



Master Gardener Foundation

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Minutes of the MGFWS Annual Board Meeting

October 1, 2020
Zoom Call

In attendance: Debra Benbow, Patricia Bosh, Awards Director Kathy Brenberger, Judy Callahan, George Cowan, Patty Dion, President Don Enstrom, Candice Gohn, Sharon Golightly, Angela Grady, Mary-Alyce Harpster, Carrie Hill, Membership Director MaryLou Krautscheid, Cathi Lamoreux, Kitty Lundeen-Ness, State Program Lead Jennifer Marquis, Charles McCracken, VP Paul McKenna, Ruth Monahan, Treasurer Margaret Morris, Conference Director C-J Nielsen, Barbara Raabe, Karen Russo, Kelly Rupp, Secretary John Strong, Bob Taylor, Lori Taylor, Jo Tuom, Melody Westmoreland, Rose Wakeman, Diane Wisen, Susan Yeager.

A few others connected to the meeting, and were not identified. At least 18 chapters were represented, establishing a quorum.

OPENING:

The meeting was called to order by President Don Enstrom at 10:00 a.m. The Secretary confirmed the presence of a quorum. There were no corrections or additions to the minutes of the last meeting. C-J moved and Bob seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Don's opening remarks included a review of the year just completed; a year of challenges to be sure, but one that, thanks to the dedication and hard work of all board members, we navigated successfully. The two year term just completed had mixed progress, and we are on track to have a successful 2021.

We recently received a letter from Annabelle LaCrosse with the news that her father, Edward LaCrosse passed on August 15th at the age of 94. Our annual Distinguished Service Award proudly bears his name. Her letter and his obituary is valuable to add to what we already have researched for our history and website. Don sent a nice letter of condolence to her and Ed's family.

WSU EXTENSION:

State Program Lead, Jennifer shared successes for her vision and mission for the State MG Program. The vision is to create a "cohesive statewide program with a positive WSU culture and with highly trained, competent, and engaged volunteers who: know, understand and can explain how what they do supports the educational mission of WSU, Extension, and the Master Gardener program; Support the telling of a compelling and impactful story; are a household name and a go to resource; are empowered to develop, implement & evaluate mission and vision achieving programming
Success in achieving this includes the development of a shared vision and mission and critical issues that have been communicated with MG One Sheet, The One Sheet is being expanded to a more visually attractive poster-like documents, with custom icons to be used throughout program materials.

Tools are being developed to help MGs include the critical issues in their education efforts. Also in the works are evaluation methods to help us assess and improve our story delivery, and be sure we are reaching not only the general public, but important stake-holders. One part of this will be that we will start reporting MG impacts to USDA-NIFA as a Program within CAHNRS and WSU Extension, but out from underneath the Agriculture and Natural Resources Unit.



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Also in the works is improved local program coordinator professional development, specifically around collaboration with and empowerment of volunteers.

Jennifer noted these specific Vision successes:

- Increased collaboration between county programs
- Working together for Home Hort 2021
- Improved relationship between the WSU Extension MG Program, MGFWS, and local County programs
- Increased participation from Extension Admin and CAHNRS Development

Also these Mission Successes:

- High volunteer hours (136,000 to date)
- Successful pivoting to online education, classes, plant clinics, office hours, and social events
- New tools available for growth in diversity, equity and inclusion

General Updates:

- Policy and Procedure Handbook is done!
- MG Manual should be done next summer
- Online Training update is targeted to be complete by end of 2022.
- Home Hort Training will roll out soon

Heart-felt thanks to all MG volunteers at all levels were expressed by Jennifer. She is very pleased and proud to be in a position to work with all in our program!

QUESTIONS:

Paul asked for details on the Home Hort Program. Is it going to be state-wide, and will it replace the MG online training?

Yes, it is state-wide. No it will not replace MG training. It may, if local programs wish, be a precursor to training. But there is a lot of MG training that is not included in Home Hort.

Rose suggested that recognition of our program might be improved by renaming the program to something less "general".

Yes, Jennifer agreed, and reminded everyone that the correct name is WSU Extension Master Gardener Program or WSU Extension Master Gardener volunteer. The distinguishing factor between Extension Master Gardeners and any general citizen who may refer to themselves as a Master Gardener is the connection to the University, which is why it is important to refer to yourselves as WSU <insert county> Master Gardener Volunteers. .

There was also some discussion around the fact that the term 'master' may be a barrier to participation in our programs for some cultures.

FINANCIAL:

Erin Landon, chair of the Financial Review committee, represented their report for 2019 (Addendum A). No significant issues were found in the review, and minor issues have already been corrected. They recommend making our records available digitally for ease of review. Thanks to Margaret for taking good care of our accounts.

Patricia moved and Kitty seconded to accept the Financial Review Report for 2019. Motion Passed.



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Don presented CFO Alan Smith's financial report (Addendum B). There were very few transactions for the year. We did lose some funds because of the forfeited deposits at the cancelled conference at Fort Worden. Don sees that as a lesson learned, and we have done a much better job of negotiating the contract with Hotel RL for the 2021 conference. Kathy B moved we accept the Financial Report.

Bob raised a question about the \$1,900 correction on the Endowment portion of the report. While we are not sure what that "loss" is, Don believes it is a difference between "market and actual value". This is indicative of many of the difficulties we've had deciphering the reports from CAHNRS Development. Don says this will come up again later in the meeting in the discussion of our Investment Policy.

The Secretary reminded that procedure would require a second to Kathy's motion before discussion began. Patty D. seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion passed with one Nay vote.

WORKING GROUPS:

AWARDS:

Kathy B listed the nominees for Master Gardener of the Year for 2019, seven total. And one each for Media Award and Ed LaCrosse Award. All counties are encouraged to begin work on nominees for 2020. We should have far more nominees, given the thousands of wonderful volunteers around the state.

2019 winners are: MGoY - Deborah Smeltzer; Media - Alice Slusher; Ed LaCrosse - Kathleen Eaton

Thanks so much for all the help on the Award Committee!

AEC 2021:

C-J reports that the site for AEC 2021, Olympia's Hotel RL, is excellent! The conference program is largely moved as-is from the wonderful plan we had for 2019 at Pt. Townsend, to the 2021 event in Olympia. Nearly all the classes and instructors will be there. Only one is unable to be with us.

The schedule has been opened up a bit to be a little more relaxed, and to offer about 15 more minutes per session. In brief, the schedule is:

Wednesday - Area Tours

Thursday - Area Tours, Lunch Plenary, Afternoon Classes, Evening Reception

Friday - Morning and Afternoon Classes, Awards Luncheon, Keynote Banquet

Saturday - Morning Classes, Late morning Closing Plenary, Noon Adjournment

Selection of a Banquet Keynote and an Awards Luncheon Speaker are nearly complete, so look for that news soon.

Questions: Sharon G asked if we will have capability for remote attendance, online.

-C-J said she would like to be able to do that. Looking for help on the technical issues involved.

-Jennifer recalls information from WSU about necessary tech equipment. Don recalls that and remembers it is costly and will require high speed connections.

-Also, the conference is our only source of revenue, and paid attendance should not be negatively impacted. Hotel costs depend on sleeping rooms, and we have guaranteed 330 room nights. So remote attendance should not be "free".

-Another consideration is that some speakers may not allow recording or broadcast.

-John mentioned that perhaps the tech people at WSU could help. Jennifer reminds that WSU contracts with a firm called Global Campus, and that help from them requires payment.

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-C-J adds that she is quite hopeful that Covid will not be an issue a year from now.

Don opened discussion of revenue generating events before and during the conference. Including regional tours, raffle, marketplace, silent auction. Individual county programs may want to take on the tours and silent auction. Marketplace and raffle revenue is for MGFWS.

The group discussed ways that a silent auction could be managed. Since we don't have a specific county hosting the conference, who in the past ran the silent auction, another county may wish to step up and do so. There are likely other ways that the auction could be organized. It would have to be up to an interested county, or consortium of counties.

Jennifer reminds that managing a silent auction is a very large amount of work. Debra from Wenatchee, and John from Yakima confirmed that is true!

There was a great deal of discussion, questions and ideas. We need to decide how it should be done. Candice recommends that any county that steps up to manage an auction would do it as they see fit. Bob suggests a workgroup be appointed to look into it and report back at the next meeting. Bob volunteered to head up that group. Candice, Karen, Kitty, and Erin will work with him. A report back is needed by end of this year.

Investments:

A lot of work and discussion has been going on involving CAHNRS Development, Alan, Don, Jennifer, Patty and John about the endowment we opened several years ago, and alternative ways to accept donations. A draft policy for funds development and management has been proposed and is attached as Addendum C.

Several local community foundations have been surveyed and we have learned that there are several ways that a community foundation could manage accounts for us. They include:

- an endowment, where donations go into a principal account which we cannot touch. Only earnings from the principal would be available to us. This is as it is with our current endowment at WSU.
- an agency account, where the full principal and earnings would be available to us, requiring only board action.

In general, it appears that such a foundation could provide better earnings and lower costs than what we are experiencing with WSU Endowment. The main difference in costs is that WSU charges a 5% fee on every donation when it comes in. Community foundations have no such fee. Ongoing account maintenance fees are the same in both cases: 1.5% per year.

Don notes that our Gift Use Agreement with WSU states that we will continue to promote donations to the WSU Development office. Given that, he feels that it would be disingenuous to open and appeal for donations to a second endowment fund at a community foundation, thereby competing with the WSU account. But he thinks that an Agency account would likely make sense for us, particularly in the short term of the next few years, until we become more solvent.

CAHNRS Development staff has said that they will provide training and more support in solicitation of major donors than they have to date. Local foundations also offer assistance in steering donors to our accounts.

Don requests that the Board authorizes the Executive Committee to complete any needed research and select a community foundation and open an Agency account for the benefit of MGFWS activities. At this



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time that is primarily meant to benefit AEC - related expenses, if needed. Bob so moved and Karen seconded it. Motion passed.

By-Laws:

Paul has been working on our corporate documents in preparation for any needed modifications. The by-laws currently refer to appendices, which Paul recommends we convert to a Policy and Procedures Manual, independent of the By-laws. His committee will complete that conversion and present By-laws revisions and P&P manual at the next meeting.

Communication:

Don is still looking for a Communication chair to coordinate the efforts of website, newsletter, Facebook, and conference website managers. This will help assure consistent branding.

Elections:

All officers have agreed to run for another term. Nominations from the floor were opened. None were made. Bob moved the slate be elected by acclamation. Patricia second, and the slate was elected.

President	Don Enstrom
Exec. Vice President	Paul McKenna (incumbent)
Financial Officer	Alan Smith (incumbent)
Treasurer	Margaret Morris (incumbent)
Secretary	John Strong (incumbent)
Membership Director	Marylou Krautscheid (incumbent)
Conference Director	C-J Nielsen (incumbent)
Awards Director	Kathy Brenberger (incumbent)

Presidential Awards:

There are 31 volunteers who qualified for 500 hours awards. They were sent to PCs about a week ago. There is a glitch at the federal government regarding life-time awards, so none of those have been awarded.

Insurance:

One proposal has been received, from State Farm, for liability insurance. This came up when negotiating a contract with the hotel for our conference. Briefly, limits are two million dollars on liability and many miscellaneous coverages for things that don't relate to us. Premium quoted is \$440 per year.

Comments from several people included the ideas that we don't have a need for liability, nor personal property to lose. Also, folks added that there can be unexpected liabilities, and that it is prudent to carry some insurance.

This is not Directors and Officers insurance. Our Articles of Incorporation state that officers and directors are indemnified from liability.

Margaret has learned that insurance companies are not offering event insurance due to the pandemic.

Several counties said that they have purchased liability insurance and think it may be important. Many supporting comments.



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Jennifer mentions that perhaps WSU insurance would cover liability for the conference, since Extension is a co-sponsor of the event.

Rose, Cathi L, and Jennifer agreed to report back on the insurance question. Cathi L will lead.

Charter Renewals:

Marylou Krautscheid is awaiting signed charters from Chelan-Douglas and Benton-Franklin. Representatives from those counties will contact MaryLou to finish this process.

Don added that Kittitas is completing their work to become independent. Asotin is considering joining with Garfield County.

2021 Meeting Dates:

The following dates were agreed upon for our meetings in 2021:

January 7

March 11

June 10

September 30 (at AEC2021 in the evening)

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Newsletter article submissions are always welcome!
Planning for AEC2022 will need to begin soon.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

John Strong, Sec.

Don Enstrom, Pres.

Addenda follow:

A - Financial Review

B - Financial Report

C - Funds Management Draft Proposal