

**Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State
Board Meeting Minutes – October 21, 2016**

Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, WA

Attendance:

Board Members:

Kathleen Eaton (Snohomish), Int. Pres.	Bob Taylor (Lewis)
John Strong (Yakima), Secretary	Michelle Nyman (Jefferson)
Margaret Morris (Yakima), Treasurer	Meralee Nash (Pierce)
Candice Gohn (Jefferson), VP Peninsula	Sherry Kanode (Kitsap)
MaryJo Christensen (Lewis), VP SW	Barbara Guiland (Grant-Adams)
Kathy Brenberger (Benton-Franklin) VP East	Lorraine Fritsch (Klickitat)
Karen Russo (Pacific-Grays Harbor)	Chris Allen (Island)
Ronda Welling (Asotin)	Sandy Atkinson (Thurston)
Patricia Bosh (Cowlitz)	George Loosier (Kittitas)
Elizabeth Sims (Grays Harbor-Pacific)	Jo Tuom (Cowlitz)
Nicole Martini (WSU MG Program Leader & Ex-Officio member)	

Guests:

Jeff Stottlemire (Pierce Foundation President)
Patty Kerston (Snohomish Foundation President) - attended via telephone
Linda Bailey (WSU – to speak about Endowment)
Britta Nitcy (WSU – to speak about Endowment)

- 1) President Kathleen introduced Linda Bailey and Britta Nitcy, to make a presentation and answer questions about local county foundations establishing endowments in association with the WSU Endowment Fund. Linda began by asking for introductions around the room, and then reviewed the WSU endowment program, and she and Britta answered a number of questions.
- 2) Following their presentation, Kathleen shared her idea for local county foundations to conduct fund drives wherein individual MGs would solicit donations to the MGFWS Endowment Fund from their “warm contacts”, using a “Walk-a-Thon” model, whereby donors would pledge either a flat amount or so much per hour volunteered by the requesting MG. She stressed this is only a suggestion, and encouraged counties to develop other unique fund-raisers for this purpose.
It should be noted that the primary goal of the MGFWS Endowment is to generate perpetual income to be used to support the annual Advanced Education Conference.
- 3) President Kathleen called the official meeting to order at 10:15 am. John Strong welcomed the group to Yakima.
- 4) Kathleen (KE) opened discussion of the Consent Agenda. Questions were raised about the suggested change to our Mission Statement in the proposed Bylaws revision. The proposed Mission Statement has been modified since the Strategic Planning meeting in April.
KE separated the Consent Agenda items and called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2016 Board meeting. Barb G moved and Meralee N seconded approving the minutes. Passed.
- 5) Bylaw changes:
 - a) After brief discussion Bob moved and Patricia seconded that the original mission statement as developed in April be approved in the amended Bylaws. Passed.

- b) Adding the new officer position of Executive Vice President was discussed. The primary purpose for this position, in addition to assisting the President, would be to step into the Presidency immediately upon a vacancy occurring in that office. Michelle moved, Barb seconded to approve. Passed.
 - c) After these individual changes were approved, Bob moved the Bylaws be approved as amended. Candice seconded and motion passed.
- 6) Elections: Nominating chair, Patricia Bosh presented the nominees for President (Kathleen Eaton), Secretary (John Strong) and Treasurer (Margaret Morris). Each of them has accepted their nomination. Nominations from the floor were opened. There being none, Patricia called for the election of the slate of officers as nominated. The slate was elected.
- 7) Awards Committee:
- a) Kathy Brenberger announced the names of the Master Gardener of the Year nominees (Bob Biegert from Asotin, Bob Cain from Clallam, Mick Duggan from King, Virginia Ferguson from Pierce, and Laura Pittman-Hewitt from Kitsap) and winner (Diana Wisen from Skagit County). She also encouraged the group to be sure to nominate someone from each county each year. The award was presented by President KE in Skagit County, and all the nominees and winner will be recognized at the 2017 Conference in Yakima. A thank-you note from Diana Wisen was read to the Board.
 - b) The Media Award was announced as a dual award to Rachelle Taylor and Kathleen Eaton.
- 8) Report from WSU MG Program Leader Nicole:
- a) The Tree Stewardship Training is nearly done. Work has been handed to Global Campus to put it online. Should be ready by end of December.
 - b) The revisions to the MG Training Manual are under way. There are many authors to work with, and in this revision each of the chapters will be peer reviewed.
 - c) Program evaluation is a hot-button topic throughout Extension. Stakeholders are more and more interested in measurable results. This is a big part of the reason the new clinic count sheets were developed and are being used statewide. Nicole is aware the extra paperwork is not particularly popular, but as our program and the funding environment have changed over the years, it's important for the sustainability of the program that we comply as fully as possible. One of the specifics being looked at is pesticide information, and how are MGs changing behavior with our recommendations, and is chemical pesticide use being reduced.
 - d) At the national MG coordinator conference in Montana last month, Washington was well represented with Nicole and several coordinators. Evaluation is important on a national level, as well.
 - e) Nicole mentioned the National Initiative for Community Horticulture, whose goal is awareness of the importance of homegrown food.
 - f) A new tri-fold brochure is being developed to describe our work and results, and provide information for use in soliciting support for our programs. This can be downloaded and printed for local use.
- 9) Board Meeting locations and dates for the coming year:
- a) It was suggested that we should encourage more MGs to have an opportunity to attend MGFWS meetings, so as to become more familiar with us. We decided to include a brief meeting as a scheduled part of the Conference in Yakima next year, so that all attendees will have that opportunity.
 - b) We discussed the ratio of travel time to work/meeting time and the hardships that many of us endure to attend at a distance. The travel time spreadsheet developed by John was reviewed, and will provide advice in siting our meetings.

- c) The following dates and locations were set for the coming year...
 - i) February 24, 2017 in Everett
 - ii) June 2, 2017 in Ellensburg
 - iii) September, 2017 (as part of the conference) in Yakima
 - iv) November 3, 2017 in Puyallup
- 10) Meeting was recessed for lunch off site, with a few small groups asked to brain-storm several topics.
- 11) Upon reconvening at 1:10 pm, Candice shared the discussion of her group about fund-raising ideas (see item 2, above)
 - a) It was felt that it was unrealistic to expect much could be done before next year. Perhaps in May, and at the Conference in September.
 - b) Ideas included an herb garden window kit, remay, special seeds, or other products at plant sales, the revenue from which would be earmarked for the MGFWS Endowment.
 - c) Develop publicity to local foundations describing who the state foundation is, and why this fund-raising is important. Perhaps a flyer or other document to take back to the local level.
 - d) KE suggested an ad hoc committee to explore these topics further. Volunteers included Chris Allen, Michelle Nyman, Candice Gohn and KE.
- 12) County sharing (in brief):
 - a) Pierce – Meralee talked about their program, Urban Edibles, and reported on a successful public tomato tasting with 79 varieties!
 - b) Jefferson – Michelle described the six-week Growing Groceries Course they have had great success with. In fact, this course was the impetus for Michelle to become a MG!
 - c) Snohomish – KE said they are considering the “Seeds To Supper” program. Nicole is also looking at that as a state-wide project.
 - d) Ronda told about how the three MGs from neighboring Garfield County, who meet with the Asotin group, have had great success with a school program. Last year’s third graders planted and then, as fourth graders, harvested veggies that all took blue ribbons at the county fair – including one judged “Best of Show”!
 - e) Lewis County – Bob pointed out that they are in their 6th year with a Title I Elementary School, where they have helped to raise the 4th grade science scores from the 40th percentile to the 80th!
 - f) Island County – Chris announced this year’s popular Whidbey Garden Workshop, which this year will have 49 classes, 20 of which are new. Keynote speaker will be Lucy Hardiman.
 - g) Kitsap – Sherry presented her report to the group, and then separately to the Secretary (Thanks, Sherry!):
 - o The current Board of Directors of the MGFKC would like to read any information given out regarding establishing an endowment with WSU; the big question: Is the principal accessible?
 - o MGFKC would like the MGFWS to coordinate a round table to share plant sale ideas and/or conduct a webinar to discuss ideas so everyone would not have to drive long distances in order to share this information.
 - o For starters, MGFKC would like names of all county plant sale chairs and fundraiser ideas each county has used successfully, what worked and what didn’t.
 - o MGFKC has a video produced of our 2015 plant sale from set-up to take-down, the whole event, and we are willing to share this with the state MGs. Would the MGFWS like to see this? When, at next quarterly meeting?
 - o MGFKC is looking for connection with other counties and wants to hear about what works/successes and what hasn’t worked/failures, so we may learn of successful sustainable practices in building continued MG Foundation camaraderie and Board and committee commitment/participation.

- Do any of the counties participate in 'Give America' one-day giving campaigns? If so, what can they share in terms of creating a donor base? Do they use Facebook, etc. for this? Do any counties have corporate sponsors or other consistent sponsors? How has this been created? What practices are used to build a solid donor base? How is it maintained?

13) Patricia Bosh reported on the informal lunchtime group about the AEC .

- a. The long and awkward name of the conference should be changed.
- b. Financing the conference is the main concern.
- c. Obtaining good speakers is one of the major responsibilities.
- d. Each county should provide volunteers at the conference to work short shifts (<2hrs?)
- e. The new Executive VP should take on the role of "Conference Director", organizing and leading the conference planning / steering committee
- f. Finding a central location is important. Perhaps Ellensburg? (Kat expressed their happiness to have the conference in Ellensburg, but had reservations about whether proper facilities exist there.)

14) The formal meeting was closed at 2:10, when a small sub-set of the Yakima Conference Planning Team joined the group, accompanied by the *Grazing in the Grass* conference theme song, and decked out in their 1960's garb. They presented each of us with a necklace of "love beads" as a reminder of the theme (Can You Dig It?) and fun planned for the 2017 Conference. John Strong then described the progress the team has made in planning, a sampling of featured speakers, and of the pre-conference tours planned. In closing, he implored everyone to start making their plans to attend on September 20-23, 2017 in Yakima.

He then led the group on a walk-around the Convention Center, pointing out various rooms and facilities that will be used for the fun and learning.

Respectfully submitted by

John Strong, Secretary

Kathleen Eaton, Interim President