

**Dallas County Master Gardener Association
Board Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2023**

Attending:

Monica Nagle – President
Abbe Bolich - Immediate Past President
Nancy Black - 1st Vice President (Fundraising)
Barbara Hardin - Treasurer
Leslie Densmore – Secretary
Ned Buxton - Director-at-Large
Neal Howard - Director-at-Large
Denise Strueber - Director-at-Large
Cynthia Jones - Communications
Barbara Anderson – Parliamentarian
Jadi Oliver – TMGA Director
Stephen Seewoester – TMGA Director Alternate

AgriLife:

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

Absent:

Sue Smith - 2nd Vice President (Member Services)

Guests:

Rick Coke – Budget Committee
Zandra Faris – Nominations, Financial Audit, and Communications Committees
Cindy Large – Education / Outreach Committee
Glen McGee
Joellyn Nobbe – Opportunities Committee
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 Nagle

Vacant DIL Position:

Unfortunately, Director-at-Large Beverly Allen has resigned. The nomination committee has submitted Glen McGee as a candidate to replace Beverly. Monica requested a motion for a vote noting that this term began in January 2023 so the replacement term will run through December 2024. Ned Buxton made a motion to approve Glen McGee as Director-at Large; Abbe Bolich seconded it. The motion passed.

Committees:

There have been some changes to the committee assignments since the last meeting. Joellyn Nobbe will discuss the Opportunities Committee later in the meeting. Cindy Large has agreed to chair the Communications Outreach committee focusing on educating the public; this differs from the internal communications committee's education done for CEU credits toward advanced training.

Safety / Insurance:

There was a safety incident at R&B1 recently. One of the volunteers came in contact with poison ivy; she was highly allergic and went to the emergency room. As a result of this incident, we discovered that safety protocols regarding accident follow up have not been documented. Monica is requesting the formation of a Safety Committee consisting of Monica, Katerina Graham, Fern Brown, the project liaison, the school liaison and the project coordinator that would follow up with any future incidents. Abbe noted that the existing First Aid Kit has instructions on incident management. Monica reported that DCMGA website has a document that lists items to include in a First Aid kit as well as an incident report, but it doesn't outline the follow-on process. Barbara Anderson suggested that there needs to be a bullet point list in every First Aid kit outlining the process to be followed in case of an incident.

Barbara Hardin outlined the DCMGA insurance claim process in the event of a claim; Monica reminded everyone that only DCMGA members are covered by the insurance. Also, people who elect not to become dues paying members will be informed that they will not be covered by the DCMGA insurance. A Safety Committee will be formed that will follow up only as needed if an incident occurs and will determine if a claim is needed, how to process the claim and ensure that proper safety net protocols are in place to prevent recurrence.

Budget:

Rick Coke will create a document outlining the "dos and don'ts" and allowed scenarios of spending money as part of the DCMGA purchasing policy.

TMA State Conference Demonstration Garden Showcase:

For the upcoming TMGA state conference, Nicky Maddams is soliciting applications from ten Texas County Master Gardeners associations to showcase five of their demonstration gardens highlighting how these gardens promote education. Neal Howard will work with DCMGA projects to complete this application to submit to TMGA.

Texas Superstar Plant List

Lois Diggs, President, Native Plant Society of Texas, has reached out to Monica and Texas AgriLife to discuss forming a project that promotes use of native plants throughout the area that are beneficial to our ecosystem focusing specifically on the Texas Superstar plant list.

Approve Minutes from the February 14th, 2023, Board Meeting – Leslie Densmore

Denise Strueber made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2023, DCMGA Board Meeting. Barbara Hardin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Texas AgriLife Update - Katerina Graham

Monica congratulated Katerina on the DIG Summit conference success and said she had received numerous kudos from attendees.

Programming: The Master Gardener School Class of 2023 is now in Week 8. Graduation for the Class of 2022 will be held on April 1. The Fruit Tree Grafting and Budding Workshop will be held March 31; so far, there are eight registrants, and six tree specialist Master Gardener volunteers will assist. The Spring series for the Citizens Gardening Training starts April 1st. Response to this class has been great; within three days of opening registration, there were seventy registrants, and a wait list has been created. Jeff Raska has restarted his outreach presentations on weekends. Jeff also conducted an Early Childhood LGEG workshop at R&B1 in early March.

There have been no updates on the approval of the greenhouse at R&B1. Approval discussions are still in process. There had been verbal agreements in the past but now there is work on obtaining a written agreement for Dallas County approval. The EcoLab grant has a time constraint of one year for expenditure of grant funds.

Treasurer's Report - Barbara Hardin

A new Budget-to-Actual project spreadsheet has been created which will be updated monthly to help track project expenditures. Initially, this was sent only to Rick Coke but Barbara will distribute to the Board.

There is an unanticipated non-budget expenditure on the February Statement of Activity for the cost of background checks (\$10/member due every 3 years). Katerina explained that DCMGA is now up to date on the background check payments and that there is a new, more automated process in development that will take care of this in the future and will require each member to pay for their own background checks. Katerina will confirm once this process has been finalized.

There was an unexpected expenditure in the medical and liability insurance. Our insurance was renewed at the end of last year with a new provider, USLI. The current USLI policy does not provide the special accident insurance previously carried. Hartford provided a policy for the special accident insurance at a cost of \$1130.25; this was paid from budgeted funds but there is a possibility that when the September insurance renewals are due, budgeted funds may not completely cover the required payments. Monica thanked Barbara for all her efforts.

The special orders for DCMGA merchandise that Denise sold at the class and monthly meeting totaled approximately \$2400 requiring a vendor payment of \$1200. The payment for these orders was submitted before the Board meeting even though this payment exceeded the \$1000 Board approval limit. As these funds are actually pass-through or pre-payment, the question is whether Board approval is required before payment as this would delay production and delivery of the special orders. Monica raised the question about whether-check request approvals are required for credit card payments. Barbara explained that historically invoices triggered payments and a check request approval was not required. Rick will work with Denise and Barbara to ensure that these special cases are accounted for in budget policy.

New Business

Opportunities Committee – Joellyn Nobbe

Joellyn is suggesting a new name for this committee based on the discussion from the last Board meeting: **Direction and Investment Committee**. This committee would review projects, examine where we can invest in existing projects, nurture ideas and help develop proposals to the Board. Existing Master Gardeners, the AgriLife network and public outreach connections would be potential sources for new projects or joint opportunities.

Cindy Large suggested that over time DCMGA could develop guidelines for evaluation of new projects or partnering opportunities in support of DCMGA goals. Additionally, this committee might also consult with a professional to ensure our investment and spending is in compliance with the Internal Revenue Code.

Denise asked whether there should be a standalone committee to address the actual investment of funds as had been the case in the past. Monica suggested that the actual investment could also be moved to the Budget committee. Rick felt that investment was a significant departure from the current budget committee activities. Barbara Anderson explained that the Dallas Foundation supports non-profits for investment and professional money management for non-profits even smaller than DCMGA. Joellyn suggested that a non-profit professional can be consulted, and that Barbara can investigate possibilities of the Dallas Foundation support; results will be presented in the next Board meeting.

Recurring/Unfinished Business:

Past President's Report: Abbe Bolich

No report.

1st VP Report: Fundraising: Nancy Black

Nancy will speak to the Class of 2023 to explain the Tom Thumb and Kroger contribution program benefitting Dallas County Master Gardeners to encourage their support.

2nd VP Report: Membership: Sue Smith

Joellyn will be stepping in for Sue Smith during her absence for the next few weeks.

Monica reported the current meeting schedule as outlined in the 2nd VP Report, March 9, 2023.

Katerina corrected the speaker information for the September meeting: Jaime Gonzalez, Healthy Houston and Nature Conservancy.

Neal will resend the draft meeting survey to the Board for comments and suggestions.

Cynthia had a question about the capacity of the St Barnabas Church for the March meeting. There has been a great deal of response online and there could be a larger attendance than normal. Additional chairs will be set

up. There may be a requirement for advance sign-up reservations if public announcement of meetings continues to draw larger attendance. A suggestion was made to include room capacity as part of the meeting information.

Directors' Report: Awards and Recognition - Ned Buxton

The February Awards program was well-received. Nicole Jones at Lakewood Elementary was recognized for her initiative in soliciting and distributing seed packets from several local and online nurseries to many DCMGA, school and community projects. Nancy Griswold, White Rock Lake Demonstration Garden, received the first *Making a Difference* award for her efforts as a dedicated member of the White Rock team. There will be Certificate of Appreciation award for those companies and individuals outside our organization that have been extraordinarily supportive of the DCMGA mission. Please send any nominations to Ned.

Directors' Report: Scholarship – Beverly Allen

No report.

The Board welcomes Glen McGee as a new Director-at-Large. Rick Coke will send Glen the scholarship packet.

Directors' Report: Volunteer Engagement/Project Collaboration – Neal Howard

• **Taste of the Gardens**

This new committee is continuing to take shape. Janet Lane and Neal are working on Taste of the Gardens, a new initiative to showcase two gardens a month, April through October, to bring volunteers to the gardens to educate and reconnect with the opportunities and member community in DCMGA.

Neal and Monica are working on a Project Collaboration activity to bring the project leaders together, understand the project leaders' needs in the gardens, establish a cross-project network and ensure that project activities are working toward the DCMGA goals. School gardens are included in the collaboration project.

Neal clarified that a sign-up genius will be sent to all interns and members for the monthly Taste of the Garden showcases. Fern will explain to the interns that they will receive a sign-up genius for both the Intern Days and the Taste of the Gardens; interns are welcome to attend both, but the intern days are for interns only.

Katerina announced that Joellyn is now the school project liaison for the Advisory Committee. Katerina and Joellyn plan to visit the principals of each school project to reiterate that Master Gardener participation is dependent on a commitment from the school to bring the students out to the gardens.

Directors' Report: Advisory Committee - Denise Strueber

The reports from the February 15 and the March 2 Advisory Committee have been distributed. Joellyn clarified that both Katerina and Joellyn will meet with the school garden leaders.

Communications Report: Cynthia Jones

The American Red Cross First Aid kit contains a 30-page booklet, Emergency First Aid Kit Guide. The kit is well-organized in a collection of bags specific to the situation. Current First Aid kits note that care steps are consistent with the 2015 guidelines so our first aid kits may need to be updated. Cynthia recommends that

the booklet should be part of any First Aid kit that is distributed and that a short introduction given to the project leaders to familiarize them with the material. Katerina asked about a CPR requirement for the project leaders; Monica clarified that there is not currently a CPR requirement. Barbara noted that possibly outdated components of the existing First Aid Kits could be replaced rather than incur the cost of replacing the entire kit.

There is now more cross-promotion between Denton County, Collin County and Tarrant County; this seems to be generating more interest and sharing of information among the Master Gardener communities.

Although a request has been sent to the project leaders to put their workdays online, there has not been much response; Monica will follow up.

Monica mentioned that Janet Smith was highlighted in a March 14 article in the Dallas Morning News.

Budget Committee Report: Rick Coke

Mark Jones and Margaret Hranitzky are working to establish purchasing procedures and associated forms for making purchases. Margaret is continuing to work on establishing relationships with vendors. The new purchase ordering system will expand the number of vendors offering discounts to DCMGA and offer smoother procedures to help projects take advantage of these arrangements. The new process is not quite in place; some additional communication with the projects is still required. Please send any suggestions to Rick about possible volunteers for the Project Advocates on the Project Budget Committee.

Statistics/Data Report: Tig Thompson

Hours are being reported really well; the new deadline seems to be helping. Reported hours for this year are already ahead of last year.

TMGA Report: Joellyn Nobbe / Judi Oliver

Eleven new categories have been added to VMS to help reduce hours being categorized as Other. A vote will be taken at the December 2023 DCMGA Directors meeting to increase state dues from \$2 to \$5 effective in 2024. A TMGA endowment fund is being proposed and details will be forthcoming.

Adjourn:

Abbe Bolich made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:22. Nancy Black seconded the motion. The motion passed.