

Grand Lakes Green Committee

Meeting Date: September 26, 2021, 4:30-6pm (Rock Pool Park)

Committee Members in Attendance: Leigh Anne Goerland, Julie Bush, Teresa Huddleston, Jim Herzberg

Committee Members Absent: Margie Benitez

## **Meeting Minutes**

### Encouraging Household Fixtures Donations vs. Trash

Julie noted that free household fixtures, such as fans, lighting, or cabinets, posted online in one of our neighborhood forums are most likely taken by the trash if no other resident wants to rehome them. The committee discussed how we could encourage residents to donate unwanted household fixtures to Habitat for Humanity's resale shop.

We discussed the option to pick items up and hold them in storage for a quarterly trip to Habitat, but did not resolve where we would be able to store them, and thus put that option on hold. Accepting them at the next electronics recycling event is an option we are still considering, although one challenge with household fixtures is that residents are often eager to get rid of them quickly. We agreed on a newsletter article. *Action: Julie to contact Habitat to find out more information about priority pickup. Action: Julie to draft a newsletter article with information about how residents can donate fixtures to Habitat, what they accept, etc. and send to the committee.*

### Recycling at the Tennis Courts

The trash at the tennis courts is often full of one time use plastic water bottles. We initially thought this initiative may be picked up by a Girl Scout troop, but as this has not taken place, Leigh Anne would like to bring it to the Board again. There is a DuMor spit stream recycling cover that retrofits to our existing trash can models. *Action: Leigh Anne to follow up with the Grand Lakes tennis league to understand how water bottles are handled on the court and if using the retrofit option would be beneficial or if an on-court can would be needed.*

### Community Garden Update

Leigh Anne gave a brief update about the garden, and mentioned that some of the reserved signs are twisting, due to either vandalism or the wind. The committee voted at this time to not lower the signs as the foliage may cover them, however we will monitor the issue. Additionally, the crushed granite has yet to be replenished, however the HOA Board committed at the last monthly meeting to do so by the end of the year. The beds were recently power washed and the vines trimmed.

Post meeting follow-up: Julie visited the garden and found additional vandalism to the reserved signs. One reserved sign is missing, two are twisted, two look good and one was found on the ground.

### Pocket Prairies

Jim gave a brief overview of the pocket prairie concept, a topic the committee has discussed before. There are several benefits to pocket prairies, including that they are low maintenance, bird and pollinator friendly, and absorb flood water faster than lawn grass. A drawback is that they can have an unmanicured look and attract animals, such as snakes.

Jim mentioned that he has visited various locations with pocket prairies to get a sense of how they look and how large they are. Katy High School is one such location, and Jim shared a link to their prairie website ([TigerPrairie.org](http://TigerPrairie.org)). Leigh Anne will go look at the Katy High School location in person.

We talked about possible locations for a pocket prairie in Grand Lakes, and Jim, Julie, and Leigh Anne viewed a location along 99 in Phase 1 North. The benefit of this location is that it is not prominent in the neighborhood (so an unkept look is less bothersome), a large part of it is separated from residents by a lake (so wildlife will not be close), is fairly large, and needs landscaping work anyway (many of the large grasses have died and irrigation is in need of repair).

*Action: Leigh Anne to capture pictures of the area, find out its acreage and share this info with the committee. Also, Leigh Anne will touch base with the landscaping committee, to ensure they do not already have plans or bids for this location.*

### Attracting Butterflies and Hummingbirds

Teresa discussed the benefits of butterfly and bee friendly plants, in particular at the community garden. The committee liked the idea of planting a small section of these types of plants at the forefront of each bed, so that from the road, the garden will have a beautiful look. Perennial plants would be preferred, so they would not need replanting each year.

Denise Dibble mentioned that she may know of a Girl Scout troop looking for a Bronze Award project. We also discussed that Amy Barta of the wildlife committee would be a good resource for this effort. We agreed that the next step would be for Denise to run this rough project idea by the Girl Scout troop leader, and then for us to reach out to Amy or the landscaping committee and see about a meeting between the three groups.

*Action: Teresa to send Leigh Anne her research info, and Leigh Anne to forward to Denise.*

### **Next Steps:**

Next meeting TBD.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.