

**Dallas County Master Gardener Association
Board Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023**

Attending:

Monica Nagle – President
Abbe Bolich – Immediate Past President
Nancy Black - 1st Vice President (Fundraising)
Sue Smith - 2nd Vice President (Member Services)
Sue John - Treasurer
Leslie Densmore – Secretary
Ned Buxton - Director-at-Large
Neal Howard - Director-at-Large
Glen McGee – Director-at-Large
Barbara Anderson – Parliamentarian
Rick Coke – Budget Committee
Cynthia Jones – Communications
Joellyn Nobbe – TMGA Director; Investment Committee; School Liaison to the CEA
Fern Brown – Master Gardener Coordinator
Jadi Oliver – TMGA Director
Stephen Seewoester – TMGA Director – Alternate
Tig Thompson – Statistician
Katerina Graham – AgriLife, Dallas County Horticulture Extension Agent

Absent:

Barry Bloom – Garden Consultations
Chris Geyer – Safety Coordinator
Zandra Faris – Nomination; Financial Audit; Communications
Margaret Ghose – TMGA Director – Alternate
Mark Jones – Procurement
Cindy Large – Continuing Education
Cookie Peadon – Speaker’s Bureau
Denise Strueber - Director-at-Large

Guests:

Gwen Cassel
Lisa Centala
Jurhee Curtis

Quorum:

The meeting was held via Zoom. It was called to order by President Monical Nagle at 10:03am with a quorum present.

Approve Minutes from the August 2023 Board Meeting

Abbe Bolich made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 2023, DCMGA Board Meeting. Ned Buxton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

President's report – Monica Nagle

No questions on submitted President's report.

Treasurer's Report – Sue John

All reports have been submitted. Sue suggested that two monthly treasurer reports could be posted for the DCMGA membership: a condensed Statement of Activity report and the Statement of Financial Position. There have been a few requests from the membership for financial reports. Financial reports are reviewed at the October business meeting but simple, quarterly reports that reflect current financial position, operating income and funds that are already committed for 2024 could be posted. Financial reports are always available to any DCMGA member upon request. Sue will speak with the other counties to see what financial reports are being posted and will present reports to the Board at the next meeting that will be posted for membership.

Dues for 2024 need to be decided. Dues before Covid were \$25.00 and the background checks were included. As background checks are only required every 3 years only \$4.00 of the \$25.00 was applied annually to the background check making the effective, pre-Covid dues \$21.00 annually. Texas MGA state dues are increasing in 2024 from \$2.00 to \$5.00. The 2024 budget is still being prepared but budget requests that have been received are larger than 2023; insurance costs have also increased substantially. A suggestion was made to increase dues to \$30 to cover the state dues increase and increased operating expenses. DCMGA will continue confidentially subsidizing any member who needs assistance.

AgriLife is changing the way that background checks will be conducted and paid (\$12.00 per background check). The background check process will now have an online training component as well as the actual background check; Texas MGA will manage notifying members that a background check is due and will begin the process with the individual including direct payment by the individual. Payment is required before the online training is begun. Some members may already have active background checks from other organizations such as the Arboretum or the school districts. However, Texas MGA will only accept background checks conducted through the Texas MGA process.

It is important to begin the year knowing the amount of money that the Association has in their operating budget. As in previous years, there is an incentive to pay annual dues before December 1.

Glenn McGee made a motion to increase the annual dues to \$30 if paid by December 1 or \$50 if paid after that date; the cost of the background checks will be paid directly by the individual when required. Sue Smith seconded. The motion passed.

Past President's Report – Abbe Bolich

Monica thanked Abbe for the excellent slate of new Board nominees for the coming year.

Directors' Report: Volunteer Engagement – Neal Howard

Both the online registration for the Slow-Gardening, Texas Style Seminar and the 2024 Master Gardener School have been launched. The online form for the Japanese Maple sale is almost complete. Neal's responsibilities for Volunteer Engagement and Project Collaboration have been transferred to Glen McGee. Monica reported that the online registration for the Slow-Gardening seminar worked seamlessly and thanked Neal for all of his work.

1st VP Report: Fundraising - Nancy Black

There have been three donors for North Texas Giving Day totaling approximately \$456 after the Communities Foundation of Texas processes the donation. Kroger sent a statement donating \$63.24 for the period of May 28, 2023, through August 26, 2023.

Raincatcher's has submitted a request for a fundraiser for their fall pansy sale.

Monica Nagle made a motion to approve the fundraiser request for the fall pansy sale at Raincatcher's. Abbe Bolich seconded. The motion passed.

2nd VP Report: Membership - Sue Smith

The new equipment for membership meeting has been purchased, is being tested and will be used at the October membership meeting. The September membership meeting will be via Zoom; the October meeting will be held at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church.

Directors' Report: Awards and Recognition - Ned Buxton

A Making a Difference award will be presented in September after a hiatus in August. There has been good participation from the project leaders making this program so well received.

Directors' Report: Project Coordination / Scholarship/Outreach – Glen McGee

The scholarship checks have been mailed.

Asset information is being collected from the projects to ensure insurance coverage; however, most of the assets are owned by the sponsoring organizations so there wasn't a large amount of new insurance coverage requirements.

A dry run on the procurement process by Urban Farm went well. A training PowerPoint has been created for the school garden project leaders. Vendors are being added. There are three documents online in the Association documents section titled Procurement: the vendor list, the form to use procurement, and the training PowerPoint.

Glen McGee, Monica Nagle, Janet Smith, and Cookie Peadon met with the Bath House to explore additional joint educational programs. There are programs scheduled for October 5 and late October as well as two in early 2024.

Glen is working on budgeting equipment for community outreach including canopies, banners with the association logo, tablecloths, etc. that can be used in all Association activities. Glen has researched canopies

that are heavy-duty and more durable. Purchases are planned for early next year when budgets are in place; however, Glen will submit a NBFR if a better price is found on the canopies this year. Storage of the canopies is still to be determined.

Sue John made a motion to approve a NBFR for the purchase of six blue ABCCANOPY Commercial EX Pop Up 10x10 Canopy Tent if the total price is \$1400 or less, noting that the procurement requirement for approval of purchases of \$1000 or more has been met. Monica Nagle seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Directors' Report: Advisory Committee – Cynthia Jones for Denise Strueber

Enrollment for Slow-Gardening, Texas Styles is going well, over half the available seats have been reserved. The event has also been posted on the state-wide website. Dallas County Water Conservation is providing a moisture meter for each guest. Temple Emanuel has donated seeds and every guest will receive a packet of flower seeds, herb seeds and vegetable seeds.

Master Gardener School – Fern Brown

There are currently 49 applications for the 2024 Master Gardener School.

New Business

Bylaws Update – Barbara Anderson

The latest draft of the Bylaws has been distributed. Some sections are bolded because these are either new provisions or are areas that need further discussion and clarification. Please review and send any comments or questions to Barbara in two weeks if possible. New provisions include stating that the policies adopted by the board will be put in writing and placed on website, flexibility on voting procedures, and provisions for nominations in addition to the published slate.

Budget Committee and Procurement - Rick Coke

Rick applauded all the effort and outstanding results that Margaret Hranitzky has accomplished in establishing the procurement process.

On the budget side, the project advocates have contacted all the project leaders for their budget submissions which are due by September 15th. Results will be presented at the October Board meeting.

A committee has been established to review the financial procedures for projects, donations, grants, and fundraisers to simplify and streamline them for ease of use and efficiency.

Communications Report: Cynthia Jones / Zandra Faris

Cynthia expressed the need to increase the number of volunteers at many of the communications positions and possibly add an assistant webmaster.

Statistics/Data Report: Tig Thompson

Currently 125 master gardeners have met the graduation or certification requirements. Volunteer hours are still behind last year at this time, but we are approaching close to \$1,000,000 value of volunteer hours.

TMA Director's Meeting – Joellyn Nobbe/Jadi Oliver

The endowment continues to be a TMA primary initiative. Joellyn clarified that there will not be a separate endowment fund but there will be earmarked funds from the Texas A&M endowment for the TMA endowment. There is still a question as to the responsibility for the control of these funds. Katerina clarified that Extension does not receive any funds from Texas A&M. There are three action items from this discussion: 1) a DCMGA document outlining our questions and concerns regarding the endowment 2) AgriLife owes DCMGA a document stating definitive purposes of endowment as well as the oversight process of the endowment expenditures 3) Katerina will meet with Xiomara to understand how finances work at AgriLife.

Investment Committee – Joellyn Nobbe

There is an upcoming meeting on September 26 to discuss where investment funds might be transferred. There are two draft MOUs for schools in progress and a school project lead meeting scheduled for September 21.

Help Desk – Rick Coke

There was a joint Collin/DCMGA table at Lowe's on Saturday, 9/9, but there was very low attendance. Collin County MGA is looking for another possible venue. There are North Haven Garden events scheduled for the third Saturday in September, October, and November.

Safety Report – Chris Geyer

No report.

Speaker's Bureau – Cookie Peadon

No report.

Garden Consultation Team – Barry Bloom

No report.

Texas AgriLife Update - Katerina Graham

There is a new Agriculture and Natural Resources agent, Matt Orwat. Matt is from the Dallas Fort Worth area and graduated from A&M. Once Matt completes his three-month onboarding with A&M, he will work with Katerina to explore agricultural and horticultural collaboration opportunities in Dallas County.

The Master Gardener School applicants will now go through a two-step process. First, an application to Dallas County is submitted followed by a selection process with the interview committee. Once they have been selected, they will apply to the school, complete extension standards training and pass the background check. Acceptance letters will be sent in December.

The Citizen Gardening Training Program has been renamed Edible Gardening for All. The class will begin this fall in a new hybrid form beginning with a tour of Urban Farm followed by asynchronous presentations that

can be viewed by participants at their leisure. There will also be 3 work days scheduled once a month through December at large community gardens around the city.

A second Winemaking Class is in the works starting September 30 at RB1. This is a four-class series held on Saturday afternoons. Registration information is on Facebook and also on Mark Your Calendar.

Katerina will attend the American Community Garden Association Conference at the end of September in Houston.

An Entomology Training class will be offered at the beginning of November to all youth interested in insects. Participants will be encouraged to participate in both the January County Entomology Contest and the March 4-H sponsored District contest.

The State Fair of Texas is accepting volunteers for the AgriLife booth. Extension agents are taking turns managing the volunteers; Katerina will be at the booth October 2nd and 3rd.

The proposed changes to volunteer requirements discussed at the zoom meeting in September will be considered Plan A and put on hold pending further consideration and discussion. Monica and Katerina are working on ways to include the full membership in the discussion before any implementation of changes.

Katerina shared the Retrospective Evaluation of the Master Gardener School presentations which illustrated the understanding of concepts before and after the presentations.

Adjourn:

Monica Nagle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ned Buxton seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58pm.