



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Chairman and Members
Park Authority Board

VIA: Kirk W. Kincannon, Director

FROM: Cindy Walsh, Director
Resource Management Division

DATE: April 17, 2014

Agenda

**Resource Management Committee
Wednesday, April 23, 2014 – 6:15 p.m.**

Boardroom – Herrity Building

Chairman: Frank S. Vajda

Vice Chair: Anthony J. Vellucci

Members: Edward R. Batten, Sr., Mary Cortina, Ken Quincy

1. Community Horticulture Program Update – Information*

*Enclosures



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563. TTY (703) 803-3354

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Board Agenda Item
May 14, 2014

INFORMATION

Community Horticulture Program Update (with presentation)

Staff from Green Spring Gardens will present an update on the current activities of the County-wide Community Horticulture Program. The presentation will highlight information on the Fairfax County Garden Plot Program, the Green Spring Master Gardener Program and the Fairfax County Farmers Market Program.

STAFF:

Kirk W. Kincannon, Director

Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO

Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director, CFO

Todd Johnson, Director, Park Operations Division

Barbara Nugent, Director, Park Services Division

Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division

Todd Brown, Manager, Operations Branch, Resource Management Division

Mary Olien, Manager, Green Spring Gardens

Community Horticulture Program



Fairfax County Park Authority's Community Horticulture Program

- VCE Master Gardener Program
- Garden Plot Rental Program
- Fairfax County Farmers Markets



Green Spring Master Gardeners

**Sharing Knowledge. Empowering
Communities.**



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Our Mission: We Educate



The message:



10th Annual EcoSavvy Symposium

February 22, 2014

Gardening in the 'burbs

Bringing the message to Green Spring Gardens

- Children's Program
- Trained Garden Docents
- Basic Gardening Series
- Demonstration Gardens
- VCE Master Gardener Help Desk*



Bringing the Message to the Community

- Speakers Bureau
- Ready, Set, Grow
- Gardens at RECenters, libraries, schools, churches
- Farmers Markets and public events



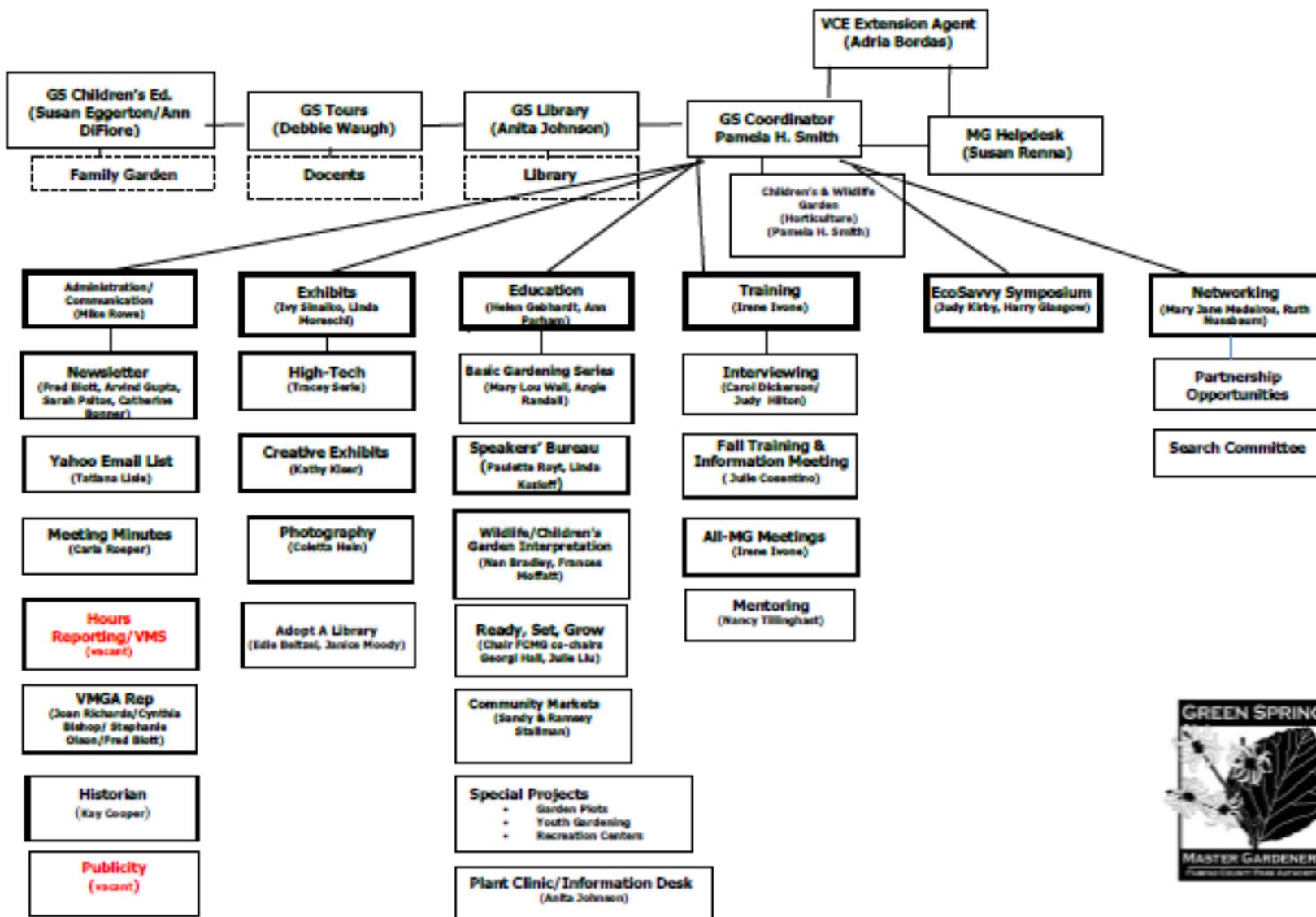
Bringing the Message to the Community

- VCE Horticulture Helpline at Pennino Building
- Adopt-a-Library exhibits
- Partnerships with non-profits



01/21/2014

Green Spring Master Gardeners Organizational Chart



What is our impact?

In 2013:

- 154 Master Gardeners
- 7420 service hours
- 6000 citizen contacts
- 1003 hours of continuing education



What is our impact?

- Since 2003:



Over **47,000** hours
of educational
volunteer service to
Fairfax County
citizens

Fairfax County Garden Plot Program



The Garden Plot Program

Through the Community Horticulture Office, Fairfax County administers a garden plot rental program for Fairfax County residents to enjoy nature, to plant flowers, to grow fruits and vegetables, and to get exercise from the practice of gardening.

Gardeners share their produce with family, friends, neighbors, churches, and food pantries.

We administer 671 garden plots in 9 County parks.

Plots by District and Park(s)

46 Braddock District - George Mason Park

142 Dranesville District - Lewinsville Park

32 Hunter Mill District - Baron Cameron Park

86 Lee District - Franconia Park

172 Mason District - Pine Ridge & Broyhill Crest

41* Mt. Vernon District - Grist Mill Park

148 Providence District - Nottoway & Eakin Parks

**Several small plots were combined into large plots at Grist Mill.*

Garden Plot Accomplishments

2013 Highlights:

- A Business Plan was developed for the Garden Plot Program.
- Educational programming was offered on site in the garden plots for the first time.
- Two new water hydrants were installed in Lewinsville Park.
- First year's fee increase was successfully implemented.

Fee Increase

Plots are 20' x 30.' The annual fees will increase on April 1 each year until 2015:

- 2012 \$65
- 2013 \$85
- 2014 \$105
- 2015 \$125

Wait List Management

- As of January 1, 2014, there were about 600 people on the wait list. This compares to about 500 last year at the same time.
- 'Oldest' names now on the wait list signed up in January, 2012.
- Jan + Feb 2013 = 45 new names
Jan + Feb 2014 = 78 new names

Challenges and Opportunities

- Meet higher tenant expectations for program administration and for maintenance of roads, water, etc. as rental fees increase.
- Collaborate with Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax to help them achieve their goals.
- Extend the Business Plan to address the question of Garden Plot Program expansion.

Fall and Winter Gardening



Fairfax County Farmers Market Program



Mission and Scope

The mission of the Fairfax County Farmers Market is to provide the citizens of Fairfax County the opportunity to purchase locally grown or produced agricultural products while supporting agribusiness in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

2013 Accomplishments

- 92 Vendors across 167 vendor slots
- New additions:
 - Seafood
 - Organic/Certified Naturally Grown
 - Dairy
 - Successful season extension at the McCutcheon/Mount Vernon market (December 18)
 - Awarded intern funding through ExxonMobil (program re-funded for 2014)



2014 Market Locations by District

Braddock District

- Burke
- Wakefield
- Government Center

Dranesville District

- Herndon
- McLean

Lee District

- Kingstowne

Hunter Mill District

- Reston

Mason District

- Annandale

Mount Vernon District

- McCutcheon/Mount Vernon
- Lorton

Providence District

- Oak Marr

Government Center Farmers Market

Thursday afternoons

3:00 pm – 7:00 pm

May 1 – October 30

We will host 10 vendors, including produce, baked goods, meat, eggs, and ice cream

Organized in collaboration with the BOS
Chairman's Office, Cable and Consumer
Services, and Facilities Management
Division

SNAP-at-Market

- In 2014, there will be **four** locations managed by the Park Authority where a SNAP benefit recipient will be able to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables:
Lorton market
McCutcheon/Mount Vernon market  The Farm Stand at Frying Pan Park
Reston market
- Made possible through partnerships with Arcadia Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Cornerstones, Neighborhood and Community Services, and a seed donation in support of the matching dollars program from INOVA

Reaching into the Community

- Chef-at-Market program in collaboration with VCE's Master Food Volunteers
- Community Events:
 - Earth Days Fairs at local businesses and schools
 - "Green" Symposiums at local universities
 - Clubs and Civic Organizations
- Collaboration with other regional food system advocates
- Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax
- Gleaning program at market

What the future holds

- Marketing the Green Spring Master Gardener Program
- Expanding programs for under-served constituents' access to fresh food
- Examining our models for expanded gardening opportunities in the community

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