have had outside groups help in the garden. Member payments in lieu of service equals 120 hours. Milton J. suggested that we use fees to hire help. Carol M. noted that we do not have insurance for paying individuals to work in the garden. Greg and Carol will work on including the need for community service and tasks in the monthly newsletter. Motion approved to raise community service hour fee from \$25 to \$50.</p> <p><u>Conversion of Tax Status to 501(c)3</u> – Laura O., former Board member who worked on this issue, provided an update and recommendation that we not proceed. The City of Long Beach wrote the Articles of Incorporation as a 501(c)4 in the 1970's. A 501(c)3 organization allows donors a tax exemption. Tax deductible donations are currently made to Partners of the Park, a 501(c)3 organization. Partners of the Park charges us a 10% fee for this service and we may use the money that they hold in our behalf. Because of all the community service that the LBCGA provides, the Board believed that we would be eligible to change our tax status. This would require us to change our Articles of Incorporation and follow certain IRS guidelines involving two operational tests, which we may not pass (e.g., it is rate that a 40+ year old organization would change). Based on these findings, Carol M. and Laura O. recommended that we withdraw our application. LBCGA can still conduct community service activities and accept donations through Partners of the Park. Dan F. thanked Laura for all her work.</p> <p><u>City Infrastructure Funding for Road Repairs</u> – Carol M. reported that approximately \$100k is in the City's budget for road repairs to the garden. Our project would be combined with the Public Works Department and a larger road repair project for El Dorado Park. Public Works will provide an update.</p>	<p>Motion approved</p> <p>No action</p> <p>No action</p>
<p>Orchard Report – Alan C.</p>	<p>Orchard Report – Alan C. reported that we have a good citrus crop this year. Alan suggested wording for signs to remind gardeners to dump dirt in the assigned Q plot rather the manure piles. Proposed wording to be developed by Alan, Greg, and other interested Board members.</p>	<p>No action</p>
<p>Food Bank Report – Anita C.</p>	<p><u>Food Bank Report</u> – Anita C. reported that there are seven Food Bank Plots – Q1, Q2, Q3, Q15, A18, B18 and G12. Food delivery volunteers for the summer to receive four hours for community service. Volunteers are trained on where to go and Anita does follow-up to ensure that the work has been done.</p>	<p>No action</p>

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<p>Old Business</p> <p>1. Sewer Project</p>	<p><u>Sewer Project</u> – Greg M. reported that the contractor is waiting for permit to put in a gate rather than cutting the fence. Construction in the garden is now limited. Most of the required work will be done through Willow Street. The contractor will work around our July 20<sup>th</sup> Picnic schedule. Impacts from this project will be minor rather than major impact as the project was originally proposed. We may need to relocate wheelbarrows during this project.</p>	<p>No action</p>
<p>New Business:</p> <p>1. Website</p> <p>2. Trapping</p> <p>3. Picnic Planning</p>	<p><u>Website</u> – Carol M. noted that Nina B. is no longer on the Board so we will need a website administrator. In addition, the website needs to be updated to attract new members and to continue to educate existing members. Carol to contact the Volunteer Corner and investigate contracting for website development and management.</p> <p><u>Trapping</u> – Carol M. made a motion to develop a policy on trapping. Milton J. seconded this motion. Discussion followed. Trapping of mice and rats is legal in the City of Long Beach. Trapping of other rodents (rabbits, squirrels, gophers) is not legal in the City. The garden has a program for gopher control so that is not an issue. Trapping of mice and rats is required as these vermin can spread disease. As a Board, we are responsible for policies that promote safe and healthy gardening, so vermin control (i.e., rats and mice) is required. The issue is what to do about squirrels and rabbits. Some Board members expressed opposition to trapping or poisoning squirrels and rabbits. A draft of proposed wording on how to address squirrel and rabbit issues without trapping or poison to be developed by Greg and Carol and to be circulated to Board members prior to release in the next newsletter.</p> <p><u>Picnic Planning</u> – A meeting to discuss picnic details was set for June 27, 2024.</p>	<p>Follow-Up action – look for professional website manager</p> <p>Follow-Up action – include in newsletter</p> <p>Follow-Up action – picnic meeting</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn at 8:11 pm by Chuck D. and second by Anita C. Motion approved.</p>	<p>Meeting Adjourned</p>

Draft Minutes prepared by Mary Sue O'Melia and distributed to all Board Members on September 3, 2024.