

Minutes – South Whidbey Tilth Business Meeting – March 19, 2015

Council Members Present: Susan Prescott, Edward Hueneke, Tom White, Jean Nelson, Michael Seraphinoff and Dorcas Young.

Council Members Absent: Marc Wilson (with an excuse)

Also present: J.C. May

Call to Order - Prescott

The meeting was called to order by Prescott at 6:49 p.m. The meeting was held at the Community Building at Trinity Lutheran Church in Freeland.

Announcements – Prescott

- **Building for Sale** – Anza Muenchow purchased the building Christina Moat was offering for sale. The building has been removed from the Tilth campus.
- **Greenbank** – There will be a presentation by Don Stuart author of *Barnyards & Birkenstocks* at the Greenbank Farm at 2:30 this Sunday, March 22nd.
- **Equinox celebration** - The Equinox celebration at Tilth has been cancelled.
- **Tilth Film night** – Film night will be the 24th at 6 p.m. The movie this month is *Open Sesame, the story of seeds*.
- **South Whidbey Garden Club grant** – Prescott has received word that Tilth was not awarded the South Whidbey Garden Club grant for 2015.

Minutes – Jean

Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the February 19 minutes as amended.

Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the January 17 Annual Meeting minutes as presented.

Financial Report - Edward

- **Profit and Loss** – Edward reported that there is nothing out of the ordinary. He commented on the membership line item concern brought up at the February meeting. The end of the year, the timing of the annual letter and the date of deposits all will be a factor in the membership numbers at the first of each year. Consequently, the numbers reported in January and February may not be complete. He reported that to date the membership number is 179. Edward reported the checking account balance as of 3-19-15 is \$10,777.
 - **S.W. Tilth Association** – Edward reported that he has renewed the nonprofit corporation annual report and sent the \$10 for South Whidbey Tilth to the Secretary of State Corporation Division.
 - **Cascade Second Harvest** – missing is the invoice for the listing in the Puget Sound Fresh Farmers' Market Guide.
- Action Item #1 – Edward will look into this.**

- **Sustainability Fund** – There was more discussion around the question of how and whether to invest the money in the Beneficial Bank Sustainability Fund savings account. With the money currently earning only .05%, it is felt that the money can be moved to other forms of investment based on what the Board believes is a safe risk.

Action Item #2 – Prescott and Edward will sit down with a representative from Heritage Bank to discuss the options available.

Action Item #3 – Edward will look at Tilth's original policy for the Sustainability fund for any wordage covering investment risk.

- **Tax Evaluation** – Edward has received the Island County Property Tax - \$1,031.16 (\$968.86 for half; \$62.30 for conservation easement)

Market Committee - Tom

- **Market Promotion** - Tom reported that market promotion is moving along, but that to date there are only 6 vendors currently signed up. There has been no response from the ad on Drew's List.

- **WI Farm Tour** - Tom reported that S. W. Tilth has been accepted for the 2015 Whidbey Island Farm Tour. A \$50 registration fee is due by March 30.

Action Item #4 - Edward will see that this is done.

- **Poster & Rack Distribution** - Distribution will begin April 1 in Freeland, Langley and Clinton. Additional posters and rack cards will be held in the classroom until needed. It was suggested that perhaps the local Guest houses be asked to display either posters or cards in their office. Tom said the market committee will organize it.

- **Music Festival** - Russell Clepper has again agreed to organize the Annual South Whidbey Acoustic Music Festival. The festival this year will be 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on June 28.

Land Stewardship - Dorcas Young

Dorcas attended a meeting held by the grocer chain Haggen. She talked about Haggen's focus on small farmers and local business. She is looking forward to seeing how they incorporate their mission to support the community.

- **Volunteers** - Dorcas emphasized the importance and need for volunteers to help maintain and improve the land.

- **Community Garden** - The deadline for renewing garden plots is March 20th. Not all current garden users have responded so it was suggested that we honor last year's users and assume they will be renewing until we hear differently. The major problem from last year was the vole infestation. Additional fencing is being used, but it is still a problem. It was suggested that the 3 compost piles now INSIDE the fence are major attractions so the possibility of clearing the existing piles and moving them to OUTSIDE the fence was discussed. It is the goal of Tilth this year to complete the individual water connection to each garden plot. Marc Wilson will conduct another hands-on water workshop instructing and working with the plot renters to run water to their plots for timed irrigation.

- **Water Conversation** - On March 16, Marc and several members of the land stewardship committee met with Karen Bishop of the Whidbey Island Conservation District at Tilth to discuss support possibilities with the district for this project. Karen provided possible resources information and will get back to us concerning a workshop date.

Ramp - Pete Little has completed building the ramp at the garden shed to help with movement of equipment in and out.

Education - Michael Seraphinoff

- **Classes** - Michael commented on how well attended and informative the 2 classes so far in 2015 have been. Both Gary Ingram's pruning and Anza Muenchow's class on seed starting were well attended. Future workshops include: April - Marc Wilson "Soil building and site preparation", May - Marc Wilson "water in the garden" and Eric Conn "seed saving", June - J.C. May "control of noxious weeds, July - Anza Muenchow "beneficial insects" September - a class on seed exchange and October - a class on mushrooms.

- **Michael Pilarski workshops** - S.W. Tilth was approached by Michael Pilarski to co-sponsor and promote 3 workshops he will be conducting on Whidbey. The first is "1,000 crops for Northwest Growers" April 15th from 9am to 4pm to be held at Unity of Whidbey, Crawford Rd. That same day from 6:30pm to 8:30pm Michael will be at Unity of Whidbey presenting the workshop "The Emerging Alliance Between Humans and Nature Spirits" The final workshop will take place on April 16 at the Pacific Rim Institute and Michael will be offering "Wildcrafting, plants for home use and income" Tilth will receive 20% of the proceeds along with promotion costs and mention by Mr. Pilarski. The workshops are not at the Tilth campus because our land is still recovering from understory disturbance and we don't have wireless fidelity (wifi).

- **WIFI at Tilth** - Some market vendors want to use their mobile devices for credit card sales.

Action Item #5 – Jean and Prescott will explore how to manage this.

- **Market or Education** - There is some confusion about where the responsibility falls regarding the special Sunday Market entertainment such as the hawk or fish presentations etc. Market and Education will work on clarifying this. Also there is a combined effort to work on the market's Google group page.

Membership/Community Relations – Marc Wilson was absent

- **Conflict of Interest Form** - Tabled until April meeting

Eco-Net Meeting

Prescott attended the February Eco-Net meeting. The topic for the meeting was on how to promote business on Facebook. It was very informative and helpful with suggestions on how to boost a business "like" on Facebook. Tom White volunteered to be listed as Admin on the site with Prescott.

Earth & Ocean Month

Prescott asked for volunteers to staff the South Whidbey Tilth display on April 22 at the South Whidbey High School from 8am to 11:30am and at the Greenbank Farm April 25. Continuing the Earth & Ocean Month theme, there will also be displays by various groups at Greenbank Farm on April 25 from 1 to 6 p.m. Prescott and Anza have started trays of seedlings for the "Guess the Seedling Game" for both venues.

Slow Food Whidbey Island

Prescott attended its event at the Grange, March 8. The leaders Kathy and Merv Floyd are looking for opportunities to partner with other organizations especially South Whidbey Tilth. Council members are encouraged to consider ways to involve them, such as at the Farmers' Market or the Sustainability Banquet.

Pesticide Reduction Training

Prescott passed around information about a training workshop by Seattle Tilth on May 6, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Edmonds. It will be in the newsletter.

Master Gardeners use of Tilth Classroom

Anza Muenchow is currently employed by Washington State University as the Master Gardener Island County trainer. She asked to use the Tilth classroom and surrounding fields for a class on Saturday, May 16 and offered a \$0 donation. Her request was approved with the suggestion she present a short statement and invite students to become Tilth members.

With no further business, meeting was adjourned at 8:19 pm

Respectively submitted

Jean Nelson, Secretary