

**Master Gardener Association of Bergen County  
Board Meeting Minutes – May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Present:** Co-Hosting – Melody Corcoran and Arnie Friedman, Karen Riede, Joseph Cooper, Suzanne Danzig, Theresa Schneider, Miriam Taub, Karen Pennell, Pat Vellas, Herb Arbeiter, Autumn O’Shea, Donna Faustini, Keith Mazanec

**Absent:** Sandi Liberti

The meeting was called to order by President Corcoran at 5:33PM

**Officer Reports:**

**President – Melody Corcoran**

Tonight is our joint meeting with Passaic County Master Gardeners. I’m expecting a good turnout from both counties because our speaker is Bruce Crawford.

Governor Murphy announced yesterday that starting this Friday, residents fully vaccinated against the corona virus would no longer be required to wear masks inside stores and other indoor venues. CDC guidance is that vaccinated people could go mask less indoors and out in most situations.

You should have all seen the Rutgers requirements for in-person activities. Let’s hope that Rutgers will soon open up Master Gardener activities in accordance with New Jersey and CDC guidelines.

**Vice President – Suzanne Danzig**

No official report, however, would like to thank all Board members for being flexible this past year.

**Treasurer – Pat Vellas**

Pat summarized the April, 2021 Treasurer’s report

Month Ending – April, 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Opening Balance as of: March 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	\$ 11,449.38
Income:      Membership Fees:	\$ 540.00
Membership Donations:	\$ 125.00
Speaker Fee Donations:	\$ 200.00

<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$ 865.00</b>
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### **Recognition Pin Distribution**

According to our records, MG of BC volunteer hours were not logged prior to 2010. Melody proposed that we make 2010 the cut-off year, and award the nine outstanding pins. Joseph offered his understanding of how the criteria were established, and Karen Pennell stated that hours prior to 2010 were grandfathered. Melody began developing a motion to document how Service Pins are awarded after 2010, and Arnie suggested writing it out and the Board can review and vote on it. Theresa offered to wordsmith the document, and Karen Pennell suggested that this matter be reviewed at the September meeting. Melody to work on the document.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Community Outreach Liaison – Arnie Friedman**

Arnie reported that he continues to do talks, and is booking for next year. Virtual talks are scheduled through the end of October.

#### **Hospitality – Sandi Liberti**

No report.

#### **Membership – Theresa Schneider**

As of now, we have 138 members who have paid their 2021 membership dues. There are 223 members listed on the website. Having challenges loading the May updates however, working with Gayle to correct the problem.

#### **MG Class Liaison – N/A**

#### **Newsletter – Miriam Taub**

Will speak with people from different organizations – Tri-State Hosta Society. Has photos from Garretson to publish. Arnie raised the question as to whether the MG of BC needs to comply with Rutgers photo release rules, as we are an independent organization. Karen Riede to get clarification from Rutgers and forward to Melody and Miriam. There was further discussion about media releases and whether permission is needed to re-print public pictures. Melody said to wait to get guidance from Karen.

#### **Programs – Donna Faustini**

Bruce Crawford will be our speaker tonight and his talk will be about trees. This will be a joint meeting with Passaic County tonight.

I am in the process of trying to get dates for next year's meetings, and will plan Zoom meeting for the fall.

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension Liaison – Karen Riede**

As of now, the building at One Bergen County Plaza remains closed.

Karen Riede submitted the following written report:

RCE Report to MG Association Board Meeting 5/25/21

Joel Flagler

1. Rutgers is resuming in-person outdoor activities, with certain protocols required that allow for contact tracing and such. At this time group size is limited to 25 or less; but larger participation can be allowed as long as sub-group size is 25 or less. So 100 attendees can come to an event but stay in smaller groups—as maintained by the Rutgers person overseeing the event.
2. Karen and Joel have the sole authority to allow or not allow an MG activity or event. Rutgers uses the local faculty and staff to make such determinations rather than statewide mandates. There is still much variability between counties and programs. It is fully possible that one county allows certain activity while neighboring counties do not. We are all about safety and well-being of our MG community. That is priority #1.
3. RCE Bergen is now easing into its new digs on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. We have a new office suite that should meet our needs. We try not to notice that there are no windows. Indeed this is the same space we had for 11 years after Y2K.
4. The Bergen Fall Harvest Festival will take place outdoors in-person in Van Saun Park. We expect a fine turnout and the MG interns and alums have roles to play if we are to have success. Interns will create and staff the displays tent, providing education and inspiration on a variety of MG themes. There will also be activities for the young-uns. **The alums can help by helping to take-down the space at the end of the Sunday afternoon. There are many chairs and tables to fold and pile up and we always welcome the person-power at that point. Also the alums could arrange for a nice bagel mini-breakfast** to set up in the MG tent, and then maybe a little something for snacking later. There will be plenty of food trucks for everyone to get their own lunch (or BYO). We truly hope you will all attend this free family-friendly event. Come and support the newest class of MG's and welcome them into the ranks of the MG of BC alums.

Thank you all for all that you do, as ambassadors for Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

You have been extraordinary during these unbelievable times.

Proudly, the MG program is alive and strong; and your impacts in the communities are so significant --and so very much appreciated!

Best wishes to you and yours!

Joel

THANK YOU KAREN!

### **RCE Report cont...**

Karen reported that there are 13 students enrolled in the class of 2021 and 14 were enrolled in the class of 2020. Governor Murphy has announced there will be no outdoor restrictions. She stated that the Fall Festival will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Karen will coordinate with Sandi the items which will be needed, i.e, coffee for both days, bagels, donuts, snacks, etc... There was discussion concerning setting aside monies for the items listed above.

**\*Motion:** Suzanne motioned that a budget of \$250.00 be established to offset the costs associated with the purchase of items for the festival. Miriam seconded the motion.  
APPROVED.

### **RMGANJ Report – Herb Arbeiter**

Jan Zientek, the State Coordinator, reports:

Volunteering can resume at designated sites according to RCE guidelines. In order to qualify, Master Gardeners must watch a 9 ½ minute video and also fill out a “Health Screen Form” online. The volunteer must provide proof at the site that they filled out the form. You cannot ask the vaccination status of a volunteer.

Deirdre Gallagher, the RMGANJ President, reports:

Planning for the fall conference is continuing. Counties are to assume that the conference will be held and plan their presentations accordingly.

Nick Hendershot, the RMGANJ Vice-President, reports:

The association wants to raise the awareness of Master Gardeners. He asked for suggestions on how to accomplish this goal.

Some suggestions were:

- Use nurseries as a source
- Get a database of email contacts
- Get the newsletters out to the public
- Borrow expertise for promotional material, e.g. poster making, from other counties.

Donna mentioned that a lot of organizations use social media, i.e., Facebook and Instagram to get their word out about promoting themselves.

### **Site Coordinator Liaison – Melody Corcoran**

No report.

**Volunteer Records - Autumn O’Shea**

**MG of BC committee notes from Volunteer Records Chair for May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021: submitted by Autumn J O’Shea**

- The total hours so far for 2021 entered in Better Impact system through 5/24/2021 are 231.04 hours
- Outreach sites are active in Better Impact for when the site/locations start- so hours can be entered, but MGs do not need to do so for the remaining year of 2021. These hours can be counted toward lifetime hours if entered into Better Impact system.

Volunteer Records Chair,  
Autumn J O’Shea

Miriam asked if any of the sites had turned in their forms pertaining to volunteers. Karen Riede said that three of the sites have, and all have been approved. Miriam to include in the Potting Shed which sites would be open and when. Suzanne also mentioned to include the contact names and phone numbers.

Arnie asked to amend his report to include that he was interviewed for a television program, “Montvale Today” about the Master Gardener’s program.

**Website – Joseph Cooper**

N/A

**New Business:**

**Nominating Committee**

Melody asked if anyone was interested in heading up the Nominating Committee. Karen Pennell to head up. Positions include: President and Vice-President.

**Rutgers Guidelines for In-Person Activities**

Karen Riede gave overview of guidelines for in-person activities. Will put together a packet of information and forms for site coordinators.

**Misc....**

Melody went over the announcements for tonight’s meeting:  
Sites opening up; Fall Festival

**Misc... cont...**

There was a suggestion made that we possibly consider pro-rating membership dues for the remainder of the year. Following a discussion, it was decided that the current policy pertaining to membership dues remain as is.

**Adjournment**

Melody asked if someone would make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**\*Motion:** Motion made by Arnie to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Joseph.

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 6:55 PM.**