

## South Whidbey Tilth Business Meeting Minutes – May 19, 2016

The president, Prescott, called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. on Thursday, May 19, 2016 in the Nursery at Trinity Lutheran Church's Annex. Present are Tilth council members Prescott, Michael Seraphinoff, Judy Kaplan, Pete Little, Edward Hueneke and Tilth member J.C. May. Council member Dorcas Young said she would be late, but didn't make it and Fred Rouge could not come either.

### 1. Introductions, check in and agenda review

- a. In the absence of no volunteers to take minutes, Prescott announced she would record meeting and transcribe them for the record
- b. Prescott announced there are still some volunteer positions available as parkers and docents for the Whidbey Island Garden Tour. She is a parker Friday night for the pretour.

### 2. Minutes: The minutes of the April 21 business meeting were accepted with the correction at the end stating "All agreed" for Pete to use up to \$500 of the \$822 Whidbey Island Garden Tour grant income prior to receiving funds in August. The project is about *Soil Building and Vole Control* and a weed trimmer is needed now.

### 3. Committee reports

#### a. Finance report – Edward

- 1) review of Profit & Loss and Budget/Actual. He noted a \$6,000 donation for the hot water and fence improves the normal balance.
- 2) budget requests:
  - a) Prescott proposed we send \$50 every three months to Jim Fox Tree Service. He deposited partial loads periodically for Native Plant Stewards who would pay him \$50 every few months. Prescott asked Jim Fox if he wanted to continue to drop off his extras and he does. The discussion covered the question of how many loads of chips are needed for garden paths, landscape paths and landscape beds. Majority of attenders preferred asking Jim to donate chips, but keep it loose. Members will be invited to take chips and leave a donation to Tilth. Pete plans to take a load to the Senior Center's new orchard. The Native Plant Stewards still plan to use some of the chips for their own projects off site and intend to lead a work party to mulch the Garry oak groves. Perhaps our member's tractor with a mower, front loader and post-hole digger could be accessed for some things.
  - b) Discussion to share cost of supplies for chickens at Tilth. Calyx doesn't want full responsibility for them. Linda Good has established a schedule of caretakers and she takes one of the hens during the winter. The chickens appear to be an attraction to visitors and the run keeps snails and slugs from the garden. All agreed that Tilth will cover half the food and supply cost for the chickens during the season.
  - c) Report to increase our intern's stipend: a member offered to donate \$500 to increase Angie's stipend from \$300 to \$400/month during the market season. After consulting with the coordinator of the state Farm Intern Pilot Project, the best way to handle it is to prepare an amendment to her agreement with us to work 35/hours a week from mid February through November. The \$400/month would be for May through September. Tilth will cover additional FICA costs. Since the hours are not changing, there is no extra fee to Labor and Industries.

#### b. Market – Judy reported confusion about her duties and market committee chair. She has asked vendors for help and most have responded well, but have trouble committing to a specific time. She's been advised to reach out to members but she finds going through Marc for a general message to members frustrating. Prescott tried to clarify that specific members she knows or sees at the market might be targeted for specific chores on specific weeks. Judy wants to be introduced to the members so others understand she is asking for help with such tasks as staffing the hospitality booth, put on tablecloths, count customers, etc. Others encouraged her to use Marc Wilson as a vehicle to contact members to help.

Prescott reminded anyone planning educational events, especially the Education committee, for the market times to go through the Market Manager Angie so there aren't conflicts.

The *Whidbey Weekly* is asking Tilth to advertise in the "Summer Fun Guide." It was agreed by all that our market promotion budget has been spent so the response is not to do so.

- c. Education** — Michael reported a busy weekend ahead with the Irrigation workshop on May 21 at 1 p.m., preceded by the Annual Swarm Against Monsanto at 11 a.m. There is a Teach-in at Market May 22. J.C. is scheduled to teach how to identify and control invasive weeds on May 29. Seed saving with Eric Conn was originally scheduled for June 12 but needs to be changed by Eric.

The Whidbey Area Fair display for August 4 to 7 was discussed. Perhaps the focus could be about Native Plants and the opportunity we have to build a program. Another option is to focus on Composting since we have educational materials to prepare through the Garden Tour grant. We'll revisit this topic next month.

**d. Land Stewardship**

- 1) **Fence update** – Albert has purchased a tractor with lots of parts. He is proposing to enclose entire garden area, approx. 1.5 acres in fencing with appropriate vehicle and wheelbarrow sized gates so that it's easy to mow close and decrease vole habitat. He intends to do much of the labor himself. The critical component is understanding where the conservation easement lies, Prescott will consult with John Lee. Before any digging happens the utility lines need to be marked. It was suggested that once the tax delineation has been established a meeting be called of those affected by the fence and discuss what it should look like. (See attached tentative fence boundary.)
- 2) **Mowing** – Albert willing to do mowing around gardens, around the playhouse and some of the parking. Prescott contacted antique tractor owner for mowing the area south of the market and up the hillside and around the Garry oaks. He is offering to do it for \$45/hour. Volunteers need to weed-eat around small bushes to delineate them before the mowing also clear big fallen branches. All agreed to contact tractor owner for an estimate and go ahead if it is reasonable. Concerning the market Edward has access to a mower and is willing to mow at \$17/hour. Marc Wilson voluntarily used a mower on most of the market and is willing to continue. He and Edward will consult with Marc about scheduling. Ed is willing to do it Saturday afternoons.
- 3) **Hot water in the bathrooms** – Pete reported that he and the electrician have been in casual communication and expect to get an estimate on the electrical work for the stand-alone water heaters and the line to the Lesedi Farm Stand for the refrigeration. He expects the electrician will purchase the water heaters per his requirements. We will be notified once the bid is in.
- 4) **Septic inspection** – tabled for lack of information

**e. Membership, Development, Community relations**

- 1) Judy Kaplan offered to write a Thank-you note to the donor of the new kitchen stove, when Prescott provides the information.
- 2) Newsletter production is still underway. Judy asked for clarification of how the newsletter is different from what she and Marc do. The discussed answer is the online updates that Marc sends electronically are updates between the bimonthly newsletter. The newsletter covers overall Tilth activities to the membership and is both paper and electronically generated. Judy is invited to use both types of media to share market activities and needs.

**4. Other business:**

- a. Sustainability Banquet proposed for August 18, Thursday and all agreed. A committee will be called for organizing it.
- b. Washington Tilth is still waiting for us to make our tax-exempt status independent of them. Seattle

Tilth, Tilth Producers and Cascade Harvest Coalition have merged into one food hub organization.

- c. Style suggestions for South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus – Prescott asked for review of the use in our style sheet. After discussion, we all agreed it made sense to keep it as it is. Some like changing the term campus to center. Perhaps change it to later after other priorities are complete.
- d. Camping options at Tilth per Anza’s suggestion. Michael will research options. It calls the question of violating the conservation easement. It may not be in keeping with Tilth’s mission.
- e. Next meeting will be on the South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus for a 6 p.m. potluck followed by the meeting at 6:30 p.m. The date is Thursday, June 16.

**5. Call for Adjournment approved at approximately 8:10 p.m.**