

**Town of Thompson's Station
Parks Board
Meeting Agenda
May 3, 2022**

Meeting Called To Order - Confirm Quorum

Consideration Of The Minutes Of The April 5, 2022, Meeting

Documents:

[APRIL 5 2022 MINUTES.PDF](#)

Parks Board Member Forum

Regular Agenda –

1. Preservation Park Stewardship Discussion With The Land Trust For Tennessee

2. Community Garden Discussion

Documents:

[COMMUNITY GARDEN PRESENTATION REV.PDF](#)
[ORSBORN EMAIL.PDF](#)
[HARVEY EMAIL.PDF](#)
[JONES EMAIL.PDF](#)

3. Budget & CIP Report

Documents:

[PARKS BUDGET THRU MARCH 2022.PDF](#)

Adjourn

*This meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Center
1555 Thompson's Station Road West*

Minutes of the Meeting
of the Municipal Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
of the Town of Thompson 's Station, Tennessee
April 5, 2022

Call to Order:

The Municipal Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was called to order at 6:00 on Tuesday, March 1st, 2022. Members and staff present were: Chairman Matthew Barker; Board Member Tim Bert; Board Member Ward Engle; Board Member Jaime Ewald; Board Member Millie Halverson; Town Planner Micah Wood; Maintenance Supervisor Bryan King and Planning Technician Jennifer Banaszak. Alderman Brandon Bell was unable to attend, and Board Member Zina Harris had to resign due to work commitments.

Parks Board training conducted with Town Attorney Andrew Mills from 5:30 to 6:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the March 1, 2022, regular meeting were presented.

After discussion, Board Member Engel made a motion to approve the March 1, 2022, minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and carried by all present.

Parks Board Open Forum: none

Public Comment: none

Regular Agenda

1. Park Event Permits

- a. **3 Build Global Soccer Clinic** – Sarah Benson Park. Soccer clinic for 6-12 year olds. April 6, 2022 from 5-6 pm. Under 75 ppl.
Applicant withdrew permit request.

2. Eagle Scout Project

- a. Laina Scott proposes to build a pollinator garden at the Community Garden area. This project will be included as part of the Town's Bee City designation.

Ms. Scott came forward to present her proposal for a pollinator garden and ask for Parks support. The project should be completed by 6/11/2022.

After discussion, Board Member Bert made a motion to approve the Pollinator Garden Project as presented. The motion was seconded and carried by all present.

3. The board had discussion regarding the Community Garden at the end of the meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Matthew Barker, Chair

A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills in various shades of green, with a dark brown path winding through them. On the left, there is a green tree with a brown trunk, a purple flower, and a cluster of orange flowers. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The background consists of light blue and white wavy bands representing the sky.

Thompson's Station Community Garden

05/04/2022

Facts & Figures



- This space was originally cultivated in 2012 and operated by Staff. It has also been operated by the TSCA and members of the Parks Board.
- It sits in proximity to 840, the Nutro Dog Park, and the greenway trail system.
- Plots are rented for \$50 each and the season lasts from approximately April through September, per the adopted Community Garden Guidelines.

Facts & Figures



- *Very rare for Community Gardens to be run by a municipality.*
- *In fact, the TN Department of Agriculture Community Garden Page webpage shows no municipal community gardens in the State (other than Thompson's Station).*
- *Williamson County Parks & Rec does provide a community garden opportunity.*
- *Most Community Gardens are provided &/or operated by non-profits (Nashville Food Project) or individual subdivisions (Berry Farms).*

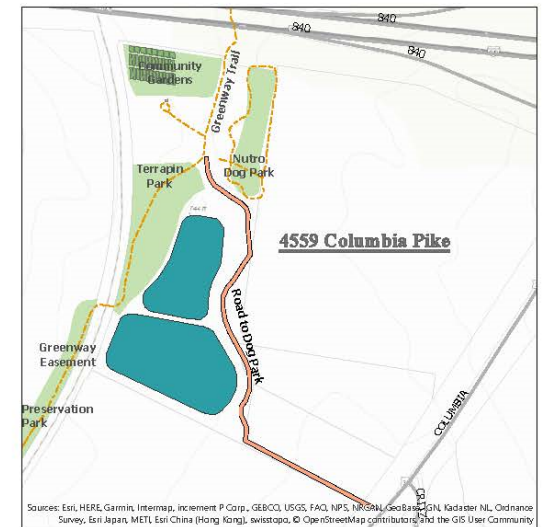
Current statistics

- There are 36 plots available per season.
- We currently have 25 gardeners. Some long-term gardeners have multiple spots.
- Only 4% of the gardeners live within the Town limits.



Thompson's Station Community Gardens

- The Community Garden is owned and maintained by the Town of Thompson's Station.
- Plots are available to rent each year in the Spring.
- Members must pay a \$50 fee for a full plot.
- Returning members will get first right-of-refusal for the lot they had the previous year.
- There are water spigots with connected hoses to water your plants. Do not drink the supplied water, it is non-potable.
- The tool shed can be used to store equipment. The tool shed code and the gate code can both be obtained at Town Hall.
- Contact Jennifer Banaszak at Town Hall for more information (615) 794-4333 ext. 12.



Current statistics

- Town has a small staff & no dedicated Parks Department
- Seasonally, Town Staff devotes an estimated 112 staff-hours to the Community Gardens, separate from any other Park activity.
- This is a significant investment of Town time and resources.





Town Benefits

- Gardening brings about native insects to the area (such as honeybees).
- The garden is organic, so everything is grown pesticide and chemical free.
- Organic gardening promotes a healthy ecosystem for wildlife and vegetation.

Emerging Issues

- *Staff time & resources.*
- *Broken Rules*
- *Trash through garden & surrounding areas*
- *Year End Clean up*
- *Water source eliminated after this year due to Sewer Plant upgrade project*
- *Garden only available to a limited number of people. Most are not Town residents.*



Overall Questions to Consider & Next Steps



- Town Staff offers that the Town's Parks should meet our community's needs for open space & recreation.
- The Parks Board should consider:
 - Is this space being utilized in the best possible way?
 - Does a Community Garden fit with the mission of the Town's Parks?



Discussion.
Thank You!

March 29, 2022

Thompson's Station Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
1550 Thompson's Station Road, West
P.O. Box 100
Thompson's Station, TN 37179

Re: Thompson's Station Community Garden
September 17, 2022 deadline for cleaning plots

Dear Board Members,

We are writing concerning the recently imposed September 17 deadline for plot clearing in preparation sowing a cover crop, which is set forth in in the Gardener Guidelines. This is the first time a deadline has been set for ceasing gardening activities at the community garden. Because the deadline is 6 weeks shorter than our Zone 7a growing season and will have a significant negative impact on all community gardeners and our overall yields, we are requesting elimination of this deadline.

We joined the Community Garden in 2014, starting with a single plot, and this year will be our 9th. Since joining, we have enjoyed being invested and active in the process, including attending organizational meetings when the garden was managed by Thompson Station Community Association. Years ago our entire family, kids included, helped dig the ditches and lay the pipes for the current water system alongside many of the friends we've made in our little garden community. Twice we helped distribute horse manure and rock phosphate to enrich the soil. In addition to caring for our own garden, we have mowed abandoned plots to keep the weeds down and participated in garden cleanup events.

We love community gardening and are grateful to have soil to plant! If you garden, I don't have to tell you it's good for the soul as well as for the body.

Over the years, we learned and implemented organic gardening practices, and every year we have opportunities to share this knowledge with new gardeners looking for guidance. We now rent multiple plots, and through our diligent upkeep and improvements (including removing Johnson grass tubers, adding organic matter to fortify the soil, etc.) our plots are in better condition than when we began.

We start all of our plants from seed (organic, non-GMO), beginning as early as January, which requires investment of time and money. We rely on our garden to produce a significant portion of our food throughout the year. To cease gardening on September 17th, a full 6 weeks early for summer sown crops, would mean pulling from the ground actively growing and producing plants. We would then have to replace the lost yield by purchasing food in the grocery store. This is especially concerning considering dramatically increasing food prices and the food shortages we've seen over the past 2 years.

Mid-September of any given year, we have a full garden actively growing plants (including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans, pumpkins, summer squash, and much more), and many of these plants produce up to the first hard frost. Plants such as pumpkins and butternut squash will not be ready for harvest until late October. We typically grow enough winter squash to feed our household until the following year's harvest. Peppers actually ramp up production after the heat of summer wanes and

produce heavily in late October. Additionally, our herbs and flowers (which benefit local bees, butterflies, and other pollinators) are still vibrant though October.

The proposed September 17 deadline will eliminate the ability to grow a fall crop, including carrots, chard, kale, radishes, turnips, and various other root vegetables. In B1, we grow garlic that is planted in October and harvested in June. The yield provides a full year's worth of garlic.

These issues are not unique to us. There are several other gardeners actively tending to their plots and harvesting food well after mid-September. If a cover crop is planned, we ask that it not interfere with the blessing of our Zone 7a growing season or prevent the veteran gardeners [mostly on the end plots] from year-round growing. Perhaps it could even be trialed in some of the plots that have been abandoned by September.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our request to not shut the garden down early. Now more than ever it's vital to be able to grow our own food.

Sincerely,

Michael Haynie & Libby Orsburn

From: jan@harveytherapy.com
To: jbanaszak@thompsons-station.com
Subject: Community garden request
Date: Sunday, March 27, 2022 6:27:46 PM
Attachments: [sigimg0.png](#)
[sigimg1.jiff](#)

Ms. Banaszak,

Thank you for speaking with me this week about the Community Garden, and my concern over the Shorter growing season this year. I would like to request from the Board that they reconsider the cutoff date to give the gardeners more growing time. Sept. 17 is about 6 weeks too short. There may be some folks who may be done by then, but there are others who are not. We grow part of our garden for an indigent senior citizen's home in Nashville that is in what is considered a "Fresh food desert", and we need to have as much time as we can to help provide for them. I heard President Biden this week state that this year we could expect a food shortage due to the injunctions caused by the war. I am concerned about this for our family, and especially for those who don't have access to fresh vegetables anyway.

We so appreciate the opportunity to have a garden space, and appreciate the city working with us, and all the work you do to maintain it. It allows us to help our families and others. Please consider my request to extend the growing season into October.

Sincerely,
Jan and Don Harvey

Jan Harvey, LMFT

AAMFT Clinical Fellow



**Advanced Training:
Emotionally Focused Therapy**



PREPARE-ENRICH Trainer

"Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone." (Mr.) Fred Rogers

Good day, my name is Steve Jones, 1009 Becket Circle, Thompson's Station. I have been participating in the community garden since it was organized by Outdoor Encounter (2013), then the Thompson's Station Community Association, and now our town staff. I plan to participate this year as well but have concerns with a new guideline that was approved by the parks advisory board without discussion or input from those who actively participate at the community garden.

Guideline #3 "Gardening ends SEPTEMBER 17th, 2022 this year. Your plot will need to be cleaned out and ready for tilling and sowing of a cover crop. All dead plants and non-plant materials must be removed and disposed of properly. All gardens must be left neat and tidy. If your plot is not cleaned, you could lose your privileges for the next season."

There are several reasons why I disagree with this guideline:

- 1) In growing zone 7a, many warm weather plants are still producing through September and even October i.e. tomatoes, okra, squash, peppers... Cool weather plants will just start to produce in late September - October i.e. lettuce, kale, peas, carrots... Currently I have garlic I planted last October at the community garden that will be harvested late spring. It is enough garlic to last a year.
- 2) I would prefer the plots I rent not be plowed, tilled, or cover crop added. I have spent years amending the soil with organic matter (composting kitchen scraps), pulling Johnsongrass rhizomes (an invasive grass), and turning the soil by hand to prevent compaction and encourage beneficial worms. Once the soil is tilled and mixed with other plots I will have lost years of work.
- 3) This guideline or rule change is going to be implemented without testing the impacts on our community garden. A shorter season will likely discourage participation due to cost and time commitment, especially for returning gardeners who have a passion for it. At the deadline we will not be pulling dead plants out of the ground but living and producing plants that have finished their life cycle. Our first frost is mid-October.

While I do understand the nutritional benefit of a cover crop, I would suggest testing this practice over a portion of the community garden before implementing. Perhaps rows C and D that have fewer gardeners that return year after year can be tilled and cover cropped. Rows A and B can be for those who enjoy a longer growing season. Over the course of 2 seasons maybe it would be best to reassess the 2 practices and make changes if desired.

In conclusion, when September 17th rolls around I will need to pull living and producing plants, not dead plants, out of the ground in preparation for a cover crop that provides the same benefit of my kitchen compost (nitrogen). Pulling out plants that have yet to produce or finish production is counter to the intent of gardening, to produce your own food naturally, and to be in tune with the rhythms of the seasons.

Thank You to everyone that spends time and energy on the community garden, it is greatly appreciated.



*Town of Thompson's Station
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
FY 2021-2022*

Summary of Parks Revenue and Expenditures

	Approved Budget	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Total YTD	Budget Remaining
Revenues												
Park Impact Fees	\$ 73,200	\$ 13,832	\$ 4,880	\$ 10,248	\$ 5,368	\$ 7,320	\$ 6,344	\$ 3,416	\$ 7,808	\$ 6,832	\$ 66,048	\$ 7,152
Revenues	\$ 3,000	\$ 855	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37	\$ 1,055	\$ 540	\$ 313	\$ 410	\$ 2,954	\$ 6,164	\$ (3,164)
Grants Revenue		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,960	\$ 13,320			\$ 20,280	\$ (20,280)
											\$ -	
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 76,200	\$ 14,687	\$ 4,880	\$ 10,248	\$ 5,405	\$ 8,375	\$ 13,844	\$ 17,049	\$ 8,218	\$ 9,786	\$ 92,492	\$ (16,292)
Expenditures												
Cleaning		\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 4,500	
Utilities		\$ 280	\$ 429	\$ 259	\$ 247	\$ 314	\$ 257	\$ 270	\$ 312	\$ 327	\$ 2,695	
Repairs				\$ 450	\$ 4,850	\$ 179		\$ 212			\$ 5,691	
Other		\$ 1,132		\$ 54	\$ 600	\$ 1,806	\$ 1,470			\$ 1,600	\$ 6,662	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 45,100	\$ 1,912	\$ 929	\$ 1,263	\$ 6,197	\$ 2,799	\$ 2,227	\$ 982	\$ 812	\$ 2,427	\$ 19,548	\$ 25,552
Park Improvements												
	Budget	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21		
Park Improvements	\$ 1,096,988	\$ 35,630	\$ 14,000	\$ 19,703	\$ -	\$ 20,489	\$ -		\$ 9,327	\$ 2,770	\$ 101,919	\$ 995,069
											\$ -	\$ -

Notes

Oct - Bloom Tree trial maint = \$4,850