

Maple Street Community Garden Compensation Proposals

Proposal 1: Volunteer-Only Model with Limited Exceptions for Compensation

Summary:

This proposal affirms that our community garden is fundamentally a volunteer-run organization. The strength and sustainability of our garden come from the shared effort and commitment of its members and community. To preserve this ethos and promote equity and inclusion, this model strongly discourages monetary compensation for work performed by garden members, reserving compensation only for exceptional and clearly-defined circumstances.

Core Principles:

1. Volunteer Commitment: All tasks, projects, and responsibilities within the garden are to be undertaken by volunteers.
2. Equity and Inclusion: No hierarchies of paid vs. unpaid labor.
3. Exceptions for Non-Member or Emergency Labor: Only if a task is urgent, required, and no volunteer is available.
4. Approval Process for Compensation: Must be approved by the Coordinating Committee in advance.
5. Examples: Hiring for snow removal, professional services (plumbers, arborists, etc.) when necessary.
6. Prohibited: Routine tasks, stipends, retroactive payments.

Conclusion:

Reaffirms the garden's identity as a ,cooperative volunteer-driven space with minimal and transparent use of compensation.

Proposal 2: Limited Compensation for Special Work Beyond Committee Scope

Summary:

This proposal allows modest, transparent compensation in specific, limited circumstances — particularly for work that falls outside the scope of our compost, gardening, fundraising, or other committees. It balances flexibility with accountability, recognizing the value of specialized work that may exceed typical volunteer expectations.

Core Principles:

1. Volunteerism as a Foundation: Routine responsibilities remain unpaid.
2. Compensation for Special Work: Permitted for one-time or specialized tasks outside regular committee duties.
3. Examples: Infrastructure projects, sculptures, paintings, or artistic performances, instruction for classes or workshops, professional services such as the use of an arborist.
4. Mandatory Approval by Coordinating Committee: Both concept and budget must be approved in advance.
5. Hiring Process: A brief written proposal must be submitted to the Coordinating Committee, and if approved, the opportunity will be posted publicly to the garden community. If no qualified volunteers are available or interested, an external person may be contracted. All hires must be approved by the Coordinating Committee and documented in CC or General meeting minutes.
6. Frequency Limits: No individual may receive compensation more than twice per calendar year without special approval (2/3 vote) of the Coordinating Committee (or should this be Garden Members?). This ensures broad access to opportunities and limits reliance on paid roles.
7. Equity, Fairness, and Process: Opportunities should be openly shared; payments must follow an approved budget and be tracked transparently.

Conclusion:

Enables the garden to fairly address unique needs through compensated work while maintaining a volunteer-led structure.

Comparison of Garden Compensation Proposals

Category	Proposal 1: Volunteer-Only Model	Proposal 2: Limited Compensation
Basic Principle	Garden functions entirely on volunteer labor	Volunteer-based, with some compensation allowed
Compensation Allowed?	Rarely — only in emergencies	Yes — for special tasks outside committee duties
Who Can Be Paid?	Non-members/volunteers (outsiders) only	Members/volunteers and non-members/volunteers
Examples of Pay	Snow removal, emergency repairs	Classes/workshops, art, performance, snow removal
Covered Tasks	Urgent, safety-related tasks only	Specialized, non-routine tasks as well as urgent tasks
Approval Process	Advance approval by Coordinating Committee	Advance approval by Coordinating Committee
Budget Oversight	Minimal, essential expenses only	Pre-approved and documented budget

Transparency	Required: documented in meeting minutes	Required: documented in meeting minutes
Volunteer Emphasis	Strongly emphasized	Still emphasized, but flexible