



MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF KING COUNTY

BOARD MEETING and RETREAT

Saturday, January 16, 2021, 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

In Attendance: J. Olson, G. Scheider, C. Hill N. Purcell, V. Barei, W. Jordan, B. Caredio, B. Williams, T. Bloor, A. Lee, D. Hanower, J. Sykes, M. Watts. M. Byrne, P. Kriese, R. Godwin, Suzi O., T. Ng, N. Purcell, R. Smith,

Agenda

The meeting was called to order by Jim Olson. He began the meeting with the guest announcements. Each guest was the lead for one of the teams that supports the programs overall efforts. Following this each guest spoke briefly about the work their team was doing in support of the program.

Clinic Leadership Team Update Presented by Gary Schneider - Minutes provided by J. Olson.

Gary Scheider, leader of the Clinic Leadership Team, presented. Looking back to 2020, plant advice activity was dramatically reduced, as in person clinics didn't open. One bright spot was the dramatic increase in email requests for plant advice. Requests more than doubled, to 1150, from previous years. The bulk of this increase was from May through July. In May, a video clinic was added. Activity was low, about 110 clients. These activities are promoted as "Ask a Master Gardener". The Video Clinic helped the Email Clinic with a backlog that had occurred from year end 2019 to early 2020.

Looking ahead, increased promotion of the "Ask a Master Gardener" will occur in early 2021. The Video Clinic will reopen in April 2021.

The key activity for 2021 will be Advanced Training for all King County Master Gardeners. Planning is nearly complete and a pilot is set for January 26. This training has two parts – a video and a Zoom practice session. The purpose is to keep our Master Gardeners engaged, to increase familiarity and skill in use of on-line WSU resources, especially for pesticide advice, to practice clinician collaboration and using Say Show Share. Training is expected to be complete in March.

There are many unknowns regarding if in-person clinics will reopen, and when. Further compounding the uncertainty is the loss of 20% of our 2020 Master Gardeners. A review will be done when 2021 rosters are complete and available.

Communication Leadership Team Update Presented by Marty Byrne

Marty Byrne, Communications Committee lead, presented a summary of the Committee's recent activities and plans. The Committee re-formed in 2020 because of the need for better publicity for online activities; a centralized publicity effort for some events; consistent



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messaging; need for keeping MGs connected. Challenges include limited bandwidth, need for clarity in how we describe our offerings, and lack of understanding of media. Initiatives include evaluation of the most effective social media; better understanding of local media outlets; a better process for publicity projects; and coordinating the changes to the Foundation and Program websites. The Committee requests information on the Board's priorities for 2021 in order to provide the appropriate support.

Jim offered two priority areas for consideration. First would be to have a unified message on what MG's offer the public - demonstrations gardens, classes/education and personal gardening advice, so that each activity cross references the others. Second is to increase out social media footprint, in line with your goals already.

Garden Leadership Team Update Presented by Nancy Purcell -

The Garden Leadership Team formed in the summer of 2020. It's defined purpose - communication between gardens and sharing resources. It is presently working on standardizing, to a point, signage. The team is working to develop standards regarding what information should be conveyed and what materials signs should be made of. It has requested a budget. Attracting volunteers, succession planning and sign design are the top priorities. A team training has been planned for Spring. Fall will have another team training, with 2021 goals reviewed. The team has assisted Mary by making sure budgets and reports are completed in a timely fashion. Nancy Purcell requested that the board let them know in a timely fashion if requests for funds have been approved. At this time garden volunteers are spending their own money to order time sensitive supplies such as seeds. A discussion followed of what the delays in relaying information are and how to bridge them. The standard delay between the approval of the budget in January and the approval of those minutes in March was cited as a major issue. It was suggested that we re-establish having board liaisons to the teams.

Education Leadership Team Presented by Dave Hanower

The teams core focus is to coordinate educational outreach for both the general public and Master Gardener volunteers. The team tries to make easier for potential event organizers. Since the beginning of the pandemic the challenges of organizing events have changed. There are a number of web applications that someone needs to manage to host an online event. While the program or foundation has accounts for these applications getting access and knowing how to use them is hard and prevents otherwise willing volunteers from planning events. The team would like to deploy skill training for each application aimed at would be organizers as well as training to presenters on PowerPoint.

BDG - now online



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Growing Groceries - online, coordinators are working to expand the program
Spring at Shoreline - now online. 2021 - trying to organize committee.

Speakers Bureau restructuring - will be back in May hopefully.

Teaching Kits - now online seminars. Planning 12 monthly online classes - two requests, one is standardized rev. process for materials and second is to preserve budget as will have spending needs for teaching kits if they go back to in person.

J. Olson - noted first BDG workshop today - 325 people attended.

Plant Sale Team Update Presented by Gary Scheider

Hope to return to in-person sale in 2022. 2021 will be online again. 2020 Sale \$13,000 in revenue. Sold 3800 of 4200 plants grown. 419 shoppers, 65% were not MGs. Provided overview of the team that is putting together the 2021 sale. Challenges are where to grow, where to host, where to additionally source from. Looking to include specialty vendors. Date at Bellevue is late April. May or may not change date.

Program Update Presented by Mary Watts

Have 550 MGs returning. Normally 15% attrition offset by new interns. This year 20% attrition and no new interns. Increase likely due to Covid and Background check. May be able to have bigger class than normal in 2022. Limitations on classes - how many people apply, how many we need, and ability to place. If an intern is in one of their top three picks for clinics they are more likely to stay.

Home Horticulture class - current plan is to keep it as foundation for training classes going forward. Ultimately decision of state director - will likely have some redesign of intern training program.

Program leadership team launching soon. Chair of other committees as well as foundation Pres and Past Pres and handful of at large members. One recent intern. Representation from various program components.

Right now non-critical requests for Mimi's time have to be declined. She has too much to do right now.

Early heads up - WSU is rolling out new platform to manage volunteer programs. Not sure when it will come to King County. Not clear what it can do or when it will replace current platform.



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Jim Olson invited folks to share their thoughts on the various presentations.

G. Schneider asked about if there is a specific goal around diversity - There is not but M. Watts to have those conversations both with the state and program and those are happening.

At this point we began the board meeting.

B. Williams moves to accept W. Jordan Seconded - poll for acceptance. Approved

TJ Johnson presented the treasurers report.

Significant recent activity and lookahead - Overview of Profit and Loss statement. Brought in 62K and spent 106K. Investments have us in the black by \$400. Good news is we have zero liabilities though we do have obligations.

Budget v. Actuals - we didn't spend nearly what we had planned and our investments held their value. Had budgeted \$2700 in from Intern trainings. Didn't get those items in but it is understandable. Educational seminars were expected to bring in \$11,000 will see what online efforts get us. Also thought we would spend \$15K for ed seminars. Have spent \$2400 (?)

Audit committee meeting will be next week. The audit committee is now meeting on a regular schedule.

TJ will discuss investments with an investment advisor. One point will be how do we begin to withdraw money if we need to. At this point we have not withdrawn any money from our investments. With luck we won't have to but still should check our mix of investments and keep a good balance. J. Olson provided a graph that illustrates our decline in free cash versus investments.

The board discussed a RFF for Brown Paper Ticket non-refund.

At issue is that prior to the cancelling of the plant sale a small number of individuals purchased tickets to the Gala via BPT. BPT is effectively out of business and not providing refunds as they should. One purchaser has requested a refund from the program.

The board discussed who is responsible, should we pursue legal action, for our "donors" is it a donation. Should we reimburse.

J. Olson- Proposal - have Kristi reimburse the one person and have audit committee assess next steps. The proposal was adopted.



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2021 Budget Final Approval - Discussion lead by TJ Johnson

Discussion of budget with a good deal focused on the estimates for plant sales. Budget was approved with the understanding that some intricacies around plant sales will be cleaned up in the following week.

Emergent items :

Jim Olson shared details on the upcoming MGF Joint County Zoom meeting to be held January 22, 2021. MGF Joint County Forum. King Co. Scheduled to host. The topic for the meeting is What were our successes - impact of background checks - budget look ahead.

B. Williams noted that another group with whom he volunteers has cut dues to membership but allowed them to pay full dues if they like. Now he's wondering about donations for talks - we say 70% donate. Ways to get more donations - already in the communications.

Our next meeting will be the second Thursday in March.

The meeting was adjourned.