

Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden September 2021 Newsletter



A Couple of Things ... by Jim Baumann, Garden Coordinator

The board of the Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden asked me to cover two important items in this month's newsletter:

1. Garden Wastes, and
2. Garden Leadership

Garden Wastes: Weeds and Plant Wastes

I hear it frequently, "Oh, if we just had a place in the garden to dump our weeds!" Having such a place with its associated rodents, odor and unsightliness isn't going to happen in Rennebohm Park under our lease agreement. So, what can we do?

Let me start with the approach recommended by the local Gardens Network. During the spring and fall the city will pick up "yard wastes" at the curb. The yard wastes are taken to a site where they are composted. The fall period usually starts near the end of September or early October. The spring period starts in April, I believe. Please take advantage of this service.

Between the city curb pick up periods, the Gardens Network suggests "in-plot composting". It really isn't composting and is more "in-plot mulching". For example, leaves from many vegetables can be used as a mulch. Seeds from weeds should be avoided, so it is important to remove the weeds before they go to seed.

The garden board recognizes in-plot mulching isn't perfect. There are a number of situations that come up during the growing season where it isn't practical. To a limited degree, the board will offer hauling of bagged dry weeds to the city drop-off sites on work days to those working at the work days. Weeding your individual plot is not considered working at the work day. We may need to limit the number of bags. Please do not leave weeds and plant wastes in carts or dumped near the shed.

Of course, throughout the growing season you may take weeds and other vegetation to city drop-off sites. Paper yard waste bags are accepted, but all plastic bags must be emptied.

Garden Leadership - Volunteers Needed and Welcomed

The Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden is a self-supporting and a self-managed organization. It is entirely managed by volunteers. None of the volunteers are paid and the city does not provide paid staff assistance. There are a handful of exceptions (as explained at the end of this article), but they don't factor into day-to-day activities.

I'm again putting out a request for volunteers to help manage the community garden.

I tend to put our leadership volunteers into two groups with the **garden board** being one of the two. The board has nine elected members, according to our by-laws, and includes the garden coordinator, past garden coordinator, registrar, treasurer, secretary, time-keeper and plot monitor. In addition, we have a tools coordinator and a member-at large. In practice, many of the board members have taken on additional responsibilities, such as the treasurer is also our webmaster. Our registrar is also our social event coordinator.

Although each board member has specific responsibilities, much of the work of the board is done as a group. Every January, February and March the board sets an annual budget, determines plot fees, revises the garden handbook, reviews the registration forms and develops the garden calendar. The board addresses issues that arise and guides the garden coordinator.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Elections should be held this fall, and we will likely hold the elections online. Due to COVID concerns we did not have an election last year. A few of the board members, myself included, are willing to continue, but would be happy to step aside and have "new blood" take over. Some may prefer to step away from the board. Please contact me if you are willing and interested in running for a board position. I'd be happy to discuss each board position with you.

The second group of volunteers consists of those who take on a specific task, such as food pantry plot coordinator, newsletter coordinator, herb plot manager, garden photographer, librarian and others. Each of these volunteers makes my job a little bit easier.

We need more volunteers to take on specific tasks and earn their work hours by performing those tasks. For example, Steve Ales has done a fantastic job of coordinating our food pantry plot. However, after doing most of the work for the last two years Steve is hoping to have a co-coordinator for next year. He can't be at the garden every week and sharing the work load with another will assure that we can get our vegetables to food pantries when they are ripe.

Volunteer Opportunities

I'm particularly interested in one or two people willing to manage a portion of the perennial flower area along the east fence near the park path, and as mentioned above, someone to serve as a co-coordinator for the food pantry plot. However, I'd be very interested in any suggestions you may have on specific tasks that you would like to take on.

In case you are interested in the handful of exceptions I referred to above, I can think of five. The group Rooted holds the master lease with the city for gardens in parks. We sublet from Rooted. Rooted also arranges for the million-dollar liability insurance required by the city. We pay a portion of the insurance premiums along with more than a dozen other gardens. Our water service is in the name of Rooted since they hold the lease, but we pay for all of the water use charges.

Madison Parks claims ownership to our water system and winterizes the system every October and re-connects the water in

May. Finally, Rooted provided conference call services for our board last winter. I appreciate all of these arrangements, since we would not have our garden without them.



Board Member Contact Info:

If you would like to contact a board member by email, click on the name below:

[Jim Baumann, Coordinator](#)

[Emma Sams, Registrar](#)

[Geren Zhang, Timekeeper](#)

[Julie Grim, Secretary](#)

[Ruth Cadoret, Plot Monitor](#)
