

**Sustainability Task Force
Minutes
December 10th, 2019
Big Lake Council Chambers**

1. Introductions
 - a. Becky Guthrie, Big Lake Citizen
 - b. Corrie Scott, City of Big Lake
 - c. Tom Wyatt-Yerka, City of Big Lake/MN GreenCorps

2. Gardening 101 Meeting Recap
 - a. Last month's gardening 101 meeting with the master gardener went well, and many of the issues encountered last season (class attendance, issues with weather/backup dates, and issues with upkeep/harvesting between classes) were discussed. The group discussed starting the class earlier in the season – possibly including an indoor portion – having informational materials or staff/volunteers available during “office hours” at the garden in between class dates, and encouraging participation through including the class in the community education booklet.

3. Winter Cleanup Discussion
 - a. Based on the success of last season's winter lakes cleanup which was a partnership with the community lakes association, the group decided to pursue a similar event for this year. Tom will reach out to the community lakes association to plan an event.

4. Community Garden Sign – Up Begins January 1st
 - a. Signup will be on a first-come, first-served basis with those who had a plot last year being given the first opportunity to reserve a plot for this year. One plot will be allowed per household, and a waiting list will be established for those who would like more than one plot, with additional plots being distributed if available. Corrie and Tom will work with the City Engineer to determine if it's feasible to increase the number of plots this year.

5. Community Garden Informational Materials and Sign Discussion
 - a. City Rebranding – ETA June, 2020
 - i. Due to the fact that the city will be rebranding with a new logo in 2020, the community garden sign will most likely not feature a logo and will be closer to the “hand-painted” design discussed earlier this year. For the informational materials, Tom and Corrie will explore grant opportunities to create materials.
 - b. Becky raised concerns about the possibility of theft or vandalism at the community garden if it is made more visible based on her experience in other communities. Tom and Corrie will reach out to area communities with similar community gardens to determine if theft/vandalism has been an issue for them, and if so, what they have done to prevent this.

6. Social Media Discussion Update
 - a. Tom has been posting “Sustainability Sunday” posts on the Sustainability Task Force Facebook page, and there has been a positive response with increased engagement of the page. The posts are currently averaging about 800 views a piece, with 8-10% of people viewing the post actually clicking on it. If you have any ideas for themes to be featured on the page (or come across an interesting article, or would like more information about a specific topic) please reach out to Tom by messaging the Facebook page or emailing him at twyatt-yerka@biglakemn.org

7. Winter Farmers Market

- a. The first winter market was a great success with approx. 170 attendees. This beats the record from last winter, and is over 100 higher than the average attendance last year. The next market will be held on Dec. 21st at City Hall from 10am – 1pm.
- b. Sustainability Activities for Kids/Families
 - i. Tom and Corrie discussed making biodegradable bird feeders for the kids' activity at the next market. They are made from half an orange, peanut butter (soy butter will be used to avoid allergies), bird seed, twine, and wooden skewers.
- c. Sign Up to Volunteer for recruitment and help track attendance
 1. Becky will reach out to area families with kids looking for volunteer opportunities to help volunteer at the next market.
 2. If you are able to volunteer to help track attendance, help with a kids activity, set/up or clean up, promote sustainability in Big Lake, or if you just want to help out with the market please email Tom at twyatt-yerka@biglakemn.org.

8. Next Meeting

- a. ~~January 14th, 2020?~~
 - i. The group decided to cancel the January 14th meeting – the next meeting will be on February 11th at 6pm at City Hall.
 - ii. REMINDER: Keep an eye out for the winter lakes clean up event as this will most likely be held before the February meeting.