

Senior Fare!

A Project of the Garden Institute

Feeding Seniors With Fresh Local Food From Our Gardens

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Fighting Food Insecurity

Working to Improve the Diets of the Low Income Elderly ~
A Model for Communities Everywhere

Project Scope

- The Garden Institute has five acres of in-town property we want to use to grow food for low-income seniors
- Maine is 1st in New England in food insecurity – many of our elderly don't know where their next meal is coming from and often go to bed hungry
- There are already many food programs serving the elderly – but, there is not enough food to go around
- And, there is a great need for *healthy food* and *healthy diets*
- We can grow food, but
- We will need help finding the folks who truly need the help

Objectives

- Providing fresh produce to local seniors in need:
 - Technical objectives: Conduct a Test Run Growing Season
 - ❖ Identify the target senior population
 - ❖ Identify how much of what kinds of food is needed
 - ❖ Determine how much of this food can be grown on our property
 - Schedule objectives:
 - ❖ Spring 2013 - plant test crop with Community School class of 2013
 - ❖ Summer and Fall 2013 - harvest and distribute produce with Community School class of 2014
 - Cost objectives:
 - ❖ Cover cost of test run with grants and donations: \$1350 received to date; \$2000 grant pending
 - ❖ Determine actual costs of utilities, seeds, and amendments
 - Special objectives:
 - ❖ Determine amount of labor involved in producing test run produce; and
 - ❖ Assess interest of Community School in developing curriculum that involves a commitment to *Senior Fare!*

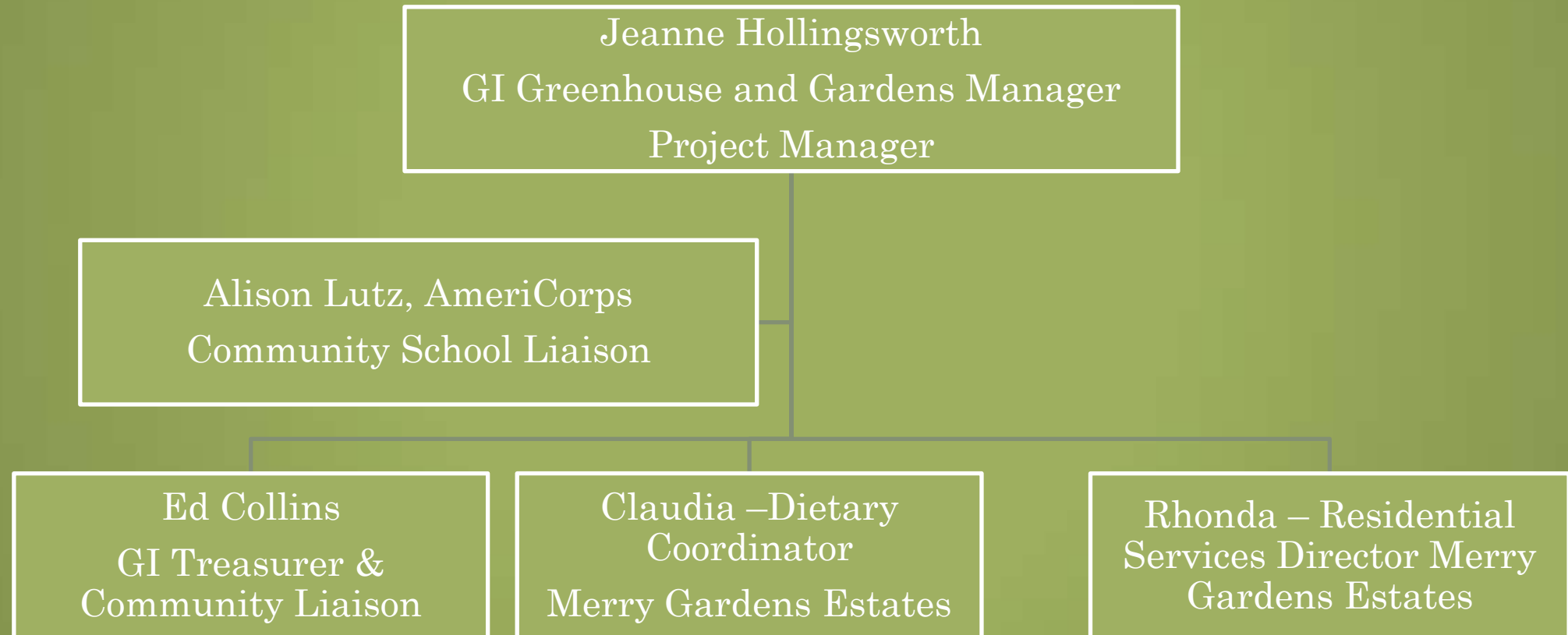
Deliverables

- To provide enough produce on a twice-a-week basis for at least one meal a day for the seniors we serve
- To have extra food to help fill the gap between paydays for seniors who just don't have enough food to make it through
- To fulfill the Community School's educational objectives and community service project objectives

Success Factors

- Elements that are key to the success of the project:
 - Producing a product that can be delivered on a reliable schedule in a form that is easily useable by seniors
 - Sufficient number of volunteers to tend crops, prepare produce for pick-up or deliver food
 - Completed within budget without relying on Garden Institute funds
 - Sustained interest in program by seniors and volunteers

Project Team Roles and Responsibilities



Implementation Schedule: Phase 1 Test Run

Purpose ~ Assess feasibility of proposal

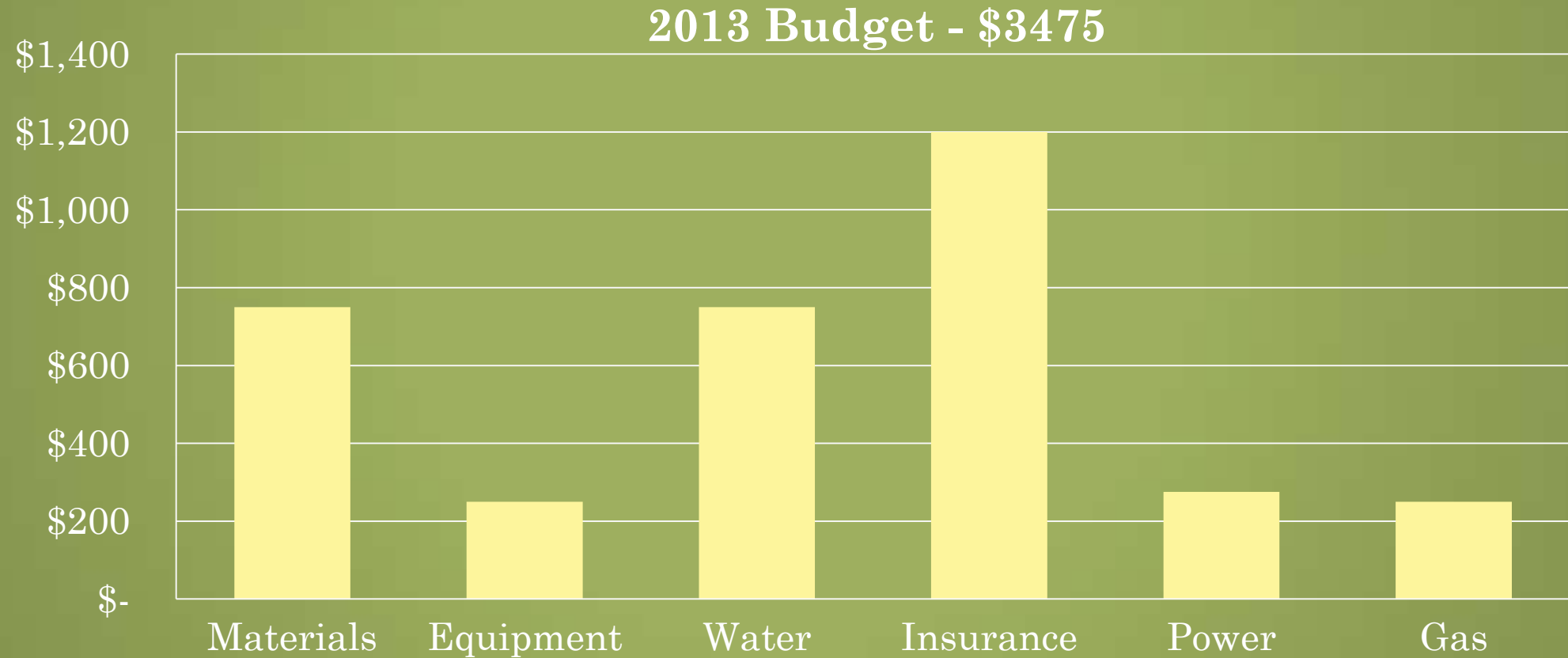
Summer 2012 – Fall 2013

- Procedures:
 - ❖ Summer 2012: Construct six raised garden beds
 - ❖ Fall 2012: Community School “Green Project”~Food Insecurity ~ begins
 - Fill and plant garden beds with seedlings for late fall/winter harvest
 - Deliver harvests to Merry Gardens Estates
 - Install row tunnels to prepare for early spring 2013 harvests
 - ❖ Winter 2012/2013: Plan gardens for 2013 harvests based on research and interviews with dieticians
 - ❖ Early 2013: Greenhouse classes starting seedlings
 - ❖ Spring 2013: Harvest grow tunnels – make deliveries; plant all beds for 2013 harvests
 - ❖ June 2013: 1st Community School class ends
 - ❖ Summer - 2013: AmeriCorps volunteers tend summer gardens/harvest and deliver

Project Schedule and Milestones ~ Test Run



Cost Analysis:



Assessing the Trial Run ~ Do We Go Forward?

Late Summer 2013 – Assessment Points

- ❖ How much food did we grow?
- ❖ How many people did we feed?
- ❖ How much labor was involved from planting to harvest?
- ❖ What is the actual cost of the project at this level?
- ❖ Did the Community School meet their goals? Do they want to continue the relationship? Are there other possible partnerships?
- ❖ Is there sufficient interest on the part of the Garden Institute to continue the project? What if fundraising is necessary?

Alliances and Coalitions

- Good Shepherd Food Bank ~ “Mainers Feeding Mainers”
- Interfaith Area Outreach – Local Food Pantry
- Local Service Organizations: Rotary Clubs (2) and Lion’s Club
- Area Churches Food Kitchens
- Local Food Activists
- Area gardeners and growers

Implementing a Full Scale Project ~ Phase 2

- If *Senior Fare!* shows sufficient community interest and support this is what we *could* do to address improving food delivery systems on a major scale:
 - ❖ The Commons: A large community garden designed for seniors to grow food for themselves and other seniors with help from volunteers
 - ❖ Market at the Gardens: A farmers' market and food stand where a Market Master would coordinate a bulk food distribution center supplied by local growers and frequented by local restaurants and senior centers
 - ❖ The Garden Kitchen: A community commercial kitchen where food preparation and preservation methods would be taught, and where produce and meals for housebound seniors can be prepared
 - ❖ The Growers Coop: A cooperative store to coordinate bulk orders of expensive soil amendments, seed, and animal feeds to help local growers cut costs

PROJECT ADVOCACY PLANNING CALENDAR

3 Years ~ 2013 - 2015

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2013								Meet with Alliance and Interested Parties to Develop Mission and Goals – Create formal alliance for project/apply for development grants				
2014	Present proposal to Service Clubs asking for sponsorship/donations						Meet with Alliance to Assess progress and support, and to define and assign major fundraising efforts					
	Present proposal to Churches asking for volunteers to deliver food to their needy members in summer – plan pot luck at Gardens to brainstorm									Media coverage of proposal and breakout of Website		
2015	Fundraising Year – continuing media stories on progress											
							Using local success story, work with Congressional Delegation re: creating funded project through USDA					

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