

Murramarang Community Garden

MINUTES

General Meeting

Saturday 8 September 2018

10.30 AM at the garden.

Chair: Ewen Sussman

1. Present: Jocelyn Sussman, Harley Delves, Neil Brown, Judith Carroll, Sybille Davidson, Marg Hamon, Doug Howarth, John Tapsell, Cathy Delves, Richard Lake, Don Davidson, Ewen Sussman, Graeme Tooth, Ross Lewis, Mary Stanwix.

2. Apologies: Maggie Mance, Rene Anderson, Noel Barwick, Barbara White, Peter White, George Lemann, Helen Nelson.

3. Business arising from Minutes of previous meeting: it was noted that all matters have been addressed or are ongoing.

Moved: Sybille Davidson

Seconded: Jocelyn Sussman

4. Reports:

Presidents Report (on website)

Treasurers Report (on website).

Garden Managers Report (on website) – 2 separate reports – one by Jocelyn for the “outer” or communal area and one by Harley focussing on the “inner area”.

Both garden Managers spoke to their reports and answered questions that were raised by the meeting. Those present accepted both these reports.

Moved: Cathy Delves

Seconded: Marg Hamon

5. General Business

1. Neil Brown referred to the *MCG Plan of Management (PoM)* and the founding principles of the community garden. In doing so he noted that although the garden is doing well he thought it a good time, after 8 years, to take stock of its momentum. For example, although there are many wonderful ideas for improvement and development of the site they are realised in an uneven and ad hoc way, often with little or no consultation with the *Management Committee* or the wider membership.

He suggested that it is important to have a formal as well as an ad hoc approach to management that should include everyone in the process.

Neil also suggested that it was now a good time to broaden our

membership base by embarking on a membership drive (after the garlic that is currently planted in beds in the “inner area”, i.e. beds that can be rented to individuals, is harvested in Nov/Dec.)

Graeme commented that it would be useful to provide publicity about MCG, and membership forms, at our stall at the Murramarang Markets.

2. Marie O’Connell believes that we should consider encouraging more “\$5 members” to join the garden...i.e. members who don’t rent a plot. She felt that these people could perhaps contribute to working bees or even just visit the garden to enjoy the ambiance of the setting. She suggested a membership drive to attract “member only” people from our community and volunteered to prepare an article for the local newsletter inviting people to join.

Neil suggested that *everyone* could participate in a “membership drive” simply by mentioning the MCG to friends and acquaintances in our community and giving them a membership form. The form is available for downloading from the homepage of the website so everyone can print a few forms to distribute themselves. Judith reminded the meeting that we submitted 4 articles for publication in the local newsletter in 2017 and one in February this year.

3. Barbara White submitted a written list of ideas for MCG to consider, as follows:

- *What is planned for the garlic beds in the inner area once the crop is harvested? Is there a plan? Who makes the plan? Could there be someone dedicated to the raising of veggies just for the markets, if that is part of the purpose of MCG?*

Harley spoke to this proposal by noting that once the garlic is harvested from all beds (inner and outer gardens), they need to be planted with a green crop, such as clover before they are reused. He agreed that the inner beds should be available for new members. Judith suggested that therefore we should consider constructing several beds dedicated to garlic in the communal area, similar to those already constructed adjacent to the small gate.

- *I would like to propose a coordination of a week-day working bee (in addition to the Saturday morning w’bee). I appreciate both the “growing food” and the “together” principle as the core purpose of the MCG and feel that if there was another scheduled time when like-minded gardeners could work on projects, we could benefit by working in the company of others and harness more effort into managing the communal sections of the garden.*

Generally, people agreed that this could be achieved and referred this idea to the Management Committee. It was pointed out that in 2013/14 we did have a Thursday afternoon working bee scheduled that was reasonably well attended. This proposal will be considered by the Management Committee at its next meeting.

- *An observation that the reserves of “veggie mix” soil are being invaded by weeds...please remove soil from the edges of the piles, not just the middle.*

The meeting agreed that these soil piles should be kept weeded. Judith reminded the meeting that the Soilco “veggie mix” soil is intended for **new beds only**, especially the many beds that have been and are planned for the communal area. Individual plots should be topped-up by compost and products such as cow manure and soil purchased by members for their own use. If the Management Committee decides that the Soilco soil should be available for everyone to use there will have to be a motion with this proposal put to a Management Committee meeting.

- *Can the MCG consider purchasing a dehydrator to preserve the fig crop (and other fruit and veggies)? Is there someone with expertise in this?*

Cathy volunteered to follow up on this suggestion as she has experience in dehydrating fruit. The meeting agreed that this is an excellent idea and could provide much needed produce for our market stall in the middle of winter when we have very few crops to sell. She was thanked for her willingness to undertake this task.

3. Sybille requested that we purchase strong, long-handled shears suitable for pruning. The meeting agreed that she should go ahead with this purchase.
4. Judith proposed that the box trailer, donated to the garden in 2014, be stored at the garden so that it is available for gardeners to use at short notice - for example, the collection of mulch. At present the trailer is “housed” at the home of Ewen and Jocelyn. Judith suggested that the trailer could also be offered to members for a small rental fee to contribute to our fund raising efforts. This issue was left unresolved since there are a wide variety of views about where the trailer should be stored and whether it should be available to members for rental. The issue was referred to the Management Committee for further consideration.

Meeting closed at 11. 20am.