

RED WIGGLER COMMUNITY FARM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday December 03 2015 6:00pm

Location: Marlene Michaelson Home

6:00 Call to Order/Review Agenda

6:02 Approval of Minutes from 9-24-15

6:05 Review Agenda, Announcements and Introductions

6:10 **AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Committee reports – committee chair or designate (30 minutes)

Executive Committee (5 min)

Program (5 min.)

Development (5 min)

Finance (one issue for possible vote) (10 min)

Governance (5 min)

2. Program Report From Staff (1 hour 10 minutes)

7:50 Review dates for regular board meetings

8:00 Adjourn

Red Wiggler Community Farm
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

The meeting was held on December 3, 2015 at Marlene Michaelson's home.

The following were present:

Marlene Michaelson, President
Nancy Everett, Vice-President
Katie Brewer
Kati Gimes
Jim Heaney
Cynthia Hamilton
Jean Hochron
Valerie Levanos
Jean White
Anne Wolfe, Secretary

Andrea Barnhart, Farm Manager
Katie Junghans, Program Coordinator
Molly McCracken, Education & Outreach Coordinator
Melissa McLearen, Field & Facilities Manager
Diane Ringel, Business Manager
Woody Woodroof, Executive Director and Founder

A quorum was present.

The following were absent:

Jim Hochron, Treasurer

(6:30 pm) Call to Order: By Marlene Michaelson, President

(6:30 pm) Introductions: Brief individual introductions were given by each attendee.

(6:32 pm) Approval of Minutes: On motion made by Jean Hochron, seconded, and carried, the Board approved the previously distributed minutes of the special meeting of the Board held 9/24/15 without modification.

(6:33 pm) Board and Committee Reports:

The Executive Committee: Has not met, no report given.

The Program Committee: Kati Gimes reported that the committee has met four times. The first three times were educational, the last was to brainstorm ways that the Committee can be most helpful to

Staff. Currently, the Committee is researching best practices for interns: housing (paid/unpaid-a token monthly dollar amount for food), paid/unpaid stipend, insurance/liabilities, etc.).

The Development Committee: Valerie Levanos reported that the Committee last met tonight 12/3/15. The current Development Plan, which has been very helpful, was reported on by Woody Woodroof. The Farm to Fork event was successful, as was the Harvest Celebration. The auction portion of the Harvest Celebration was outsourced which turned out to be a good choice. It allowed farm operations to continue uninterrupted by auction business. Valerie Levanos, Katie Brewer, and Woody Woodroof will update the plan with information for 2016.

The Finance Committee: In Jim Hochron's absence, Cynthia Hamilton and Marlene Michaelson reported.

Staff bonuses for 2015 were previously approved by email vote, as Red Wiggler was in a financial position to award bonuses this year. During the last Finance Committee meeting, it was determined that two budget amendments be presented to the full Board. The Finance Committee recommends that a total of approximately \$45,000 be set aside to be spent as needed as a reinvestment in Red Wiggler:

1. \$15,000 to be earmarked for Marketing/Development/Technology
2. \$30,000 to be earmarked for durable items (replacement of worn out tools/machinery, upgrades to the infrastructure, maintenance, grading of the building, etc.)

Red Wiggler has maintained 8 months of operating cash in the bank for some time. Acceptance of these two budget amendments would lower that reserve to approximately 7 months (6 months is the standard). The Finance Committee supports these amendments.

A motion was made by Cynthia Hamilton to adopt these two budget amendments. It was seconded, and unanimously carried.

Governance Committee: The Governance Committee last met yesterday 12/2/15. The main thrust of their discussion was the recruitment of new Board Members. Two candidates have been vetted, with another two candidates pending.

The status of our Standards of Excellence will be reviewed/revisited by Diane Ringel.

(6:45 pm) New Business:

A list of tentative 2016 Board Meeting dates was circulated. Marlene Michaelson asked that any conflicts be emailed to her, and she will conduct Doodle polls for alternative dates as needed.

The creation of the Fiscal Year Staff Presentation at this time of year is difficult to pull together. Going forward, this presentation will be moved to the 1st quarter Board meeting instead of the end of year meeting.

(6:46 pm) Dinner

(7:15 pm) Fiscal Year Staff Presentation

Andrea Barnhart took the lead on the presentation, with various staff members expanding on the themes presented. Despite staff turnover (Molly McCracken's first year, Melissa McLearn started in April, overlapping with Matt Gardine who left in September) the programs went very well throughout the year. Red Wiggler is a successful productive farm!

Growers: Red Wiggler employs 16 growers who were paid for 6,600 hours this past fiscal year. Growers work from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm during the growing season and are paid minimum wage along with a 'share' of produce each week. The total Grower hours worked decreased slightly from last year, but wages have increased by \$4,000 last year due to the minimum wage increase. As the minimum wage continues to increase, so will our labor costs.

Each year staff meets with the Growers and sets three goals for the season for each Grower. These goals include a tool/job that a Grower may want to learn. Job expectations are also set for 50 expected job and farm skills in 7 categories. Individual Grower highlights were provided.

Volunteers and Groups: Red Wiggler is fortunate to have several types of volunteers (Interns & Adult Volunteers, Students getting their SSL hours, Corporate Groups, School groups, and Adults with Developmental Disabilities). Last fiscal year there were a total of 484 volunteers, providing 5,771 hours.

Interns (Sophie, Nick, and Keji) & recurring adult volunteers (Abby, Claire, Connie, and Madeline) play an important role in what we do, providing leadership and allowing us to divide into smaller work groups. Students getting their SSL hours play an important role of interacting with growers and giving the growers a chance to be teachers. Red Wiggler partners with Corporate groups such as Stantec and Kaiser who help us with big jobs harvesting winter squash and sweet potatoes. Last year we tried an intern program using adults with Developmental Disabilities with mixed success. We may decide to increase this program at some point but it would require more resources, including staff. With new staff, we didn't have the capacity.

Distribution: Growers and volunteers do everything that is needed to run a successful certified organic farm. Last year we grew \$128,000 of certified organic vegetables and distributed 34% of them to low income families. The remaining percentages went to the Gourmet CSA and the Farm to Foodbank programs. All three seasons of the Gourmet CSA program were sold out.

Education Program: Red Wiggler's Educational Programs include school groups, students with and without disabilities, and adults (individuals as well as groups such as Leadership Montgomery). Woody Woodroof also does periodic farm tour consulting. The Winter Program of growing microgreens in the greenhouse in January and February was successful, with deliveries to Group Homes. We worked weekly with the same two school groups serving students with Developmental Disabilities, which allows for full life cycle education.

Sustainability (Environmental Stewardship): Red Wiggler innovates by reducing the use of plastic by using the roller crimper. Test beds were used this year to prove the hypothesis. We aim to increase diversity by developing a cover crop schedule and routine that works with our planting schedule.

Maintainance: It is important to have someone who is focused on keeping tools and equipment fixed and functioning properly, calling contractors, and tending to mowing, fence repairs, and compost. The plan is to increase our compost endeavors next year.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be a Saturday in March, 2016.

(8:15) Adjournment (and Dessert!)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Proposed minutes respectfully submitted:

_____ Date 12/9/15
Anne Wolfe, Board Secretary/Recording Secretary