

**Master Gardeners of Bergen County  
Board of Directors Minutes for September 22,2020**

The Meeting commenced at 5:30 pm via ZOOM with Arnie Friedman and Miriam Taub as co hosts

**Present at the meeting:** Miriam Taub, Patricia Vellas, Jane Nicholson, Donna Faustini, Suzanne Danzig, Melody Corcoran, Karen Riede, , Arnie Friedman, Karen Pennell, Terri Pegg, and Janet Schulz (Carolyn Gretchen joined later in the meeting)

**Presidents Report:**

Melody Corcoran

Melody provided her written report as follows:

“Arnie Friedman has been given access to Rutgers’s Zoom , WebEx, etc. accounts. These accounts through Rutgers are free. The MG of BC Zoom account which Arnie set-up and had a monthly fee of \$14.99 will be cancelled.

We will be stick with Zoom for now because most people already have some experience with this platform. Arnie and Miriam Taube will be co-hosting tonight’s general Zoom meeting. They will be admitting members to the meeting, making sure everyone in the audience is muted, attending to any technical difficulties that may be encountered and so on. Thank you to Arnie and Miriam for taking on this task.

Cecilia Diaz, program Associate for RCE of Passaic County, has been assisting Karen Riede and Autumn O’Shea in setting up Better Impact. Karen asked if Passaic County MGs could be invited to our general meeting as a thank-you for the help Karen and Autumn have received from Cecilia. I thought it was a good idea and Passaic County was invited to our meeting. Cecilia, however, declined.

I asked Joseph Cooper who was paying the fees for our domain name and webhosting. He said that MG of BC pays for it; he believes it’s every two years. That information should be found in the treasurer’s records. He agrees that having a website that can be accessed and updated by several people is a good idea.”

**Vice President:**

Suzanne Danzig

No report.

**Recording Secretary:**

Jane Nicholson

The August minutes were provided by Jane Nicholson for the last meeting of August 25, 2020.

**Motion:** Melody Corcoran requested a motion to approve the minutes of February 25,2020 and Arnie Friedman seconded, all were in favor, none opposed.

**Corresponding Secretary:**

Miriam Taub

Miriam provided her report as follows:

“Since the last board meeting I distributed the September Potting Shed and September mid-month update. Once again, I received an “undeliverable” message for the mid-month update for approximately 20 members with the optonline.net email addresses. The “system” rejected the email with the pdf attachment as “spam”. I resent the attachment as a Word document. This happens periodically and I have no idea why.

On behalf of the board, I sent thank-you cards to Donna Karpel and Hank Annunziata for their service. I sent a condolence card to Karen Pennell on the loss of her mother. Terri Pegg notified me that we have one more paid member. Josie Ko, who I’ve added to the distribution list. Reminder: Since March, only paid members are on the MG of BC distribution list.”

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Pat Vellas

Pat Vellas provided a detailed Treasurer’s Report, summarized as follows:

Month Ending Aug.31, 2020

Opening balance as of July 31, 2020.....	\$12,496.61
Total Income.....	\$ 20.00
Total Expensed .....	\$ 00.00
Closing balance as of July,2020 .....	\$ 12,516.61
Total Outstanding Checks.....	\$ 00.00
Bank Statement Balance as of Aug.31,2020.....	\$ 12,516.61

**\*Motion:** Suzanne Danzig made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report. The motion was seconded by Joseph Cooper and all were in favor, none opposed.

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### **Old Business**

Melody Corcoran

### **Website Platform**

Melody had discussed our issues with our Website with Joseph and they agreed that a new website would be more up to date and informative if more than one person had access to the website. Also Melody wanted a website builder that did not need coding. Joseph said he would look into WIX as a possibility. A discussion ensued among committee members as to a possible website with additional functions. Melody suggested an Ad Hoc Committee be formed to research websites.

\*Motion: Arnie Friedman made a motion to form an Ad Hoc Committee with Miriam Taub as chair to investigate a new website platform. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Danzig and all were in favor, none opposed.

## **Committee Reports**

### **MG Class Liaison**

Lorelei Koran

### **Community Outreach**

Karen Riede

Karen provided the following report:

“We did not participate in the Virtual Party for the Planet at the Bergen County Zoo. Nothing else to report.”

### **Garden Club Liaison**

Miriam Taub

No Report

### **Hospitality**

Sandi Liberti

Sandi could not attend the meeting but sent an email letting the Board know that she met with Hank and has all of the hospitality supplies.

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### **Membership**

Terri Pegg

No report.

### **Newsletter**

Miriam Taub

Janet Schultz

No new report

### **Programs**

Donna Faustini

Tonight's speaker at the general meeting will be Frank Mortimer on bees and honey. Michael Mitchell (Winterizing Roses) will be in October and Carey Buchman (Orchids) will be in November. Donna is asking speakers for January through May if they will either do Zoom or not. Arnie stated that if she needed candidates she could fill in from the Speakers Bureau if necessary.

No bookings yet for 2021 (virtual or live)

Donna will introduce Frank Mortimer at the general meeting tonight. Questions from the audience will be taken via chat on Zoom

### **Publicity**

Patrick Lull

No report, Patrick not in attendance

### **Rutgers Cooperative Extension Liaison**

Karen Riede

RCE Report to MG Association Board Mtg. 8/25/2020

Joel Flagler/Karen Riede

The BC Freeholders approved our 2020 budget allocation-which is great news indeed. That County contribution amounts to about 1/3 of our total operation (salary, University support, equipment, supplies expenses). RCE Bergen's budget has been solid under this County administration and we are grateful.

Rutgers is dependent on the county dollars more than ever as funding crisis deepens. Rutgers University/NJAES has suspended all in-person activity through the end of the year. It is uncertain what spring 2021 will look like on campus. Slowly Research is getting back to business, with only solo activity permitted. Ag research has been hugely impacted and certain types of crop and genetics research

are being allowed on a case to case basis. State and federal funding streams to Rutgers have been interrupted. In some cases state funds coming to the University are being cancelled entirely, leaving the University to fend for itself. Thus, the deficits are passed along to the Extension and we face the same restrictions and cut-backs. Faculty are now having to find external dollars to keep their staff on board. Bergen is in good shape at present. But many Rutgers staff are already hit with furloughs for one day per week. In all, the cuts will be at least 20% and that is huge. Very few purchases are being approved and the hiring freeze at Rutgers is said to be the hardest such freeze in history. The true impacts of the budget crisis have not yet been realized. Rutgers has cautioned us to pace ourselves.

Rutgers has praised Extension for its excellence in online training and outreach. The efforts statewide have been innovation and effective at keeping Extension active and viable-and delivering most traditional services to clientele. We do get very high ratings for the online pivot and our sustained impacts.

I did a webinar for Family Support Network which reaches hundreds of families with disabilities. I also do weekly Zoom segment called "Ask the Ag Agent" for several group homes in Bergen County. The clients love the horticulture lessons. With advance planning it is easy to mail out the supplies to them so everyone can work together on gardening projects and nature craft activities. I also tape segments for the SEBS Horticulture Therapy course which currently has 19 students. That curriculum has courses for beginners and advanced students as well ([www.Rutgers.edu/horticultural](http://www.Rutgers.edu/horticultural) therapy). Everyone needs Horticulture in their lives, and even more in this time of crisis and uncertainty.

Best wishes to the entire MG family – good health and happiness!!

Yours,  
Joel

**RMGANJ**  
Karen Pennell

Karen provided the following report:

### **Nominating Committee Report**

A nominating committee chair was appointed at the August 25<sup>th</sup> MG of BC board meeting. A Committee of 3 members that included Janet Schulz, Kathleen Sullivan and Karen Pennell was formed. The nominating committee was given the task of finding a Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. The committee came up with the following slate:

Corresponding Secretary	Miriam Taub
Recording Secretary	Keith Mazanec
Treasurer	Pat Vellas

### **RMGANJ Report**

Jan Zientek reported that Rutgers University Policy regarding the pandemic continues the prohibition of non-essential, in person events by Rutgers Faculty, staff and volunteers until further notice.

Master Gardener county coordinators and RCE faculty are making progress with an online public health policy (and RU policy) to safely provide the “hands on” experience and mentoring that are critical components of the RMG training.

Online activities and outreach efforts will be increased during the fall and winter.

RMGANJ 2021 conference planning is still ongoing.

Nominating committee formed for 2021 officers.

Bylaws being updated in committee.

Miriam Taub inquired why Rutgers Garden Home School charged \$35.00 a course. Penn State’s fees were up to \$10. Karen P. explained that Home Gardeners School was a separate office. We do not set charges.

It was noted that Zoom was sending messages that we had only 4 minutes remaining in this Zoom session. The Board quickly went on to make a motion to accept the slate of the nominating committee (Janet Schulz, Kathleen Sullivan, and Karen Pennell) for the positions of Recording Secretary, Keith Mazanec, Corresponding Secretary, Miriam Taub, and Treasurer, Pat Vellas.

**\*Motion:** Arnie Friedman made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee slate for Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. Melody Corcoran seconded, all were in favor, none opposed.

The meeting ended at 6:10 but was reinstated on Zoom a few minutes later. Arnie had been looking into the problem and found that the account he had with Rutgers was a Basic account. He paid to upgrade the account and we continued. Karen R was surprised this had happened she and Arnie will look into getting Arnie an account with Rutgers where he will not have to pay for extended time.

### **Site Coordinator Liaison**

Melody Corcoran

No report. Sites closed for remainder of year.

### **Speakers Bureau**

Arnie Friedman

Arnie stated that thanks to Miriam Taub they were getting lots of requests for speakers from libraries. And presently they have a nice list of speakers.

## **Volunteer Records**

Autumn J. O'Shea

Autumn provided the following report:

“Committee notes from the volunteer records chair for MG of BC board meeting, September 22,2020”

- . Karen has Cecilia the horticulture coordinator for the Passaic County MG looking over our system inputs for the Better Impact system.
- . Students for class 2020 should be inputting hours if they have them for dates between 1/1/2020 thru 3/31/20. There are no open volunteer sites after these dates.
- . I am in process of gathering previous hours and starting to input those.
- . By this point active volunteers should be or have already inputted the profiles and completed what needs to be imported to set-up their individual accounts.
- . A huge thank you to Karen Riede for her long hours setting up accounts and inputting past volunteers – Karen has taken on a huge piece of the set-up for the Better Impact System besides coordinating the training with the horticulture coordinator for Passaic County. Very special thank you to Cecilia.

## **Website**

Joseph Cooper

Joseph's status on a new Website was discussed earlier with Melody's President's report. He reiterated the concept of a portal for volunteer hours.

## **New Business**

Melody Corcoran

### **Publicity**

Melody stated that as Patrick Lull has not been in contact with us, his position must be filled. The board decided it would be best to redefine his responsibilities. Presently he seemed to be engaged in Facebook (which was not being updated timely or with informative comments) and setting up the audio visual equipment for the guest speakers at the general meetings. It was decided that these should be viewed as two separate jobs.

In the past there had been an equipment position which was held by Joe Papa. Presently Joseph has the projectors but Patrick has the PA system. Donna said she would try to contact Patrick and she if we can get all the equipment. The board is thinking about resurrecting this position.

Regarding Publicity the board considered expanding this position and mentioned other media that might be used such as Instagram. They agreed that they needed a better definition of the position itself before presenting it to the general meeting for their consideration.

#### Trips and Tours

As many sites are opening (Miriam Taub noted that members will find a list of sites and activities in the Potting Shed in which our members might want participate), Janet noted that members would have to travel according to Covid precautions, such as travelling alone and meeting at the site. In some cases an individual reservation would be required but this could not be considered a Master Gardener group activity.

Many of our members and other garden clubs are posting tours and gardening seminars. Joseph mentioned he was on You-Tube. Suzanne asked how she might create and post a virtual tour. Arnie offered to help her create a video with a slide show on Power Point. Joseph thought we might create links to these activities on our website.

#### General Meeting

Before closing, Karen P. stated that slate of candidates for Board positions must presented tonight at the general meeting and will be voted at the following general meeting. According to the by- laws it is the Recording Secretary who must present the slate of candidates at the general meeting. Jane agreed to present the nominating committee and their slate of candidates. Arnie and Miriam will host the meeting on Zoom.

#### **Adjournment**

**\*Motion :** Joseph Cooper made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by Karen Pennell, all agreed , none opposed.

The meeting was closed at 7:00 pm.