

Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State  
Board Meeting Minutes – June 4 , 2019  
Confluence Technology Center, Wenatchee, WA

Attendance:

In Person:

Meralee Nash (Pierce)	Judy Callahan (Skagit)
John Strong (Yakima), Secretary	Alan Smith (Chelan), Financial Officer
Margaret Morris (Yakima), Treasurer	C-J Nielsen (Island), Conference CoChair
Marylou Krautscheid (Grant-Adams)	Irene Reed (Pierce)
Debra Benbow (Chelan)	Sharon Hockenson (Chelan)
Craig Lawrence (Chelan)	Don Enstrom (Lewis), President
Patty Dion (Yakima), Development	Paul McKenna (Island), Exec. VP
Mary Alyce Harpster (Skagit)	Jennifer Marquis (State Lead)

Via Zoom:

Candice Gohn (Jefferson)	Karen Russo (Grays Harbor/Pacific)
Patricia Bosh (Cowlitz)	Sandy Keathley (Whatcom)
Raven Travillian (Snohomish)	Dennis Fife (Benton-Franklin)
Kathy Brenberger (Benton-Franklin)	Erin Landon (Grays Harbor/Pacific)
Ronda Welling (Asotin)	Becky Bivian (Asotin)
Bob Taylor (Lewis)	

Guest:

Alex duPont (Skagit Co PC)	Ken Tolonen (Yakima)
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- 1) Call to Order: President Don opened the meeting, and introductions were made.
- 2) Minutes: Minutes of the February 22nd meeting were approved as emailed.
- 3) Don reviewed the officer and committee chair positions that remain open, and described their responsibilities. The include: Membership, Communication, Historian, Webmaster, Social Media, Financial Review, and Nominations. It is vital that board members step up to fill these roles.
- 4) VP Paul reviewed our official documents. He reported that the Articles of Incorporation were last revised in 2010; the By-Laws twice in 2018; and the MOU with WSU Extension is up for renewal now. Don asked that any comments and suggestions about the By-Laws or the MOU be sent to him.
- 5) Financial: Alan distributed and discussed the revised financial documents.
  - a) Balance Sheet - Conference expenses are shown as deferred, pre-paid; and the Endowment has been moved from an expense to asset.
  - b) Profit / Loss - Now shows a two-year comparison.
  - c) Budget - generated by Quick Books. He noted that the "Hats" entry will be moved to Conference Income

Don noted that now, with our take-over of the Conference, we are suddenly a 6-figure operation. The importance of watching our cash flow is critical as we prepare for the 2020 and the 2021 conferences. He suggested that we skip the \$5,000 contribution to

our Endowment, that we had originally planned. (Our minimum \$25K balance in the Endowment has been achieved.) Alan moved and John seconded a motion to hold off on the \$5,000 contribution to the Endowment for this year. It passed with one nay vote, and Patty asked that her abstention be noted.

- 6) Report from our State Lead:
  - a) Jennifer officially assumed the position as State Program Coordinator on May 1st. The Master Gardener leadership team includes her, Todd Murray, Jim Kropf and Jana Ferris, Volunteer Specialist. Jennifer also serves on the Extension Leadership Team. It is valuable for communication and coordination that we are represented so well on both these teams.
  - b) Jennifer's priorities as she moves into her position include:
    - i) Site visits on a listening tour around the state, learning what works for local programs, what challenges they face, and how they are meeting them.
    - ii) Following up on what was learned last year in the Program Coordinators SWOT study, teams have been set up among that group for:
      - (1) Resources - what resources exist and what needs are there. How best to meet those needs.
      - (2) Infrastructure - our volunteer management system. Work to improve the online system for posting volunteer hours. An automatic logging system is being investigated. Also under consideration is a statewide clinic log, simplified to show questions and issues only.
      - (3) Professional Development - Strategic planning and enhanced training for Program Coordinators.
      - (4) Tell Our Story - Vision and Values - Create measurable goals that can be reported.
      - (5) Diversity (added since the SWOT analysis) - Identify barriers to improving diversity among our volunteers, and strategize on how to mitigate them.
  - c) Build a strong relationship between the state MG program and MGFWS. A similar strong relationship has worked well in Jennifer's recent position as Chelan/Douglas PC, and she hopes to build on that at the state level.
  - d) Questions/Discussion:
    - i) Margaret asked about the Points of Light Presidential Award data. Jennifer has that data and pass it along so the awards can be ordered. Patricia noted that these awards have a significant positive impact on all volunteers, when they see them presented. It is planned that the awards will arrive in time to distribute them to representatives and/or PCs at our September meeting.
- 7) President Don again reviewed the open positions, appealing again for volunteers
- 8) Endowment: Patty opened her report by thanking Kittitas and Lewis counties for donations to the Endowment. Also thanks to the AEC team for their new website. She suggested it might be a good place to include an opportunity to donate.

There have been some questions about the details of our Endowment, and how it is structured. Kathleen began the Endowment in 2016 and signed a Gift Use Agreement with WSU Foundation's Development office. In a Powerpoint presentation we learned that it includes two accounts maintained at that office: the endowment account which is the principal and earnings, and the expendable account, to which 1% of the endowment is distributed each quarter. The funds in the expendable account are available to spend according to the uses designated in the Gift Use Agreement.

As of reporting date March 31, the endowment value is \$37,334.89. Expendable balance is \$674.59.

The WSU Development Office charges for their management of the accounts according to the following:

- a) One-time advancement fee of 5% from each gift when it arrives. This is to support the expenses related to soliciting, processing, and stewarding gifts.
- b) Annual 1.5% fee on the endowment balance, to fund Foundation operating costs, investment consultation, and college development office.
- c) A closing fee of 3% on planned gifts.

It has come to light that some donors have not been acknowledged or thanked in a timely manner. We also are not aware of any ongoing solicitation on the part of the WSU Development office. Further research and communication with that office is needed in order that these issues get resolved, and our Financial and Endowment teams will pursue that.

A Case Statement is being prepared. This will provide a guide for consistent messaging in all MG fund raising efforts across the state and at the state level. Also to be developed is a one-page letter of ask, and regionally/locally focused tri-fold brochures to support fund raising.

Patty would like to develop a team of representatives from local areas who will help target local donors. Patty will work with those local teams to coordinate the appeals, and ensure consistency and protect against multiple disjointed appeals to the same donors.

Questions:

Bob is very concerned about the lack of acknowledgment of our donors. Patty will be following up, along with Margaret, Don, and Alan, as noted above.

What organizations have donated to date? So far, other than MGFWS, only individuals have donated.

Raven appreciates the help and leadership from Patty and wants to be part of her team. Irene also asked to be on that team.

There was significant discussion about the apparent issues with the way WSU Endowment Development folks are fulfilling their roles in managing our donations. Most comments stressed that these problems must be resolved as soon as possible. While some said we might consider moving the endowment to a different organization, it was also pointed out that association with WSU has marketing benefit. It is hoped that we can solve the problems without the need to terminate that relationship.

- 9) AEC 2020 Report: C-J reports that all the conference team chair positions are filled, with one exception - - that of Sponsors.

Debbie previewed the Conference website ([mglearns.org](http://mglearns.org)) to everyone's delight. As plans are firmed up, the site will be updated. There is also a conference Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/mglearns.org>), which will also announce plans as they are made. All are encouraged to "Like" and "Share" the page in order to expand its reach. Also all local county programs are asked to provide links on their websites to this website and FB page.

The website and FB page will recognize sponsors as they are recruited.

Paul suggested that the logo that Debbie developed for the conference be copyrighted. She will do that.

C-J was pleased to announce that a banquet keynote speaker has been scheduled. It is Ron Gagliardo, the lead horticulturalist for the Seattle Spheres (Amazon). Furthermore, Amazon has offered to donate his fee back to our conference.

The Program Development Team is divided into tracks:  
Garden Mastery (Kitty Lundeen-Ness),  
Master Gardener Skills (Jennifer)  
Home Food Production (Don)  
Sustainability and Maintenance (Jerelyn Resnick)

Registration will open April 1, 2020. And by June 30, 2020, we should have locked in a site for our 2021 conference.

- 10) Email communication: The conference, as well as other communication needs, demands that we have an efficient way to contact all Washington State MGs by email. The old listserv that was managed by WSU is significantly out of date and difficult to maintain. A new system from WSU, known as DadaMail, might be the solution. Jennifer and Craig Lawrence will look into it and other alternatives.
- 11) Don again reminded us of the openings for committee leads, and emphasized that an important one to obtain is that of AEC2020 Sponsorships. This person would work with local MG groups to get recommendations for past program sponsors, particularly those who might wish to have exposure to the entire state, through our conference. There ensued a long discussion of possible sponsors.
- 12) Committee Reports:
  - a) Awards - Dode is bringing Raven up to date on the Awards Committee. Patricia reminds us that Master Gardener of the Year nominations must be in to her by July 1. Nominations for the Ed LaCrosse and Media awards go to Dode. It is very important for all counties to nominate members for these awards. There are many talented and committed MGs across the state, and they deserve to be recognized.
  - b) Membership - MaryLou volunteered to accept this position. Thank you MaryLou!
  - c) Nominating - Open - Don pointed out that current by-laws call for all committee chairs to be voted upon by the board. Patty moved and Irene seconded a motion that all committee chairs be appointed. Motion passed.
  - d) Webmaster - Our current website is somewhat out of date, and is built on antiquated technology, which is difficult for a non-professional web designer to update. Don received a proposal (for \$2,000) from Craig Lawrence (Computer Resource And Information Group) to design a new website for us using Wordpress, a development tool that specifically allows for laypersons to easily make updates. He would develop three prototype sites to review by the end of July. We would then select one of the designs, and he would complete it and populate it with our content. Candice voiced a concern about spending that much, given our budget challenges. Ensuing discussion pointed out that the website is like our front door/yard. Potential donors, sponsors, and volunteers will make decisions about us based on its appearance and professionalism. Paul moved and John seconded a motion to accept the proposal from Craig. John will serve as our contact to Craig as he completes the work. (Note:

Craig pointed out that he will offer a 10% discount to Master Gardeners.)

13) Our MOU with WSU Extension needs to be renewed. Motion by John, seconded by Merilee to renew it without further board action, provided no significant or substantial changes are necessary. Passed.

14) Zoom - We have learned in the past year that our meetings are more productive and better attended when it's relatively simple for members to attend remotely. Also, as teams from around the state are involved in planning the AEC, we need to have our own Zoom account. After some discussion, a motion by John, seconded by C-J was made to obtain such account, with one host, at a cost of \$149.90 annually. Motion passed. John will register for that account.

15) Meeting Adjourned

Take-aways:

- a. It is vital that we recruit chairpersons for the open committees! See Item 3, above. All reps should consider stepping up to assume one of these tasks, or find a member from your local area who would be good at one.
- b. There are opportunities for Master Gardeners and Interns to help plan our 2020 conference, especially to coordinate the recruitment of sponsors. Contact C-J Nielsen ([cjnielsen2@gmail.com](mailto:cjnielsen2@gmail.com)) or Kathy Brenberger ([kbrenberger@frontier.com](mailto:kbrenberger@frontier.com)).
- c. Promote attendance at the conference. October 2-3, 2020. [mglearns.org](http://mglearns.org)

Respectfully submitted by

Approved by

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John Strong, Secretary

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Don Enstrom, President