Medford Community Garden Commission meeting (via Zoom)

March 24, 2020

Present: Brian Duran, Amanda Bowen, Rebecca Stevenson, Mimi Gordon, Joan Parker

Educational Beds: We’ve received an additional application for a group garden plot from a local Boy Scouts troop. This would affect the use of the Winthrop ed beds for the Food Pantry but it turns out they want to use a McNally bed instead. If we let them use the McNally bed it would give them priority over those who have been waiting for a McNally plot. Those present voted to let the Boy Scouts use a McNally plot this summer.

Action: Amanda will contact Michael Caldera to be certain that they want a McNally plot.

Access during the COVID crisis: The Winthrop steering committee has drafted some garden use guidelines to ensure social distancing. The Board of Health is considering the guidelines. A key feature is avoiding the sharing of tools. Changing the lock combination on the sheds at each garden will ensure this.

Action: Brian will check with Kyle at Tufts to ensure that their lock is changed.

Membership: Brian has been filling vacancies as quickly as possible. Tufts will have almost 50% new gardeners.

Updates: The Eversource work is complete at Winthrop but they filled the rebuilt beds with substandard soil. It has been removed and they have been reminded which vendors provide adequate soil for gardening.

Visit with mayor: We plan to schedule a meeting with the mayor in the near future. Some considerations we might discuss are:

-should future community gardens be added in city parks?

-what are best practices with consulting with neighbors?

-may we consider vacant city parcels?

-how best should we consult with DCR about building gardens along the river?

-wanting to expand in the eastern part of Medford, should we consider approaching the Budweiser plant? How would a public/private partnership like this work?

-what is the appropriate wait time for prospective gardeners?

-how do we balance locations to ensure that all neighborhoods have access?

Action: Fred will try to set up a meeting time and then we will refine our questions further.