

## FENWAY GARDEN SOCIETY

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP WINTER MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2022

Zoom Video Conference

#### **Present:**

Pam Jorgensen, President

Meredith Babine, *Treasurer*

Christine Nelson, *VP of Communication & Development*

Chelsea Arnold, *VP of the Park*

Amy Johnson, *SVP of Administration*

Facilitators: Kevin Cranston and David Patel

Parliamentarian: Kevin Cranston

FGS Members – 80

**Call to Order:** 10:02am with a Quorum present

Approval of Spring 2022 Meeting minutes. All stand as distributed.

#### **Review of Rules of Order**

- Kevin Cranston, Parliamentarian, reviewed Robert's rules of order

#### **Introductory Remarks - President**

- Highlighted accomplishments and events of the year, including:
  - Seed swap
  - Spring Meeting
  - Educational gardening workshops
  - Summer Solstice Take Back the Gardens event
  - Increasing social supports among membership
  - Open Gardens
  - Fensfest
- Recapped major 2022 projects, including:
  - Spring Bulk Order
  - Launch of the online merchandise shop
  - Food donation program
  - Community Participation Days
  - New hot composting program
  - Youth training program through PowerCorps

- Congratulated those who participated in the Mayor's Garden Contest and received Outstanding Gardener and New Gardener awards

### **President's Report**

- Reported on progress for the goals for 2022 as outlined in the 2022 Spring Meeting
  - Accomplished 5 out of 6 goals:
    - Adopted a whistleblower policy
    - Adopted a non-retaliation policy
    - Adopted a document retention policy
    - Created a members' handbook
    - Created an executive board handbook
    - Partially completed the last goal, which will be completed at the end of this meeting: Revisions to FGS constitution and by-laws
- Reported on important projects that FGS completed in 2022
  - Completed the pollinator garden construction
  - Began work on the accessible garden to make it truly wheelchair accessible. FGS will continue to collaborate with Northeastern students, the City Disabilities Commission, and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department to finish the project.
  - Began the experimental phase of the hot composting project to compost invasive plants
  - Established PowerCorps partnership to involve their trainees in garden construction and maintenance projects
  - Implemented a new policy requiring corporate/ for-profit volunteer groups to donate money in conjunction with FGS sponsoring their volunteer group in the gardens

### **SVP of Administration's Report**

- Recapped 2022 security efforts
  - Formed the Security & General Maintenance Committee in early 2022 to respond to break ins and maintenance issues in the gardens
  - Installed solar power, motion-detecting lights in common areas
  - Created an incident report form for gardeners to report security incidents

### **VP of Communication's Report**

- Reported on 2022 membership communication efforts
  - Weekly emails, with monitoring of engagement metrics
  - Newsletters
  - Social media posts
  - Website updates
  - Thanks to volunteers who contributed to these initiatives
- Recapped additional 2022 projects
  - 2022 Seed Swap
  - Distribution of new gardener starter kits
  - Call for volunteer interest for these projects in 2023

### **Treasurer's Report**

- Described the FGS Statement of Financial Position as of December 1, 2022
  - FGS received \$19,839.72 in gardener dues, \$17,234.13 in operating donations, and \$2,155.44 in endowment donations in 2022
  - Reported on balances in each bank account
- Displayed metrics of 2022 budget vs. actual in the following categories
  - Revenue and Cost of Goods Sold for 2022
  - Administration Expenditures
  - Bulk Order, Membership & Community, and Office Supplies & Software Expenditures
  - Park, Special Projects, and Grant expenditures
  - Overall (aggregation of above-listed categories)
- Motion to approve financials from January through November 30: Passed
- Reported on Pollinator Garden progress
  - Construction completed and some grant balance remains
  - FGS is planning to do work with the Boston Area Beekeeper Association on any educational and outreach activities funded by this grant.

### **Endowment Committee Report**

- Treasurer reported that the Endowment Committee reevaluated the portfolio, and removed holdings that were not in line with the mission of FGS
  - Divested from fossil fuels, tobacco, and weapons
- Treasurer reported that the endowment generally tracked with the market fluctuations this year
- The Endowment Committee will continue to transfer \$5 from every garden renewal and additional specific donations to the endowment

### **VP of the Park's Report**

- Recapped 2022 park accomplishments
  - FGS gained 98 new gardeners over 7 new applicant sessions
  - Hosted 7 Community Participation Days
  - Added several new power tools for community use
  - Managed wood chips and created new dumpster solutions

### **Nominating Committee Report**

- Nominating Committee Chair (David Patel) recapped recruitment efforts to fill 2023 Executive Board
- The Nominating Committee implemented the recommendations of the FGS Nomination and Election Process Working Group
- Conducted 2023 Executive Board and Area Director elections
  - Described election process
  - Introduced Board candidates
  - Reported on the prior week's Meet the Candidates Forum

- Asked for any Board nominations from the floor and received none
- The following candidates were elected to the following positions:
  - President - Pam Jorgensen
  - SVP of Administration - Sydney Kanjuparamban
  - VP of Communications - Victoria Puyat
  - Treasurer - Heather Dunbar
  - VP of the Park - Stephen Exner
- Described Area Director role and introduced slate of Area Director candidates
  - Asked for nominations from the floor for Area Directors and received none
  - All forty-four Area Director candidates were elected

### **Constitution & Bylaws Committee Report**

- Kim White introduced the following recommended substantive changes to the constitution and by-laws
  - Clarification of President's role on various standing committees. Current document says President is an ex officio member of several committees but also says members of the executive board may not serve
  - Add a requirement for a supermajority vote of 75% to dissolve FGS or merge FGS with another entity
- Conducted vote to approve changes to the constitution and by-laws
  - Described voting procedure
  - Displayed redlined changes to Articles VIII, IX, XI, XII, and X
  - Facilitated discussion regarding said changes
- Motion to approve changes to Articles VIII, IX, XI, and XII passed
- Motion to approve changes to Article X passed

### **Members Forum and New Business**

- Susan Povak submitted a motion to consider Arthur Rose for Honorary Membership.
  - Motion passed unanimously.
- Rachel Sampson and Sasha Murshteyn discussed the lack of public parking around the gardens for non-Fenway residents and suggested that members reach out to city councilors, BPDA, and the Boston Transportation Department to promote saving public parking spots in the area.
  - Treasurer suggested that those concerned with parking could send a blurb to the Board to communicate to membership.
  - VP of Park reported that the Board had opposed conversion of open parking for nonresidents to metered parking earlier in the year.
  - President requested that Sasha provide a sample letter to the Board for inclusion in the next communication.
- David Patel suggested adding a Little Free Library in the pollinator garden and volunteered to head the project.
  - President requested that he submit a proposal with a budget to the Board.

- Tom Collins asked whether there are plans to keep the fence surrounding the gardens, but no one present was able to answer the question. He will continue to try to get an answer from DCR.
- Anne Lundberg & Peter Scott suggested expanding FGS education efforts beyond the garden to classrooms, YMCAs, and summer camps.
- Victoria Stock requested volunteers to assist with managing the hot composting bins.
- Erica Bernstein requested volunteers to assist with an ad hoc committee that will aim to make communications and Board meetings more inclusive and accessible.
- Sara Sun requested a way to connect new gardeners with experienced gardeners.
  - President suggested attending the Seed Swap and reaching out to Arthur Rose for mentorship.

Meeting adjourned at 11:52 AM.