

**Dallas County Master Gardener Association
Board Meeting Minutes
June 13, 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
Neal Howard - Director-at-Large
Glen McGee – Director-at-Large
Denise Strueber - Director-at-Large
Cynthia Jones – Communications
Stephen Seewoester – TMGA Directory Alternate
Barbara Anderson – Parliamentarian

Absent:

Katerina Graham – AgriLife, Dallas County Horticulture Extension Agent
Fern Brown – AgriLife, Master Gardener Coordinator
Ned Buxton - Director-at-Large
Joellyn Nobbe – Investment Committee / School and Project Liaison to the CEA
Jadi Oliver – TMGA Director
Margaret Ghose – TMGA Directory Alternate

Guests:

Barry Bloom – Garden Consultations
Rick Coke – Budget Committee
Zandra Faris – Nominations, Financial Audit, and Communications Committees
Cindy Large - Education / Outreach Committee
Cookie Peadon – Speaker’s Bureau
Tig Thompson - Statistician

Quorum:

The meeting was held via Zoom. It was called to order by President Monica Nagle at 10:01am with a quorum present.

Opening remarks/ President’s report – Monica Nagle

There were no questions regarding the submitted President’s report. A question was asked about resolution on liability coverage for the use of woodchipper at Raincatcher’s. There is a meeting with our insurance agent on June 29th to review coverage and discuss the recommendation for a liability waiver requirement.

Approve Minutes from the May 2023 Board Meeting

Abbe Bolich made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 2023, DCMGA Board Meeting. Sue Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report was submitted for May 2023.

Past President's Report: Abbe Bolich

Abbe Bolich presented a new Treasurer candidate, Sue John. Sue stepped forward as a result of the Communications team email to the general membership announcing the opening of the DCMGA Board Treasurer position as a result of the resignation of Barbara Hardin. Sue John has held the Treasurer's position twice in the past and is willing to serve again.

Abbe Bolich nominated a candidate, Sue John, for the interim Treasurer position that will end in December 2024. Abbe verified that Sue has the experience and equipment to use QuickBooks for the DCMGA Treasurer reports. Tig mentioned that Sue also serves as Treasurer for Dallas Garden Club which has over 800 members. Zandra mentioned that due to the resignation of the Treasurer, a Financial Review should be conducted. Barbara Anderson concurred that a financial review should be performed on transition of financial responsibility.

Monica Nagle made a motion to approve the nomination of Sue John as the interim Treasurer for a term that will end in December 2024. Leslie Densmore seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Abbe described the grant that AgriLife, Xiomara Diaz, received for \$2.6M over a 2-year period that will include support for two new employees, 2 vehicles and additional equipment. Abbe will distribute a comprehensive grant report for the next meeting. Xiomara confirmed to Monica that DCMGA is not required to maintain the two new vehicles after the grant expires but any contribution would certainly be appreciated.

Directors' Report: Volunteer Engagement – Neal Howard

Neal noted that the Taste of the Gardens is continuing with great support and thanks to Janet Lane for all her efforts. Two gardens were launched in May, two were held in June with plans for two additional gardens in July.

Sacred Spaces at the First United Methodist Church in Mesquite has been awarded the first Keep Mesquite Beautiful award. Congratulations to Patricia Gatlin and the Sacred Spaces team!

1st VP Report: Fundraising: Nancy Black

DCMGA received a donation of \$52.03 from Kroger for the period February 26 through May 2023. The new Garden Tour team has secured five gardens, three residential and two community gardens with plans to add one more residential garden.

2nd VP Report: Membership: Sue Smith

The first Saturday membership meeting will be held June 24 at CC Young. Strawberries and cream will be served at the meeting.

New Business

Monica described a proposed new position, Safety Coordinator, and nominated Chris Geyer, a retired nurse, for this position. Tentative responsibilities include: encourage volunteers to put their emergency contact information on the back of their badge as well as submit the emergency contact forms to the project leader, standardize the First Aid kits for the projects, update the contents of the First Aid kits and include the Red Cross First Aid guidebook. The Safety Coordinator will also review the accident protocol and verify that the project leads are aware of the procedure, facilitate CPR and first aid training for those who are interested and participate in the medical and liability insurance reviews.

Abbe Bolich made a motion to form the Safety Coordinator position as described and approve Chris Geyer as the Safety Coordinator. Sue Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Audio/Visual Equipment Update – Sue Smith

The objective of the A/V equipment update is to define an up-to-date, high quality, portable platform that can be easily transported by one person for DCMGA meetings and Speaker's Bureau activities. A spreadsheet has been developed that outlines the basic equipment needed to address this requirement with an estimated cost in the range of \$5,000. The team has also evaluated the A/V equipment used by the Master Naturalist Program which provides a state-of-the-art audio/ visual presentation experience including live-streaming, live zooming, and interactive questions. The Master Naturalist equipment is operated by a volunteer with professional A/V experience and is assisted by a team during the presentation. Estimated cost for comparable equipment for DCMGA would be around \$20,000. However, the functionality provided by the equipment used by the Master Naturalist program might be a requirement for the Master Gardener School but perhaps not a portable solution and would require a higher level of technical expertise.

Barry Walters who operates the Master Naturalist audiovisual meeting equipment has been incredibly helpful and is willing to demonstrate to the team a basic, simplified version of his equipment that could be used for DCMGA meetings and Speaker's Bureau functions. Barry has also offered to help with evaluating specific equipment and helping train the team.

The open question is to define what level of functionality is required to meet our basic needs and then what equipment would provide that capability. Some venues offer more sophisticated equipment which lessens equipment requirements on our part, but the portable platform would need to be self-contained and functional in any venue.

Investment of Funds – Monica Nagle

Monica reported on a meeting Monica, Joellyn, Barbara Hardin, and Rick Coke had in May with Gary Garcia from the Dallas Foundation.

The Dallas Foundation is a non-profit, recommended by Barbara Anderson, that invests funds for other non-profits. There are several investment options available that DCMGA could utilize; the recommended option would be a mix of a balanced fund and a cash fund. There is a 1.05% fee for management of the invested funds; average returns exceed what is currently being earned with DCMGA funds in a bank account. A minimum of \$10,000 is required to set up the account. There is an option to draw down the principal or to use the principal as an endowment and use the investment returns to augment the budget. Sue John is also aware of other foundations that have similar missions and opportunities for investment for a comparison with the Dallas Foundation.

Betsy See suggested that an investment committee be formed; Joellyn is willing to lead the committee. Committee members would include the Treasurer, Betsy See and possibly Rick Coke.

Nancy Black made a motion to form the Investment Committee with Joellyn as the lead; this committee would research investment alternatives and make a recommendation to the Board. Abbe Bolich seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Outreach Committee

The function of this committee is to do outreach for DCMGA, improve the public face of the association, get more speakers out to the public and explore new audience opportunities, new venues such as the library currently being explored by Cookie Peadon. Glen McGee will serve as the lead for this committee.

Directors' Report: Project Coordination / Scholarship – Glen McGee

Currently there is only one applicant for the scholarship. Publicizing the scholarship opportunity has been challenging and new avenues are being explored.

Progress on the calendar updates has been going well. The Texas Discovery Garden and the Arboretum have activities almost every day so incorporating these on the calendar while still highlighting other project opportunities is a challenge but is being researched.

Directors' Report: Advisory Committee - Denise Strueber

Preliminary planning is ongoing for an educational event to be held in October; dates have been narrowed down to two Saturdays in October and once the date is finalized, speaker confirmations and detail planning can start.

Budget Committee - Rick Coke

Nothing to report on the budget process at this time.

On the procurement side, work is ongoing to make the procurement process as simple and efficient as possible for the projects to utilize. Forms and paperwork are being finalized for rollout.

Communications Report: Cynthia Jones / Zandra Faris

Collaboration with neighboring counties continues to cross-promote Association events.

Statistics/Data Report: Tig Thompson

March and April hours are down approximately 1000 each month from 2022. May hours are down about 100 hours from last year. June hours are still coming in.

There was some discussion about the new 2023 VMS reporting deadline as to whether it might be a factor in the decline of reported hours. A suggestion was made to possibly extend the reporting window; however, Tig explained that changing this in the middle of the year was not practical.

Continuing Education – Cindy Large

A comprehensive Continuing Education list has been compiled. This list is included in Mark Your Calendar; possibly including this list on the website is being explored to make it readily available.

Speaker’s Bureau – Cookie Peardon

There were 14 presentations held in May with a total of 479 attendees. Confirmation forms are being revised to capture demographic information.

Dallas Public Library programming is set up two quarters in advance so the winter quarter will be the first opportunity for DCMGA presentations. A meeting was held with the library to familiarize them with the DCMGA website and DCMGA contact information.

Help Desk – Rick Coke

Nothing new to report. One Saturday a month, the Help Desk goes to Lowe’s in Far North Dallas to answer shoppers’ questions; on the third Saturday of each month, the Help Desk goes to Northaven Gardens which coincides with AgriLife’s presentation in the Northaven auditorium.

Garden Consultation Team – Barry Bloom

On July 10 a meeting will be held with Barry, Katerina and nine other individuals to determine what the parameters and rules of the Garden Consultation team participation should be. If a Garden Consultation team designates an opportunity as a short-term project, AgriLife has responsibility for the project, the Garden Consultation Team is no longer involved and volunteer hours can be logged for the short-term project

Adjourn:

Abbe Bolich made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:20am. Glen McGee seconded the motion. The motion passed.