

## HCGN Knowledge Swap Series - Minutes

<b>Topic:</b>	People Power	<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday May 20, 2015
<b>Facilitator:</b>	Katie Stiel	<b>Time:</b>	4:30pm - 6:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	City Hall, Room 264	<b>Recorder:</b>	Lexi Putman
<b>Attendees:</b>	Bill Wilcox, Amy Angelo, Erin Davis, Dave Carson, Jean-Anne Bauman		
<b>Regrets</b>	Clare Wagner, Stacey Currie, Monica Palkowski		

AGENDA				
#	Time	Discussion Item	Discussion Highlights	Action Item(s)
1	10 min	Welcome + Introductions		
2	1 min	Approval of Agenda		
3	5 min	<b>Updates From Previous Meeting(s):</b>		
		<p><b>Bulk Purchasing:</b> Create a Purchasing Guide for Community Garden Organizers. The HCGN is currently finalizing a Purchasing Guide that provides information for what to purchase for your garden and how to take advantage of the ordering arrangements that have been set-up for gardens in the network. Vendors include Millgrove, Turkstra, Hamilton Builders Supply, Beeswick, and the City of Hamilton. We are still waiting on William Dam Seeds.</p> <p>Soil testing kits from McMaster University's "Test Your Dirt" do not include nutrient testing - just lead testing. The HCGN will receive a new supply in the next few weeks that we can distribute to gardens/gardeners in need.</p> <p><b>Legal In the Garden:</b> Minutes were distributed and all action items were followed up on. More AODA info is coming as we've outreached to Bonnie Yiu to clarify the questions that arose at last meeting - specifically around</p>		<p>Katie: re-send purchasing guide and 10 step guide to group members &amp; add Amy to google group</p>

		walkway accessibility for new gardens and established gardens.	
4	40 min	<b>Sharing Knowledge and Resources From Your Garden - All</b>	
		<p>Open dialogue to discuss and compare committee structures and terms of reference.</p> <p>Attracting/making your garden accessible to communities who speak different languages.</p>	<p><b>Committee Structures/Terms of Reference:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● varying degrees of regulations between gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discovery gardens allows people to decide themselves on their morals</li> <li>○ Sunrise Garden has one list of rules on the back of the application</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Best practices for getting people on board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● FB &amp; Twitter have been used to connect with youth groups</li> <li>● School groups have helped a lot, ripple effect from students sparking interest amongst parents</li> <li>● 'Volunteer Hamilton' pays for itself it's so successful, completely worth the 60\$ fee</li> <li>● Signage around the site is effective advertisement as well</li> <li>● Partnerships w/ other organizations and specialization in what each can provide (ie. go to victory gardens to weed and have a gardening workshop)</li> </ul> <p><b>Other advertising strategies to attract volunteers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● exposure through newspaper (Hamilton Spec). importance of looking outside the box</li> <li>● any media (newspaper, TV mentioned specifically) gets a lot of exposure and coverage</li> <li>● use of goodwork.ca and other job banks (like idealist.org or charityvillage.com) to post volunteer opportunities</li> <li>● advertise community gardens better at cityhousing buildings, apartments, condominiums, and "postage stamp" properties where space or rules don't allow plant growth</li> </ul> <p><b>Creating/using accessible language:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Victory Gardens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ partnership with A Rocha who have people on staff with certain language specialties</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
			All: Explore or let others know if you come across garden guides that are translated into other languages

			<p><b>Volunteer Retention Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kiwanis Garden: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 9 times out of ten people do things better if you put them in charge and encourage their own leadership (don't micromanage)</li> <li>○ danger: if people get a job and move on you're stuck</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Victory Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ fluctuation of volunteers, especially in the summer people want a lot of flexibility for vacations - thus having more than one site leader is beneficial</li> <li>○ lack of a consistency/ retention of volunteers week-to-week... very neighbourhood dependent</li> <li>○ need: to document and circulate better photos of the produce/ work that has been done to keep interest and engagement high. Doing this weekly is recommended.</li> <li>○ "Paying people with praise" and making the impact tangible encourages people to continue doing what they're doing/ understand that what they're doing has value</li> <li>○ Important to plan succession</li> <li>○ Volunteers come from all over the map (e.g. 3 of the best volunteers at Victory Gardens are clients of food banks and live in City housing whereas other individuals who come for a superficial reason [like to find a job] after a season or two disappear)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sunrise Garden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ smaller scale means that people come and go a lot, try it out for a year or two and then move on.</li> <li>○ desire to have volunteers with a more long-term commitment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
5	35 min	<b>People Power Going Forward - All</b>		
		Open dialogue to discuss opportunities for us to work together to better attract and harness volunteers/members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Volunteering opportunities document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ N2N has created a document that lists garden volunteering opportunities. All gardens in need of volunteers are encouraged to submit info.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Continue to keep each other updated - using the HCGN google group email</li> </ul>	Katie/Clare: Do a callout for gardens looking to be included on the volunteer document.
7	10 min	<b>Other Business/Questions - All</b>		

		<p><b>HCGN Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who will maintain it once the trillium grant has dried up? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ N2N is continuing to seek funding for the HCGN, will keep everyone updated</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What will the new website include? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Events calendar, updated and enhanced directory, and a new resource bank</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Social Media</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are some best practices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are the most commonly used</li> <li>○ Facebook is the most common among all age brackets, Twitter is primarily used with younger demographics. Instagram is good, but it is recommended that the profile be updated regularly.</li> <li>○ Blogs vs social media. Blogs are good to convey larger amounts or complex info that can't be captured in a facebook post or tweet. Many have shifted from blogs to social media for updates.</li> <li>○ Hootsuite is a good (and free) platform for consolidating all social media accounts</li> <li>○ Photo contests or “guess that picture” are options for further social media engagement (prize or not to help spike interest)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>100 in 1 day Hamilton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get your event idea submitted on the website</li> </ul>	<p>Katie/Clare; talk with Judy from Victory Gardens about sharing a template for reaching out to schools. Look into the City's enrichment fund for possible HCGN funding.</p> <p>Recommendation: Many ask for more canning workshops</p>
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**Next Meeting:**

This is the last session for this season as we all get so busy with gardening. We hope to launch again in the fall after harvest. You can always e-mail [hamilton-community-garden-network@googlegroups.com](mailto:hamilton-community-garden-network@googlegroups.com) if you have questions or resources to share with everyone.