

**Dallas County Master Gardener Association  
Board Meeting  
January 10, 2023**

**Attending:**

Monica Nagle – President  
Abbe Bolich - Immediate Past President  
Nancy Black - 1st Vice President (Fundraising)  
Sue Smith - 2nd Vice President (Member Services)  
Leslie Densmore – Secretary  
Beverly Allen - Director-at-Large  
Ned Buxton - Director-at-Large  
Neal Howard – Director-at-Large  
Denise Strueber - Director-at-Large  
Cynthia Jones - Communications  
Barbara Anderson – Parliamentarian  
Joellyn Nobbe – TGMA Director  
Margaret Ghose – TMGA Director Alternate  
Stephen Seewoester – TMGA Director Alternate

**AgriLife:**

Katerina Graham – Dallas County Horticulture Extension Agent  
Fern Brown – Master Gardener Coordinator

**Absent:**

Barbara Hardin - Treasurer  
Jadi Oliver – TMGA Director

**Guests:**

Rick Coke  
Zandra Faris – Financial Review Committee Chairperson  
Mark Jones – Project Coordinator  
Janet Hunter Lane  
Cindy Large – Financial Review Committee  
Janet Lind  
Julia Matthews  
MaryClare Milner  
Tig Thompson – Statistician

**Quorum:**

The meeting was held via Zoom. It was called to order by President Monica Nagle at 10:00am with a quorum present.

## Opening Remarks/President's Report

Monica welcomed the members of the 2023 Board and thanked all for volunteering their time and commitment to the Board; she is looking forward to their collaboration and perspective in the coming year for DCMGA continuing contributions to our community.

Monica suggested basic round rules for the meetings:

- Be kind; attack the problem, not the person.
- Keep our first reaction on HOW can we do this rather than NO, we can't do this.
- Be courteous of other people's time.
- Do as much as we can before the meeting.
- Come to the meeting with recommendations and suggestions.
- Avoid re-engineering problems during Board meeting.

January 'housekeeping' tasks:

- Bank accounts are being transferred during January; Monica thanked Julia and Nancy for their help.
- Alexa Peterson has offered to forward board members' DCMGA emails directly to their personal mail accounts; contact Alexa if you would like her to do this for your account.

Katrina has requested that the new Board meet with her supervisor, Xiomara Diaz, on Thursday, February 2, 10:00AM – 12:00PM, Magnolia Room at the LBJ Office (aka Brinker Building), 6820 LBJ Freeway, Suite 3200

Bylaws revision committee (Barbara, Jan, Rick) are continuing work so review is postponed until February Board meeting. Opportunities committee (Joellyn Nobbe) review postponed until February as well.

General thoughts going forward:

How can we improve membership engagement in our projects? Some projects are hurting for volunteers; some volunteers struggling to get their hours.

How can we improve collaboration between projects (share best practices, vendor resources, etc)?

Do our projects meet the needs and interests of the community? What gaps should we consider?

Katrina is working on education opportunities especially in the vegetable area. A suggestion was made to consider a "Newbies to Dallas" class focusing on landscaping with our high heat, drought, extreme winter weather and, at the same time, use less water.

There were no questions pertaining to Monica's report.

## Approve Minutes from the November and December, 2022, Board Meetings

No questions or corrections were submitted.

**Abbe Bolich made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 8, 2022 and the December 13, 2022 board meetings as submitted. Beverly Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

### **Treasurer's Report- Julia Matthew**

Financial statements have been submitted and sent to Board. Julia noted that since DCMGA is a non-profit, there are two reports: Statement of Financial Position (similar to a Balance Sheet) and Statement of Activity (similar to a P&L). Julia thanked the Board for all the help she received as Treasurer; Monica thanked Julia for all of her excellent work.

### **Dallas InnerCity Growers Summit - Katerina Graham**

Katerina presented an Overview for the Dallas InnerCity Growers Summit (DIGSUMMIT.ORG). This is a project sponsored by the City of Dallas; Katrina is on the planning committee; Rebekha Siebert, Urban Agriculture Coordinator, is spearheading this effort. As Rebekah is not available today, Katrina is substituting for her. Katrina has reached out to Monica asking if DCMGA would be interested in becoming a sponsor.

This summit is part of the City of Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) including a goal of 'all Dallas communities have access to healthy, local food.' One of the recommendations is to 'facilitate collaboration among urban ag stakeholders' which is the focus of the DIGS summit, February 20-February 21, 2023. Registrations are \$20 each; there are 4 levels of sponsorship: \$250, \$1000, \$2000 and \$2500+.

There were several questions about the Summit but, since Rebekah was not available to answer the questions, there was insufficient information to determine potential DCMGA sponsorship. Decision was made to submit all questions to Katrina so that she could obtain this information for us. There was discussion about having a special Board meeting for sponsorship decision once Board had questions answered. [Questions were submitted to Katrina via email on January 10. Responses to questions were emailed to Board on January 23, 2023; this document is appended to the end of the minutes].

The suggestion was also made that the DIGS Summit flyer and information be included in the Grow, Know and Go newsletter, the website and calendar communications to both our members and the community. Cynthia Jones said that the next newsletter was scheduled January 16 so the information should be forwarded to her soon. Katrina will send the flyer but there is not time to also include an article.

Offering registration scholarships from DCMGA was suggested. There was a question about DCMGA being allowed to give money to the City of Dallas. A comment made that DCMGA providing the scholarships would be in support of the community and educational mission of DCMGA. No decision was made.

### **New Business**

#### **Vote to approve the consolidated 2023 DCMGA total budget - Rick Coke**

Julia sent revised budget that included Raincatcher's garden project expenses, \$10508 and fundraising expenses, \$5200. Their fundraising efforts were approved except for the brick sales which will no longer take place. The special meeting was held in December as there were several small changes made in the budget and the revised Raincatcher's budget was approved. There were no questions on the budget.

**Denise Strueber made a motion to approve the 2023 consolidated budget. Ned Buxton seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Monica commented that Rick deserves a ‘ton of kudos’ and acknowledged all his effort and wonderful leadership going through all the separate budgets and walking us through it.

#### **R&B 1 Ecolab Grant – Janet Lind / MaryClare Milner**

Ecolab awarded R&B1 \$6500 which actually goes through the association to R&B1 for their request to install a high hoop tunnel on the garden grounds. There were some outstanding questions regarding the electrical hookup and actual approval to have the HHT installed on the grounds. We are waiting on Dr. Daniels for approval to install HHT and an agreement to pay for the hookup of the electrical installation as well as ongoing electrical service. A proposal was made to table discussion of this issue until this information is available from Dr. Daniels.

We are waiting on clarification as to whether DCMGA will be allowed to put a greenhouse on county property; information has been sent previously to Katrina and Jeff to obtain approval from Dr. Daniels, but DCMGA is still waiting on formal approval from Dr. Daniels. Approval to pay for electrical hookup and ongoing electrical service also needs to be received in writing.

All ongoing future approvals from the county must also be received in writing.

Actual scheduling of greenhouse installation is October 2023; however, if there are cancellations in the scheduling, there is the possibility of an earlier date in late spring.

#### **Approval of Barbara Anderson as Parliamentarian**

**Monica Nagle made a motion to approve the Barbara Anderson as Parliamentarian. Sue Smith seconded the motion. Votes were sent anonymously to Zandra Faris. The motion passed.**

#### **Approval of Zandra Faris as Financial Review Committee Chairperson**

**Ned Buxton made a motion to approve Zandra Faris as Financial Review Committee Chairperson. Abbe Bolich seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Zandra Faris added that Julia has done a terrific job of preparing the financial documents. Zandra will pick up documents on Thursday and then meet with Cindy Large and Betsy See who have been voted into positions on the Financial Review Committee. A date will be set for January to review the documents; report will be presented at the February Board meeting.

#### **Recurring/Unfinished Business:**

##### **Past President’s Report: Abbe Bolich**

**No report.**

##### **1<sup>st</sup> VP Report: Fundraising - Nancy Black**

Raincatcher’s fundraising proposal was sent to everyone. There was no date on the form for the fundraising request for the plant sale. Monica stated that plant sale would be in late April or early May; exact date has not been set.

The fundraising form needs to be modified to include date or anticipated date. Also, there needs to be a space for request to use a tax-exempt date. Barbara Anderson said that since we had the anticipated date that the fundraising proposal could be voted on with request for tax-exempt date made later.

**Nancy Black made a motion to approve Raincatcher's plant sale in late April/Early May. Denise Strueber seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Nancy asked for clarification of procedure to approve form. Denise said that Monica can sign and add the late April/early May date as well as a note to ask Raincatcher's to request a tax-exempt date if wanted.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> VP Report: Membership - Sue Smith**

Venues for the first three meetings on the last Thursday of the month have been booked. The plan is to record the January meeting and also explore putting the meetings on Zoom. Sue has received a suggestion that a questionnaire be sent to members asking preferences for meeting logistics: in-person or zoom, hybrid meetings, recorded meetings, meetings during the day or evening, weekdays, or weekends.

Concern on continuing Covid outbreaks was expressed. Cynthia said Covid guidelines have been updated but information should also assure members that virtual meetings and volunteer opportunities will be offered. However, this heightens the requirement for recorded meetings. Cynthia said that an added bonus is that previously when recorded meetings were offered on YouTube, there were large numbers of public views as well which increases our community exposure. Location is a key factor for meetings to provide ability to record meetings.

Sue commented that it might be a solution to have a base location to have most meetings that is easily zoomed but to have the opportunity to have meetings in other location as well. Cynthia echoed Sue's suggestion that meeting correspondence stressed that it was an individual decision to attend meetings in person or zoom per the Covid guidelines.

Abbe suggested Midway Hills as a permanent location; there will be a test recording session at that location January 17 to assess the zoom capability there.

Texas Discovery Gardens is willing to provide door prizes for meetings at a discount. Procedure was clarified that funds were in the budget and that a check request be submitted to the Treasurer for approval.

Cindy Large asked if books from the DCMGA Book Club would be appropriate door prizes for meetings; comments were very positive. Tig suggested that it was a good idea to make sure that any options presented on the questionnaire were in fact possible just to avoid problems later. It was confirmed that viewing meetings via Zoom would count toward CEU hours. Cindy Large reminded us that all videos are kept on Education list for future review and that the link is included on the Mark Your Calendar on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Tig clarified that CEU hours should be recorded in the month that the video was actually viewed not when video was recorded.

Covid Status will be reviewed before publication notice of meetings to determine whether meeting will be both in person or only on zoom. Hybrid meetings – recording live meetings – have been problematic but will be tested in current class. Zandra said that Zoom is likely the most reliable mechanism for recorded meetings.

**Directors' Report: Website - Ned Buxton**

Webmaster Alexa Peterson is working on a tour of the DCMGA website that could easily be provided to membership. Alexa is also working on providing initial tech training for the Class of 2023. Alexa is very appreciative of help from Cynthia Jones and Zandra Faris on supporting the website.

**Directors' Report: Scholarship – Beverly Allen**

No report.

**Directors' Report: Advisory Committee - Denise Strueber**

There has been no Advisory meeting; no report.

**Directors' Report: Project Leadership – Neal Howard**

No report from Neal. Mark Jones reported that projects were able to produce over 15,000 pounds of produce in the last year which was plagued with weather challenges. The purchasing manager, Margaret Hranitzky is working on getting a centralized list of vendors in place. There are forms for purchasing managers to use; procedures will need to be defined with emphasis that purchasing through DCMGA is not for personal use. Requests will go directly to the purchasing manager and payment will be handled by the purchasing manager. Ideally, only the project leader will contact the purchasing manager for requests.

**Statistics/Data Report: Tig Thompson**

Tig reported that 47 new class members have been added but we have lost 47 master gardeners from membership. There are 16 certified master gardeners that have not paid dues; however, there are 3 unidentified payments.

It was a good year. Over \$1.3 million of economic value (in volunteer hours) was provided to Dallas County.

Badges for graduates and anniversary badges are in process; Tig working on obtaining a discount for these. The funds for the badges (approximately 90 badges totaling around \$1000) are already included in the budget.

Tig reported that one-fourth of certified master gardeners got their certification in December. Perhaps there is some way to encourage spreading out volunteer hours throughout the year. Monica is working on a project roadshow that might help with this.

Fern is also asking project leaders to bring volunteers with them when they present to the class which hopefully will help make class members more comfortable with project teams.

**Communications Report: Cynthia Jones**

The DCMGA website is being updated with 2023 information. The draft of updated Covid guidelines that have been approved is complete and will be published on the web; Cynthia asked for comments on whether this comment should be added: "If you have symptoms, we recommend that you stay home." Please reply directly to Cynthia. The calendar is undergoing revision; Alexa will be asked to review the new calendar changes for everyone. All project leaders are encouraged to submit input for special opportunities. The Event Announcement form is the first form available under the Members only association documents section and is the most efficient way to communicate event information.

Rick is working on a video that could be posted on website to refresh everyone on how to use VMS easily and efficiently and would be readily available. Cynthia commented that fortunately Tig Thompson is available to resolve VMS problems if necessary.

### **Texas Master Gardener Meeting Summary – Stephen Seewoester**

Texas A&M professor, Dr. Amit Chingra, greeted attendees; Dr. Chingra's main purpose is to prepare Texas A&M undergraduates for the job market to become future agricultural leaders. Prof. Chingra had also taken a tour of the Dallas County Master Gardener Rowlett garden and associated Dallas project activities and was quite impressed.

Skip Richter emphasized that demonstration gardens are educational tools not just beautiful spaces; he also suggested that we look for public places with high traffic to be able to highlight best agriculture practices. Skip Richter also cautioned that projects should avoid 'mission drift' which might cloud educational purposes. The TMGA website has new handbooks; entries for state awards are due by end of month. All advanced training classes are also listed on the website; newly designed licensed plates are available at Texas DMV. The TMG annual conference will be virtual, May 2-3; all information is available on the TMGA website. The International Gardeners Conference will be held June 18-22 in Overland Park, KS.

TMGA requires background checks for all certified MGs every 3 years. TMGA emails will be sent to notify member when due. Stephen suggested that DCMGA alert the members of the relevant class of requirement and email so that it is not ignored. There was also a Board discussion on the potential exposure for DCMGA regarding a certified member losing certification due to background check failure if DCMGA was not notified - not on WHY but just that certification has been denied. The current process is not clear; Katrina will check on the process and notification procedure.

### **Texas AgriLife Extension Service Report – Katerina Graham**

The Class of 2023 school will begin on January 25 through May 3. Class will meet every Wednesday with most meetings in the morning and only occasional afternoon sessions. Fern Brown has done an outstanding job of coordinating the class.

The Board will meet Katrina's new supervisor, Xiomara Diaz, on Thursday February 2 from 10-12 at the LBJ office. A virtual project leadership meeting will be held January 20 for a tour of the new A&M reporting system.

Abbe Bolich is the new association representative for the citizen's gardening training committee.

Katrina is planning on attending a continuing education WASP ID workshop.

#### **Staff Changes:**

Liz Rudd retired.

Kristina Wells left her position as 4-H agent with Prairie View A&M.

Terri Wesley is a new Nutrition Associate with Prairie View A&M.

### **Class of 2022 Graduation plans – Cynthia Jones**

The current plan is to give interns their badges at the same time as the normal awards for all Master Gardeners at the February meeting. There is planning in process for a 'normal' graduation held in March with certificates and with family members and friends attending.

## Clarification of Board Meeting Voting Procedures

Neal requested that Monica provide guidance on voting procedures to new members.

Monica explained that when there is a need for a vote, someone needs to make the first motion, then someone else needs to second the motion. If financial, vote is made anonymously in a chat message to the Parliamentarian, Barbara Anderson. If not a financial vote, the vote can be made by a show of hands on zoom. The vote for the approval of Parliamentarian will be made anonymously to Zandra. Monica clarified that financial voting includes only the current voting Board members.

Cynthia welcomed the new Board members and further clarified that voting Board members include: President, Past President, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and the four Directors' at Large. The Parliamentarian is a non-voting member of the Board. All other positions are non-voting but, of course, are always welcome to attend Board meetings of their interest.

## Adjourn

Monica requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:21 pm.

**Abbe Bolich made the 1<sup>st</sup> motion. Beverly Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## Dallas InnerCity Growers Summit Open Questions:

### **KG's comment: Answers provided by Ashley Hutto from City of Dallas Jan 11, 2023**

- 1) What was level of participation/sponsorship from Harris County? *As this a new event, there is no historical engagement from Harris County. We would love to have the participation and engagement. Please let me know what additional information I can offer.*  
*KG's comment: DIGS and the Urban Ag Conference in Houston's November event (organized by Prairie View A&M) are not related or connected in any way, except for similar goals and expected outcomes. Monica reached out to Harris County MGA and they stated they were not sponsors for other Urban Ag conferences offered last year in Houston. If they had a table at PVAMU's event (I know I spoke to an MGA, just don't recall which one), maybe a sponsorship was not needed to have a table.*
- 2) Who are the targeted participants? *KG: anyone/everyone We are specifically reaching out to current and prospective producers- from home gardeners to community gardens. There will also be a group from the academic community and from agribusiness- specifically from cottage industry businesses.*
- 3) What is intended focus of trade show table? (Information? Products?)
  - a. *KG comment: outreach, awareness Agree—outreach and awareness of programs and services in the community that would be of benefit to the participants.*
  - b. *KG comment: Houston show had mix (companies/conservation groups/schools)*
- 4) What is the advertising plan? How are you reaching out to targeted participants?
  - a. *In addition to DIGSUMMIT.org We have reached out to targeted audiences via email and social media. We have also extended specific individual invitations to participate to neighbors and colleagues of the planning committee. There are also several mailing lists we have provided the information to for distribution.*  
*We have centered our communication to direct people to the web site. The flyer is also a primary tool we are making use of.*



- 5) Where are registration fees being applied? These fees will be used in the first year to cover the cost of the Summit- including meals, take away items, and other misc items. For future years, we are hopeful to be able to include post event grants and such to support community-based programs.
- 6) What are sponsorship dollars supporting? Where would leftover funds be given? We are seeking sponsorship dollars to help off set the cost of the event and to allow us to keep registration fees low. Remaining dollars will be maintained in a kitty for next year's event and to support ongoing programming between the annual summit in support of the development of those that are engaged in food production. Additionally, we hope to be able to generate dollars that can be granted back to the community organizations in the future.
- 7) What is last date for registrations? We can accept registration at the door, but we are encouraging early registration to ensure we have appropriate arrangements for food and such in our first year as we do not have historical attendance data to work from in planning.
- 8) What is last date for sponsorship opportunity? We would like to have sponsors engaged sooner rather than later, but we have made plans to be able to engage sponsors up to about Feb 10<sup>th</sup>.
- 9) Who is keynote speaker? Program speakers? We are confirming speakers currently. We are not yet able to make a public announcement about the keynote as we are confirming logistics and want to be confident those are final.  
Once I have all of the speakers confirmed this week, I can provide more information.
- 10) Are program participants all non-profit or government? Includes both.
- 11) Is the City of Dallas contributing financially? Yes, the City is supporting with both financial and in-kind resources.
- 12) Is North Texas Food Bank involved? Yes, they have been engaged. The organization has not yet determined their level of involvement but are aware of the event and will share with partners with community gardens and farms. We are hopeful to have them as a sponsor and their partners as participants. ah