



Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County Board Meeting Minutes: July 8, 2015

The meeting was held at WSU Thurston County Extension and called to order by Julie at 5:40pm.

Present: Board members Julie Sandberg, president; Cindy Hoover, president-elect; Linda Talen, treasurer; Sandy Atkinson, state representative; and Cindy Morana, secretary. Also present were Cori Carlton, program manager and Suzannah Klaniecki, AmeriCorps volunteer.

1. Minutes. Cindy H moved adoption of both the June board and membership meetings' minutes. Sandy seconded. Both sets of minutes were adopted.

2. Treasurer's Report.

YTD Income \$22,818.06
YTD Expenses \$14,976.59
Current Assets \$89,215.30

Linda will add a reporting line dedicated to the Fred Meyer donations. Cori will look into whether a link to the Fred Meyer program can go onto the program website.

3. State Foundation Report. Please see attached written report. Sandy clarified that the \$2000 grant was to help with expenses (including per diem and travel) for a full-day coordinators' meeting. Many coordinators are not supported for those expenses.

State Foundation is surveying chapters to learn what kinds of fundraisers are being held, what kinds of insurance chapters hold, and whether treasurers are bonded. Sandy will respond to the survey on our behalf.

Board discussed the new Ellen A'Key grant that King County offers for up to \$1500 annually to a county (or it may be shared between two counties). Since the application deadline was July 1, the Board agreed to keep in it mind for future special projects.

Cori is taking care of the requested display at the State Conference set for September 17-19 in Vancouver, WA. For those planning to attend, please note the listed parking rate(\$16/day) is incorrect. The correct rate is \$6/day.

4. Committee Reports.

a. Publicity. Rita Gallerani is our new committee chair.

b. Website. i. Please be advised some board members have gotten spam through their mgftc.org address. Please be cautious about odd emails. ii. Website committee is interested to expand the blog offerings, and folks could get CEs for that work. WSU has guidelines. Cori will put an announcement in the Friday Flash.

c. Plant Sale. At the membership meeting, Julie was shown a note from a member of the public complimenting the plant sale, organization, and volunteers. She will check with the writer to learn if it is acceptable to use her name to post the note on the website.

d. Bloomin' Bingo. Preparation is underway for this August 27 event.

e. Nominations. Sandy may seek a second term as state representative. We have potential candidates for vice chair, treasurer-elect, and possibly for member-at-large.

5. Speakers. Ideas were discussed, such as "pollinators," "Goodwill," and "butterflies." Julie would like to develop an advance plan, perhaps as far out as one year. It will be on the August Board meeting agenda.

6. Program.

- a. Suzannah reported on current activities.
 - i. She had 10-12 attending for “small scale gardening” and it was well-received.
 - ii. Frye Cove lunch-and-learn also went well.
 - iii. She is building the Little Library and expects to install it by early August at Closed Loop Park.
 - iv. She is working on her upcoming Children’s Garden lesson.
 - v. Suzannah will give her wrap-up presentation at our August board meeting.
- b. Cori gave a report on a number of program activities.
 - i. Safeplace’s grand opening is July 24 at 6:00pm; our board is encouraged to attend.
 - ii. Jim Thomas put together a “fabulous” new worm bin for the Children’s Garden.
 - iii. Bob Findlay has flagged spots where the Dirt Works fence was cut. Cori will ask City about contractors and arrangements for fence repair in the hope of defraying the cost to the Foundation. Additional security measures are being researched.
 - iv. Twenty-nine people completed the Master Gardener training and are now interns.
 - v. Cori is busy with outreach efforts and getting ready for the county fair. Our theme is “carrots,” and there are two great costumes that have to be seen to be believed.
 - vi. October 8 is the next cluster meeting. Please let Cori know if you will attend.
 - vii. Master Gardener license plate frames are here. Cori will be handing them out.
 - viii. The South Sound coalition, along with SPSCC, is interested in holding a joint educational conference March 28-April 1. The MRC mini-conference, currently set for November 7, shares similar goals. Cori will look into whether it would be useful or practical to roll these efforts together.
 - ix. Beekeepers Association and GRuB are putting together a display for the county fair, and they are looking for partners to launch a Spring event about pollinators.
 - x. Cori is looking for a date for the planned Hallowe’en costume swap.
 - xi. Annual picnic co-sponsored by the Foundation and Program is August 6 at 5:30 at Dirt Works. After some discussion, it was agreed to keep it as a low-key event this year, at Dirt Works, as a potluck, with families invited.

7. Fundraising. Several ideas have come up to which the Foundation could attach its name, such as Limeberry, Fred Meyer, Amazon Smile. One of our annual goals is to develop a fundraising and investment strategy. A discussion we need to have is whether we want to have criteria for choosing in what kinds of activities and with whom we will participate. Cori also noted that King County would be happy to meet with us to talk about developing an investment strategy. Julie will coordinate to talk with King County.

8. MOU with Thurston County Extension was presented for Julie’s signature. Once signed by WSU, it will put us on track to sign the charter with the State Foundation.

9. Bylaws. Discussion of terms of office was tabled until the next meeting.

10. Garden Transformations tours at Nancy Mills’ home have been very successful. Because of early blooming this year, it was agreed to move up the final tour date from August 8 to July 25, 5 - 7 pm.

11. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm. The next meeting is August 12, 5:30, at this location.

REPORT FROM STATE BOARD MEETING 6/26/2015

Meeting was held in a Yakima County Park in Union Gap. A lovely MG demonstration garden is in this same park.

Treasurer Information

- Current Assets - \$57,734.67
- Net income 11/1/2014-6/4/2015 - \$5692.32
- Anticipated net income for fiscal year (11/1/14-10/30/15) – (3245.00)
- Fiscal Year Change - The treasurer will file the necessary paperwork to change the MGFWS fiscal year to a calendar year rather than the current 11/1 to 10/31 fiscal year.

County information:

- 13 Counties were represented at the meeting
- County Charters – 14 were due for renewal this year; 10 have been signed & returned. Thurston is one of the 4 counties that have not signed their charter agreement renewals.
- Three counties – King, Chelan & Walla Walla have been invited to become Charter chapters, but have not responded.
- Several counties do not have MG programs.
- Three counties with MG programs do not have a Foundation.
- Kitsap County is considering eliminating membership in their Foundation. Lots of discussion followed this announcement.
- Most Foundations do not have dues. Mason County charges \$25 for dues.
- For the counties represented at this Board meeting, most reported having at least monthly meetings with CE. Yakima has 2 meetings in some months.

Van Bobbitt scholarship winner – Joshua Lackey of Pierce County. He is a 16 year-old MG who is hearing impaired. He is also an award winning youth golfer (a Jordon Spieth for Pierce County?)

Award nominations

- None submitted for Media Award
- Only one submitted for the Ed LaCross Distinguished Service Award – this was submitted by the awards committee chair for Nancy Davidson Short, a very senior MG who was an early supporter of the program and the first editor of the State newsletter.
- 6-8 nominated for Master Gardener of the Year
- Need more nominations and help on the reviewing committees. Due date for Media & Ed LaCross awards has been extended to July 15th. I plan to volunteer to help on the review process.
- The Awards Committee plans to develop a more specific format for nominations next year.

Educational Conferences

- 2015 – 212 registered as of 6/25.
- 2016 - still no volunteers to host, so it is considered as a cancelled event.
- There was a proposal from Asotin County (south eastern corner of the state) to host an “experience” in this small corner of WA. The State Rep, Rhonda, suggested a day of seminars and a day of adventures in this Lewis & Clark focused County. They had initially considered a camping weekend but considered a more civilized event might be better, despite the limited facilities in Asotin County.
- 2017 – no bids so far but the Pacific-Greys Harbor chapter is considering hosting. Apparently they made money on the last conference they hosted.
- Discussion: minimum requirements to be a host county; negative aspects of hosting; advice available from counties that have hosted in the past; hosting by 2 or more counties; regional educational conferences rather than a State-wide conference; lack of a historical file of past Conferences

Fund Raising

Grants – Yakima & Skagit obtain grants for their Foundations. Skagit obtained grants from the Soroptimists for several laptops/tablets. Skagit appealed to this women’s organization since the vast majority of their MG’s are women.

Water bottles – Yakima County sells recycled aluminum water bottles which are manufactured by Liberty Bottleworks in the city of Union Gap in Yakima County. The Foundation was able to select or design the pictures and message on the bottles, which are very attractive. While they sell for \$23, the sales have been good (and many were sold at this Board meeting).

Garden tours – several counties noted that liability issues had made it difficult to continue these tours.

At the groups’ request, the President (George Frey) will send out a request for information concerning Fundraising activities. The focus will be on the types of successful ventures and not on the amount of money earned.

Insurance Coverage

George’s survey/questionnaire will also ask about Insurance policies and about whether local treasurers are bonded.

News from State Program coordinator, Nicole Martini:

WSU President Elson Floyd died recently. Provost Daniel Bernardo will act as President while the WSU Regents search for a replacement for Dr. Floyd.

A well-attended County Coordinators meeting was held recently in Ellensburg. Some of the topics covered:

- Educational material supplied to the public must be vetted for compliance with WSU information.
- Announcements for public events and educational materials must include non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation statements. This applies to Foundation events if they can be considered co-sponsored (e.g., record MG volunteer hours for the events).

- Requests for reasonable accommodation must be submitted to County MG Coordinators who will then work with WSU Human Resources to resolve the request. Counties were advised to NOT try resolving these requests on their own. NOTE: a request for a pamphlet in a language other than English is not considered to be a “request for reasonable accommodation” as WSU considers language to be a skill. A reasonable accommodation requests needs to address a disability related need (e.g. wheel chair access)

Nicole plans to create more Webinars. There have been problems with finding the right software that is easy to access and that allows more than 100 participants. Past webinars are archived on the WSU website in the MG only area. The next webinar is scheduled for 7/28 and deals with invasive pests

Tree steward training has been delayed to June 2016.

Travel time – Nicole is working with Human Resources to figure out a policy. It is not likely they will allow recording volunteer hours for travel: but, they are considering whether hours need to be recorded for L&I coverage for injuries incurred during the travel.

Nicole requested MGFWS financial assistance to allow her to hold a full County Coordinators meeting at the State Education conference in Sept. She reported that she has a small training budget from WSU, most of which was used for the Ellensburg meeting. After much discussion, we approved a \$2000 grant to Nicole for a meeting. NOTE: I seconded the motion to provide this funding. Several Board members, including the Treasurer and President, opposed this motion.

Submitted by Sandy Atkinson
July 3, 2015