Present were: Chair S. Strickland, L. Armstrong, J. Brewer*, T. Cowan, R. Deutschmann, T. Galloway, J. Haalboom*, B. Halloran, R. Kelterborn, G. Lorentz, C. Millar*, J. Mitchell, K. Seiling, J. Wideman and C. Zehr

Members absent: D. Craig

MOTION TO RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

MOVED by L. Armstrong
SECONDED by G. Lorentz

THAT the meeting reconvene into Open Session.

CARRIED

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

None declared

*J. Brewer, J. Haalboom, and C. Millar joined the meeting at 1:23 p.m.

DELEGATIONS

a) Anthony Scian, Chairperson Waterloo Region Community Garden Council, gave an overview of the Community Garden Council and provided a presentation to the Committee regarding community gardens. He also handed out a summary of the Community Gardening Storytelling Project. A copy of the presentation and the handout are appended to the original minutes; the videos in the presentation are available on YouTube.

PH-13-020, Community Gardening Storytelling Project

Received for information.

PRESENTATIONS

a) Dr. Fred Mather, Medical Director Sunnyside Home, provided an overview of his report. The Committee thanked Dr. Mather and the staff at Sunnyside Home for the service that they provide to the residents. Chair Strickland asked about the increasing complexity of residents’ needs. Dr. Mather explained individuals are staying in the community longer and that changes to admissions are also affecting the needs of the residents.
REQUEST TO REMOVE ITEMS FROM CONSENT AGENDA

There were no requests to remove items from the Consent agenda.

MOTION TO APPROVE ITEMS OR RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION

MOVED by C. Zehr
SECONDED by J. Wideman

THAT the following item be approved:

- THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo formally participate in the collaborative Service Manager Housing Software initiative with other municipal Service Managers and enter into a Consortium Agreement (CA) regarding the development of a software solution, as outlined in Report No. P-13-038, dated May 28, 2013;

  AND THAT the Commissioner of Planning, Housing and Community Services be authorized to sign the Consortium Agreement between the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, and other Service Managers, to a maximum commitment to the Region of Waterloo of up to $180,000, including HST, to be financed from the Housing Reserve Fund, which agreement shall be satisfactory in technical content to both the Director of Housing and the Director of Information Technology and in a form satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor.

AND THAT the following items be received for information:

- PH-13-021, The Health of Waterloo Region’s Food System: An Update
- CPC-13-002, Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy (WRIDS) Update
- CR-RS-13-052/P-13-058, Update on Sand Hills Co-operative Housing Inc., 250 Chandler Drive in Kitchener
- SS-13-018, Child Care Fee Subsidy Service Pressures
- Memo: Preliminary Results from CIRCUS Exhibit at Waterloo Region Museum
- Memo: ECOfest at the Waterloo Region Museum
- Memo: Long Term Unemployed Manufacturing Worker Case Study
- Memo: Ontario Works Caseload: April 2013

CARRIED

REGULAR AGENDA RESUMES

REPORTS – PUBLIC HEALTH

a) PH-13-019, 2012 Food Safety Annual Report

Dave Young, Director of Health Protection and Investigations, introduced the report and provided an overview of 2012 food safety statistics.

Received for information.
b) PH-13-022, EMS Scheduler Support

Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health, introduced the report. She explained that the hiring of non-supervisory EMS schedulers will allow for the redeployment of managers which will improve EMS services.

MOVED by K. Seiling
SECONDED by G. Lorentz

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the addition of 2.0 FTE of non-supervisory EMS schedulers (inclusive of backfill and coverage requirements) with 1.0 FTE to be implemented on July 1, 2013, and 1.0 FTE to be implemented December 1, 2013;

That the 2013 expenditures be funded from the Tax Stabilization Reserve Fund;

That the 2013 operating budget for Emergency Medical Services be increased by $56,400 gross and zero net Regional Levy; and

That the 2.0 FTE Non-supervisory EMS Schedulers be included in the 2014 Base Budget for Emergency Medical Services as outlined in PH-13-022, dated May 28, 2013;

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

a) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List was received for information.

NEXT MEETING – June 18, 2013

ADJOURN

MOVED by J. Brewer
SECONDED by C. Millar

THAT the meeting adjourn at 1:40 p.m.

CARRIED

COMMITTEE CHAIR, S. Strickland

COMMITTEE CLERK, T. Brubacher
Community Gardening
Storytelling Project
Opening Remarks

• Why was the Community Garden Storytelling Project done?
• What did we do?
• What did we learn?
Community Garden Video

Three videos were produced – one for each theme: Health, Inclusion, and Learning. We wanted to share the inclusion video. The other two videos will be released this Thursday at the official release of the storytelling project results. All videos will be on the Region's YouTube site by the end of the week. The report – which is available on the Public Health Website – is filled with many more stories and quotes from gardeners.
Closing Remarks

• Increased interest in community gardening
• Importance of partnership and sponsors
• Role of Community Garden Council
• Supportive policies
Thank you!
“Not Just a Passing Fancy”: How Community Gardens Contribute to Healthy and Inclusive Neighbourhoods

Please go to the Public Health website for the full Report.


Executive Summary

The Community Gardening Storytelling Project provides a vivid picture of how community gardening has become a valuable health promoting and community building activity that, as one gardener explained, “is more than a passing fancy”. Community gardening is an inexpensive and effective way to reach a number of public health goals and support several Regional initiatives. Community gardens are a valuable tool in creating high quality urban and rural gathering spaces and supporting people’s efforts to stay healthy.

In this community gardening storytelling project, 84 gardeners participated in unstructured ethnographic interviews through which the meaning of gardening in their lives emerged from the stories they told. Their stories revealed eight main reasons for gardening which were grouped into three themes. Nine stories were highlighted and written up as profiles (see Appendix One) and three videos were produced – one for each theme. Profiles are found throughout this report and the videos are available on the Region of Waterloo’s YouTube channel.

The first theme to emerge was health. For some people, gardening helped to address mental stress. Stories included insightful anecdotes about mental health which included the role of gardening in abating current stress and also in healing past trauma or anxiety. Health benefits also included physical activity and increased consumption of healthy food due to ease of availability. Stories included children and adults eating more produce and eating more or different parts of the plant. While many gardeners commented on the financial benefit of growing vegetables and fruits, some gardened specifically to save money on food. Community gardens help Public Health reach its mandate of working with community partners to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and good mental health.

The second theme was inclusion. The Community Garden Storytelling Project suggests Community gardens lend themselves to the inclusion of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, ages, income levels, and needs. The theme of inclusion emerged from participant’s comments about community building, involving children, and preserving
culture. Community building happens when people connect over a common activity and build a personal social network. It happens when people organize themselves and work together to create and maintain a garden. It also happens when attitudes and prejudices are challenged and communities experience greater cohesion. Stories from gardeners illustrate these community building activities. Gardeners mentioned the importance of involving children as a way to spend time with them and have them appreciate food. Lastly, some gardeners mentioned that community garden plots contributed to preserving culture, by maintaining the traditional foods, skills, and language that linked them with their birth country or that of their parents. Community garden supports the Region’s Diversity and Inclusion strategy – which aims to “create inclusive programs and services that meet the needs of our growing and changing community”. They are environments where people’s skills are valued and shared – in spite of differences.

The third theme was learning. Community gardeners may start by learning how to grow a few vegetables but this quickly spreads to a curiosity about the cultivation of other vegetables or fruits, how to prepare or preserve the fresh fruits and vegetables, and numerous other environmental issues. Knowledge leads to greater understanding but also to more questions; consequently it tended to raise both respect for farmers and concern about the environment and issues in the food system. Participants often spoke passionately about the greater sense of control and confidence that gardening had brought them. They expressed excitement and pride about the rewards of their labour and learning. The learning which happens at community gardens supports one goal of the Waterloo Region Food system Roundtable – which is to work towards giving people greater knowledge about, engagement in, and control over the food in our communities.

Gardeners spoke about the elements necessary for a garden to thrive such as support for garden infrastructure, leadership and cooperation. The report concludes by listing some strategies gardeners thought would support the growth of community gardens in Waterloo Region.

This is an exciting time for community gardens in Waterloo Region. The Region of Waterloo and area municipalities have permissive land use policies with respect to community gardens. The demand for and interest in community garden plots is high – evidenced by many gardens with waiting lists. The time is ripe to foster a “culture of community gardens” in Waterloo Region that can build on permissive land use policies to embrace a full range of policies and practices that enable and support the growth of community gardens. Policies and practices that encourage and advocate for community gardens would allow more residents of Waterloo Region to experience the benefits of health, inclusion, and learning.