



P. O. Box 1862, Morgan Hill, CA 95038  
info@mhcommunitygarden.org,  
www.mhcommunitygarden.org

**Morgan Hill Community Garden TENTATIVE MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 2024. 6:30 pm**  
**LOCATION: MORGAN HILL COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER**  
**Downtown at Monterey and Dunne Avenue in the Madrone Room.**

Members:

Joe Elliott President 2025  
Pat Day Vice-President 2025  
Mary Kellogg Secretary 2026  
Allen Palmer Treasurer 2026

Daniel Armendariz Board Member 2026  
Martha O'Rourke Board Member 2024  
Alex Simpliciano Board Member 2025  
Rob Holcomb Board Member 2025  
Sally Casas Board Member 2026

- I. Call Meeting To Order 6:31 pm Joe Elliott, President  
II. Adopt Agenda/January 23 Minutes Joe Elliott, Action  
Motion to accept by Sally, second by Alex. Approved unanimously.  
III. Hearing of Membership Membership  
Sue Villanueva will speak as the agenda items come up.

IV. Reports

- A. Financial Reports Allen Palmer, Action  
Our plot income is down to \$9500 due to open plots not paid for. Our yearly expenditures are \$11,900. We need to take action to reduce the deficit.

Allen has some suggestions:

The first suggestion is to not have the cost of spreading wood chips.

- 1) No wood chips acquisition except for replenishing piles for pathway repair due to the cost of hiring someone to spread them.  
-Daniel makes a motion to limit acquisition of free wood chips for approved work projects. Second by Sally. Discussion about mowing with wood chips piled up. Motion not approved. Yes.-2, No- 6, Abstain- 1.
- 2) Motion to purchase good quality wood chips occasionally for pathway replenishing, no spreading required.  
-Motion by Rob, second by Alex. Approved unanimously.

The second suggestion is to reduce the number of "scholarship" (low-income 50% cost plots). We used to have a program to allow Scholarships for 5 people years ago, then it was increased to 10 plots when the garden plot rental was near 100%.

-Allen made a motion to reduce the scholarship plot allowance to 5, but to keep those 7 who are currently on the program as long as they are plot owners until the attrition goes down to 5. In the future it will reduce to 5. Motion second by Rob. Discussion: Martha discussed a percentage of the garden membership numbers. Mary wonders if there are grants available for helping the community by having another group pay for it. Allen says the amount paid for the plot by a third party would be the full price. Mary suggests allowing a scholarship to a new person on a year-to-year basis if we get a grant. Yes- 8 No-0. Abstain 1. Motion passed.

- B. Oversight Report Mary Kellogg, Info

The focus has been on working with old plot owners who are leaving the gardener to come back and clean up their plots. A few gardeners have been contacted to trim plants back.

-Motion to approve report by Allen, second by Daniel. Approved unanimously.

C. Work Day Report (no report- see below on agenda)

D. Special Committee Report Schedule Mary Kellogg, Discussion

Mary brought up the past decision to have various committee chairs report occasionally on their project occasionally during the year. (Demonstration bed requests, pollinator garden committee, Compost committee, etc.)

Mary will notify the Demonstration Beds leads about coming to the May and September meetings.

## V. Unfinished Business

A. Pathways Project Rob Holcomb, Discussion

The rain tamped down pathway materials. A Hula hoe can be used for small weeds in gray fines pathways and will be scheduled for the first work day project (April- after the rains).

Discussion about: ***Individual gardeners should be putting cardboard down between plots and chips on top to kill the weeds between plots.***

B. Garden Year Dates Joe Elliott, Action

1. Work days/tasks (weeding, pathways, pollinator garden, etc.) and new projects

Weeding is important now while the weeds are small and the ground is soft. Our first work days will be Saturday and Sunday in April when it is a bit warmer and rains have subsided. ***MARY send out email requesting gardeners to weed between plots (cardboard down, mulch on top).*** Rob, Joe, and Martha will work together to create a schedule for April weeding.

2. Grant schedule- Joe. Now: SCC project plan by March 29. City of MH now for an event after July 1. Joe is working on those grants.

3. AAUW Earth Day Celebration, **4/22** 10-3, CCC. MHCG will have a booth with garden information and registration flyers.

4. Open house in June- Sue Villanueva, chairperson. **Date change to September 14 and advertise more** (harvest theme, bring a dish, sign ups for the next year) Possible City grant to pay for items like hand out flyers on little cards. (Can be prepared for Earth Day event also.) Sue would order take-away cards to have the information handy. She can also make printed signs for the street directing people to the Garden for our event. We discussed the publicity contact list.

C. Gophers/Pests/Deer Allen Palmer, Discussion.

There have been some problems with pests in garden plots, even a deer. **We are in need of a rodent control committee with a chairperson.** Some pest reduction suggestions in various sources are: use some of the roll of bird netting by the little shed, baskets or water bottles over new plants, plant onions around your plot, and using more mulch and cover crop (no bare dirt) seem to discourage pests from staying in a plot. Pests tend to not like to eat cover crop. **We also need a committee of trappers to really trap and get rid of gophers.** We cannot guarantee there won't be pests since we are out in an open country field and hiring a pest control person/company would be too costly for our budget and we would have to raise garden plot fees to include that. We had fewer problems when we were located in the City downtown.

-Pat made a motion that Mary send an email to all gardeners. At this time there is no central plan to eradicate pests because of the pest control costs and lack of garden member participation in pest control. Each gardener is responsible to take measures to work on the pest problem in their plot. Suggestions are to use some of the above mentioned suggestions. Second by Sally.

Allen was concerned about the possibility of losing gardeners to this problem. He suggested that we wait a month to possibly get a committee together. Daniel wants the message that we are looking for a team to work on this problem. Vote: Yes 7, No 0, Abstain 2. Approved.

D. Porta-Potty Removal

Allen Palmer, Action

At the last meeting we discussed removing the Porta Potty because of the cost (\$3500 per year out of a budget of \$11,900) Allen found that we can have a new plan with once a month clean out instead of weekly as a cost of \$1450 per year.

Pat makes a motion to remove the Porta-Potty. No second..

Daniel makes a motion to go to the once a month clean up fee (option 2a) on a new plan.

Second by Allen. Joe says this is a good idea to start out this year. We can remove it later if needed. It will still be available to people who need it and reduce the cost by \$1600. We are \$1000 over budget right now even with reducing the Porta Potty service and cost. As the year progresses we can take the option to remove the Porta Potty if the needed to balance our budget.

VI. New Business

A. Pollinator Seed Grant (Mary W.)

Mary K, Discussion

Mary K notified the Board that Mary Williams applied for a grant for 39 pollinator garden plants. It had previously been mentioned to the Pollinator Garden chairperson.

B. Garden Policies Changes

Mary, Discussion

(Change in Scholarship plots as covered in the financial reports section above.)

C. Board Member Tasks

Pat Day, Discussion

Pat presented a document with individual Board member responsibilities. The Board needs to be a working board to cover the responsibilities on the chart. We have changed from having almost full-time volunteers taking on many of the maintenance and pest control tasks (John and Kay) where they were like full time managers to currently with not having garden member volunteers on site as much. Other cities use their staff to pay for their community garden, but the City of Morgan Hill does not have the funds to help support MHCG. Our costs are only paid for with plot fees and occasionally with grants. Pat has a draft of board member responsibilities and board members discussed the responsibilities and board members signed up for the responsibilities they will be in charge of. We are looking for many garden plot members to sign up to volunteer and help with these areas and tasks.

-Pat made a motion to approve the proposed draft as edited during the meeting. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously with one member absent.

D. Wood chip use

Allen Palmer, Discussion

Covered above in the financial section.

VII. Next Meeting Agenda 3/26

Mary K, Secretary

Wood chip use, wording of scholarship plot section of Garden Policies, special committee report schedule, April work day schedule, Earth Day booth and materials 4/22 at CCC, pest control discussion, continued board member task discussion, grants submitted, demonstration bed budget, garden policies revisions, additional plot availability to current garden members (up to 3 plots total).

VIII. Adjournment

9:00 Joe Elliott, Action Item