

Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State
Board Meeting Minutes – June 24, 2016
Mount Vernon, WA

Attendance:

Board Members:

Kathleen Eaton (Snohomish), Int. Pres.	Bob Taylor (Lewis)
John Strong (Yakima), Secretary	Dode Carlson (Snohomish)
Jody Burns (San Juan)	* Kathy Brenberger (Benton-Franklin)
* Ronda Welling (Asotin)	Judy Callahan (Skagit)
Terri Small (Grays Harbor-Pacific)	Laura Stanley (Kittitas)
Barbara Guiland (Grant-Adams)	Chris Allen (Island)
Sherry Kanode (Kitsap)	Meralee Nash (Pierce)
* Patricia Bosh (Cowlitz)	Marilyn Glenn (Whatcom)
Nicole Martini (WSU MG Program Leader & Ex-Officio member)	* - attended via telephone

Guests from Skagit County:

Jean Nelson	Deborah Smeltzer
Everett Chu	Jane Billinghamst
Al Call	Carol Taylor
Kathy Thornburgh	

- 1) President Kathleen called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.
- 2) Judy Callahan (Skagit County) welcomed the Board to Mount Vernon and introduced guests from Skagit County.
- 3) Introductions were made.
- 4) Kathleen reviewed the agenda. Judy moved and Bob seconded approval of the agenda. Passed.
- 5) Treasurer's report (given by John, since Margaret is not able to attend): Income and expenses were described by John... the small income amounts are donations, dividends and interest. Notable expenses include \$5,050 to open our Endowment account and pay 501 Commons for their expense in regard to the Strategic Plan meeting, and \$6,000 seed money to Yakima for the 2017 conference. Bob asked about the \$146 expenditure for "Treasurer Bond". He interprets the term "bond" to refer to an investment that should yield income, not cost expense. It was explained that this represents a premium payment for the insurance bond on our treasurer. Bob recommends that perhaps a more descriptive title can be put on this item in the future.
- 6) Judy moved and Bob seconded to approve the Consent Calendar. Passed. Included in the Consent Calendar are:
 - a) Adoption of Strategic Plan
 - b) Approve Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2016 meeting
- 7) Strategic Plan Goals Progress:
 - a) Kathleen: Endowment Update...
 - i) There is one document yet to execute to complete the establishment of our endowment, which will happen soon
 - ii) Using an example from Snohomish County, Kathleen discussed ideas for how to structure a relationship between MGFWS endowment and local county foundation endowments, with the prospect of state-to-local sharing of funds in the future. Extensive discussion ensued,

most surrounding the question of why there needed to be a connection between state and local endowments. Kathleen described the potential sharing of funds as motivation for members of local foundations to help raise money for the state foundation. It became clear that such motivation is likely not necessary, nor is this tie-in desired.

- iii) Kathleen, working with Linda Bailey, from the WSU Endowment office, will coordinate appeals to corporations, using specific, proven methods of solicitation.
- b) John: Communication Plan (See attached notes from that committee.)
 - i) Terri brought an appeal on behalf of editor Mary Shane for more participation in the submission of articles for the Seeds For Thought newsletter.
 - ii) On the topic of Dropbox, Kathleen recommended that each county representative to this board obtain a Google account, with a Gmail address specifically for MGFWS correspondence and communication. She would then provide each of us read-only access to the Dropbox account and to Google Calendar.
 - iii) Deborah mentioned that they have had success using Office 365 for sharing and communication, and that she would happily provide further details.
- c) Bob: Committee to improve the State Conference
 - i) The MGFWS contribution to the host county as seed money should be a fixed amount, rather than an amount governed by the previous year's conference income. That was, in fact, done this year for the 2017 Yakima-hosted conference, in the amount of \$6,000.
 - ii) The MGFWS should take a larger role in actual planning, hosting, and financial risk of the conference.
 - iii) Marilyn suggested that we should take immediate action along these lines, rather than simply discuss it. In response, Jody moved and John seconded a motion to form a committee (formed of representatives of this board and representatives from counties who have recently hosted the state conference) to explore MGFWS putting on the 2018 conference. The motion passed. (After the lunch break Dode was appointed to head this committee, which will include Laura, Kathleen, and John and others to join later.)
- 8) Kathleen: How do we encourage more involvement? She suggested that more and better recognition would incent more participation and involvement.
- 9) The meeting recessed for lunch, provided by the Skagit County Master Gardener Foundation. Reconvened at 12:30.
- 10) Two informational meetings about WSU Endowment opportunities for local foundations will be held, one on each side of the state. They will be similar to the presentation made by Linda Bailey at our March meeting. It was suggested that the Eastern meeting be held before or after our next board meeting, in Yakima on October 21st. Details to come.
- 11) County sharing (in brief):
 - a) Benton-Franklin: Their recent plant sale was expanded and achieved revenue of \$6,300.
 - b) Kitsap: Their plant sale improved to over \$10,000. Their Foundation Board recently had a facilitated retreat, where they worked on developing a Strategic Plan.
 - c) Kittitas: Extension has provided space for them to develop a demonstration garden.
 - d) Skagit: They are planning a 20-year birthday party of Master Gardeners in Skagit County. As part of the festivities Graham Kerr will be the guest speaker. The event will be July 23rd, and all are welcome to celebrate with them.
- 12) Report from WSU MG Program Leader Nicole:
 - a) Last Friday a Coordinators' meeting was held in Ellensburg. Topics discussed included a new volunteer conflict policy as part of the work to engender policy consistency across the state.

- b) The effort continues to develop a program evaluation plan that more closely mirrors that of other Extension programs. A new clinic count sheet was created which can provide data to more accurately report to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
 - c) A WSU faculty member is leading a project to create an electronic clinic log which will be uniform around the state, and might be developed as an “app”, for use on mobile computing devices.
 - d) Nicole is collecting outreach materials from each county, describing events and projects being conducted around the state. A goal is to report on how Master Gardeners are influencing public behavior. This effort will include impact statements and testimonials showing how we have changed the environment, peoples’ lives, economic savings, crime rates and more.
 - e) A new Administrative team at Extension has been formed, led by Associate Dean Rich Koenig, on which Nicole has been invited to sit.
 - f) The development of the Tree Stewardship online training continues. Expected release date is now late September.
 - g) The MG Intern Online Training tuition will be raised next year, due to increased costs associated with the online platform and USB drives. The new fee will be \$75.
 - h) The new WSU President appears to be in favor of avoiding budget cuts in the coming year.
 - i) Eric, the new Volunteer Coordinator, is focusing much of his attention on the 4-H program at this time. He seems to be pleased with the way the MG program is operating.
 - j) Todd Murray, the new director of Agriculture and Natural Resources, has extensive history with Master Gardeners, and is a big supporter of our program.
 - k) Nicole is working to improve the understanding of the difference between MG foundations and programs. This has long been difficult for many to grasp, and building on Tony Fitzgerald’s slide show of a few years ago, Nicole hopes to better define parts and roles in Master Gardeners.
- 13) Kathleen announced that the Robson Scholarship was awarded this year to Sophomore Lydia Fields, studying in the Department of Horticulture in Landscape Nursery Management. Her hometown is Spokane, WA.
- 14) The group broke into committee work sessions. Upon reconvening, each reported on their discussion:
- a) Conference - Members of the committee each will contact one of the previous conference host counties and ask for a representative to this committee, and to obtain their “book”: notes on the methods they used to plan the conference, pitfalls, and results.
 - b) Best Practices - Collect brief one-paragraph submissions about seasonal topics from each county for the Seeds newsletter. Submissions would be assembled into an article for each issue.
 - c) Communication - Add to the website: all past state awardees, officer bios, past issues of Seeds cataloged by topics. Develop a way for individual MGs to subscribe / unsubscribe to email lists and Seeds distribution, thus maintaining automatic and accurate distribution lists.
 - d) Strategic Plan – Recommend edit to Mission Statement: expand on the term: “support” in relation to the conference. Use a more generic term to replace “manpower”.
- 15) Kathleen will send further details about Dropbox, Gmail accounts, etc.
- 16) Our next meeting will be at the Convention Center in Yakima on October 21, 2016. Kathleen would like us to entertain the idea of expanding the meetings beyond four hours, to be able to accomplish more, specifically in relation to the travel time for many of us.
- 17) Under an off-agenda “Other Business” heading, Bob moved and Judy seconded a motion to modify the MOA between MGFWS and conference host counties, such that the risk of financial loss is shared by MGFWS using the same formula as the gain from profit. This is also to modify the current



MOA with Yakima County for the 2017 conference. Motion passed, with John abstaining from the vote.

18) Meeting was adjourned at 2:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by

John Strong, Secretary

Kathleen Eaton, Interim President