

Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State
Board Meeting Minutes – March 30, 2018
Cougar Auditorium, WSU Extension, Everett, WA

Attendance:

Board Members: (in person)

Kathleen Eaton (Snohomish), President	Meralee Nash (Pierce)
John Strong (Yakima), Secretary	Bob Taylor (Lewis)
Margaret Morris (Yakima), Treasurer	Dave Hofeditz (Snohomish)
Chris Allen (Island)	Debra Kroon (Yakima)
Dode Carlson (Snohomish)	Barbara Raabe (Kittitas)
Carrie Hill (King)	Al Call (Skagit)
George Loosier (Kittitas)	Mary-Cathern Miller (Kitsap)
Kathy Brenberger (Benton-Franklin)	Candice Gohn (Jefferson)

Board Members: (via Zoom)

Patricia Bosh (Cowlitz)	Ronda Welling (Asotin)
Jo Tuom (Cowlitz)	Marie Taylor (Benton-Franklin)
Karlee Hodges (Benton-Franklin)	Sandy Keathly (Whatcom)

Several from Pend O'Reille County whose names were not available

Guests:

Jim Kropf (WSU Puyallup)

- 1) President Kathleen opened the meeting at 10:00 am.
- 2) Agenda and minutes were approved, with the addition by Al for a discussion of the various methods used to select local Master Gardeners of the Year.
- 3) Margaret read the 2017 Conference Audit Report, and presented the Treasurer's Report. There was a brief discussion about the \$6,000 grant given to Yakima for education expenses at the conference. It was clarified as a grant, not expected to be returned. Bob asked if the large income figures on the Treasurer's Report were due to large incomes in the dependent counties. Margaret said they are.
- 4) At 10:15 Jim Kropf handed out and presented his report. It appears as an attachment to these minutes. Additional points and questions included:
 - a) Eric Larsen, who was Extension Volunteer Development Specialist, has resigned. A replacement is expected to be hired soon.
 - b) There is a new listserv server online now, after the old one crashed in January.
 - c) The topic at the June meeting of MG Coordinators will focus on looking to the future.
 - d) Al asked if one quarter FTE is enough time for our Interim State Coordinator to perform her duties satisfactorily. Jim said that they felt it would be adequate for now. Some blended funding is anticipated whereby additional funds may allow for more. Long-term, the job is not expected to be shared with other duties, as it is now. In the search for a permanent candidate, volunteer management skills will be emphasized more than horticultural knowledge or background. Bob and Candice noted that reduced state leadership leads to more local county independence, which can lead to problems in maintaining a consistent program across the state. Al asked what Jim might recommend that we could do to encourage WSU to move forward more rapidly toward a full-time state coordinator. Certainly lobbying WSU leadership is an option that is open to anyone.

- e) George noted that Kittitas is involving non-MGs in some of their programs, and wondered how they might be covered by our insurance. It was pointed out that they cannot be covered unless they are certified or formally in training.
- 5) At 10:50, Bob led the group in an exercise to point out the need for us to think outside our traditional and normal parameters and comfort zones... "Outside the nine dots"!
- 6) Kathleen introduced the reorganization plan as a way to set us up for managing our annual conference. The plan includes an expanded board, several new officers, and much wider involvement of MGs from around the state in conference operation. Handouts (attached) included a Venn diagram of broad areas of board responsibilities and a list of proposed offices/jobs and their duties.
- A variety of comments included overall positive impressions about the plan, fear that we may not be able to pull it off, recognition that in order to change our results, we must change how we do things. There were some who voiced excitement and eagerness to move forward, and others who said the idea was good, but they couldn't commit to more work.
- Many felt that consistent conference leadership and planning could only lead to better results. It was stressed that success will depend largely on support from the local coordinators and leadership. Kathleen said she would present our plan to the coordinators' June meeting in Wenatchee.
- 7) Just before breaking for lunch we were treated to brief comments from Sharon Collman, who thanked us for the Ed LaCrosse Award given to her at the conference last September. She also invited us to visit her "Bugs and Blights" column on the Snohomish County MG website. She has been writing this for years, and includes meaningful pictures with her advice. It is presented in conjunction with the Washington State Nurseryman's Assn., and we are encouraged to use parts of it (with proper citation) in our local newsletters.
- 8) Following our lunch break further discussion of the reorganization ensued.
- Concern was raised about losing the Regional VPs in our new slate of offices. It seems that currently only one of our regional VPs is actually attending and reporting to the counties in her region. It is important, though, that we get the word out to all local county programs. Several board members volunteered to go to their neighbors' foundations that are not regularly represented on the state board.
- John pointed out suggested changes to the By Laws to accommodate the new plan. If our goal is to have new offices in place by our election in September, we would need to change the By Laws concurrently with that election. We decided to table any changes to the By Laws until at least our June 1st meeting.
- Kathleen stressed that we need to elect an Executive VP (already in the By Laws) as soon as possible.
- 9) George moved to adopt the reorganization plan as presented. Kathy seconded. We will need to plan for changes that may occur by the larger number of board members. Changes such as redefining a quorum, allowing decision-making at lower levels, creating careful budgets, authorizing contract signing, etc.
- Patricia would like to see the Venn diagram in words. New job descriptions need to be approved before By Law changes.
- Candice noted that this reorg plan commits us to running the conference!
- Adoption of the plan was passed unanimously.
- 10) At 1:30pm, John read the report from Chelan-Douglas on the plans for this year's conference. That report is attached.
- 11) Selection processes for local Master Gardeners of the Year were shared:
- Skagit – Voting of local membership – only about 25% participate.
 - King – Various recognitions are given using varied criteria and selection teams

- c) Benton-Franklin – MGs with the most volunteer hours are the nominees, and a secret vote is held
 - d) Jefferson and Thurston – Coordinator selects
 - e) Yakima – Secret ballot at annual meeting. No nominees. Voters write down name of their choice.
 - f) Snohomish – Coordinator asks nominees who are rated in five categories.
 - g) Lewis – Nominating done by specific criteria; previous three winners select new winner.
 - h) Asotin – Group too small, so simply recognize hours
 - i) Cowlitz – Volunteers with over 25 hours are recognized by coordinator in a presentation. MGoY nominated using state rubric.
- 12) Kathleen went over talking points to take back to our counties:
- a) Reorg, more representatives, every rep has a job
 - b) We will put on the conference by 2020
 - c) 2019 RFP will be out soon; encourage your group to host
 - d) Kropf report
 - e) MGoY discussion
 - f) Bug and Blights
- 13) Kathleen announced that with her husband's recent retirement, they have purchased land and are building a home in Tucson, and will be moving there in the fall. She commits to staying on as president until September, and plans to spend summers in Washington and would like to remain involved at some level. But we will need to recruit and elect a new president by this fall's election.
- 14) Meeting adjourned at 2:05pm.

Attachments:

- Jim Kropf report
- Venn diagram
- Reorganization plan (Venn in words)
- Brief New Job Descriptions
- 2018 Conference planning report

Respectfully submitted by

John Strong, Secretary

Kathleen Eaton, President