

South Whidbey Tilth Business Meeting

May 21, 2015

The meeting was called to order by President Prescott at 6:45. Council members present were Ed Hueneke, Prescott, Michael Seraphinoff and Marc Wilson. Council members Jean Nelson and Dorcas Young were not present. Also present were members JC May, Pete Little and Anza Muenchow.

Marc Wilson was appointed minutes taker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and DISCUSSION

South Whidbey Tilth and Whidbees (beekeepers association) will work together to promote "Swarm Against Monsanto", as part of a national effort to bring attention to the effect of herbicides on bees. Monsanto is at the center of herbicide use in the U.S. along with owning much of the U.S. seed supply, including organic varieties. We will gather at 11AM on Saturday at the Bayview Park & Ride. Fliers were supplied for spreading the word. Sue Ellen White and Ziva Nephtali will teach about the effects of herbicides on bees at the Tilth Market Sunday, May 24.

Slow Food Whidbey will have a Happy Hour on June 2nd to plan for the Renaissance Faire to be held at Greenbank Farm on July 25th and other events,(Prescott circulated the information). Volunteers are needed to help with events.

After a brief brainstorming session, the council came up with a list of projects that are priorities and would possibly be interesting for a donor to fund. Various possibilities were mentioned, including staff positions, especially market manager, building an office/classroom, installing wifi in the market area and installing drip irrigation on the campus, especially the community garden.

MINUTES

The minutes of the April meeting were approved as submitted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE: Ed has developed a SNAP/EBT system for the market. He will train people on how the process works. There was some discussion about whether the form for collecting transaction information needs to be modified. Ed also reported that due to missed communications, SNAP eligibility for the market was withdrawn, but the missing information has now been supplied, eligibility restored and the customers will be able to buy vegetables with SNAP money. Ed also recommended that we move the sustainability fund monies into two 2 year Certificates of Deposit. After some discussion, it was so moved that **Motion to purchase two Certificate of Deposits for \$10,000 each with two year maturation periods was passed unanimously**

MARKET: Gross sales at the first three farmers' markets of the year were about 80% of last years sales. We had fewer vendors at the markets. There was a discussion about what other vendors we might have and it was mentioned that Lesedi Produce has been missing for these first markets and should make a significant difference to the sales. We have 7 vendors that have signed up to accept customer's WIC and FMNP coupons. Prescott and Pete have investigated Wifi for the market. A-Tech gave a quote using a tethering-to-a-device system, amplified with a couple of Pico Station M2hp boosters at about \$100 each which we compared with Whidbey Telecom. Pete mentioned a need for high speed teleconferencing for the Safety Pin Café and the Ho'omoku, school of Hawaiian studies, presented and supported at the April business meeting. Mokihana and Pete will help fund the additional cost to make it happen.

LAND: There was a discussion about the Lesedi farmstand; how it will be used and whether we can put a donated refrigerator in it. Dorcas has offered to do the work to have wiring put in the farmstand from existing circuit nearby. Pete worked on the water tank in the community garden to make it useful. He will install a new hydrant in the south garden. Communication about watering schedules and other issues can be done through bulletin boards in the garden storage shed and/or the pump house.

EDUCATION: July 11th is the irrigation workshop. We should have a demonstration completed before the workshop. The children's garden and one or more community gardeners might work. Marc will investigate. At the end of June, JC will give a noxious weeds class. Working on developing a mushroom collecting class for the fall. Eric Conn is planning to do a Seed Saving class too.

MEMBERSHIP: Prescott and Marc have been continuing to keep the database up to date. Prescott called around to get corrected emails for several members. Conflict resolution will be deferred to next month. Bugabay is offering a worm bin to use as a raffle item. The sustainability banquet will be end of August or early September, date to be decided. We will do a display for the Whidbey Island Area Fair. We are on the Farm Tour again this year, we were one of the most visited sites last year! Prescott has been working with Jim Lux on a program for a "Antique Tractors and Old Iron" meet on Saturday of the Farm Tour.

Prescott talked to the council about the need to have a succession plan and to begin thinking about the members of the council for next year. After brainstorming ways to recruit new members, the council was urged to reach out to our community to get members involved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31PM.