

**Master Gardener Association of Bergen County
Board Meeting Minutes – January 25, 2022**

Present: Hosting – Melody Corcoran, Karen Riede, Joseph Cooper, Suzanne Danzig, Theresa Schneider, Miriam Taub, Herb Arbeiter, Elizabeth Gil, Pat Vellas, Donna Faustini, Keith Mazanec, Janet Schulz

Absent: Arnie Friedman, Sandi Liberti

The meeting was called to order by President Corcoran at 5:35 PM

Officer Reports:

President – Melody Corcoran

January 25, 2022

Welcome back from the holiday break. I hope everyone had both happy and healthy holidays.

I hope that everyone has explored our updated website and is pleased with the changes.

My goal for this year is to get the Master Gardeners back in full volunteer mode. Our volunteer sites have suffered through COVID the same as we have. With a large incoming MG class, we should certainly have many new enthusiastic volunteers. Our problem will be getting the current MGs involved again. Perhaps articles in the Potting Shed by the site coordinators highlighting each site would spark interest, or a Zoom meeting at which the site coordinators make presentations as they have done for MG classes in the past. I don't have a master plan to inspire our members to get back into gardening and I welcome any ideas that you may have.

Vice President – Elizabeth Gil

No report. Elizabeth thanked everyone for welcoming her onto the Board.

Treasurer – Pat Vellas

Pat summarized the Treasurer's report for a two month period, ending December 31, 2021.

Opening Balance as of: October 31, 2021	\$ 12,669.99
Income:	
Membership fees	\$ 780.00
Member donation	\$ 285.00
Memorial donations (Angelo Pietrunti)	\$
Speaker donation	\$ 425.00

Total Income:	\$ 1490.00
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Treasurer’s Report – cont...

Expenses:	11/16/21 - Presentation by Adam Wheeler	\$	(250.00)
	11/17/21 - Center for Food Action	\$	(250.00)
	11/19/21 – Web payment, Joseph Cooper	\$	(146.99)
	11/19/21 – P.O. Box Payment, Pat Vellas	\$	(130.00)
	12/31/21 – Web payment to Gayle Clayton for website updates	\$	(300.00)

Total Expenses:		\$	(1,076.99)
Closing Balance as of December 31, 2021		\$	13,083.00
Total Outstanding checks: Web Payment to Gayle Clayton for website updates		\$	300.00
Bank Statement Balance: as of December 31, 2021		\$	13,383.00

In addition, we received a thank-you note from the Center for Food Action for our donation.

Following was a presentation of the 2022 Annual Budget. Currently, anticipated income is projected to be \$5,100; anticipated disbursements totaling \$5,345, with an anticipated loss of (\$245.00). We have budgeted \$1700.00 for speakers fees, which is higher than prior years.

Motion: Suzanne motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Melody seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” APPROVED.

Following the approval of the Treasurer’s Report, there was a discussion regarding the Holiday Open House at Skylands. As per the November Board meeting, the person representing the committee in charge of the Holiday Open House will be requested to present to the board a proposal for any donations requested from the MG of BC, on how those funds will be used. This will give the board an opportunity to review the request prior to giving approval. Therefore, no money has been budgeted for the Holiday Open House until a request has been made and approved.

Motion: Joseph motioned to approve the 2022 budget, and Miriam seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” APPROVED.

Recording Secretary – Keith Mazanec

Keith stated that the final copy of the November 16, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes had been sent out to all Board Members for review, and that if there were no changes or questions, propose that a motion be made to approve them.

Recording Secretary's report – cont...

***Motion:** Suzanne motioned to approve the November, 2021 Meeting Minutes; Liz seconded the motion. All in attendance voted "Yes." APPROVED.

Corresponding Secretary – Miriam Taub:

The December Potting Shed was sent out as was the January Potting Shed and mid-month update. There was no mid-month update for December. Miriam received a notice that Laura Maurer, Class of 1999 had died. Five people have requested access to the website. Newsletter expenses for 2020 and 2021 totaling \$147.00 have been submitted for reimbursement.

Motion: As the amount submitted was over \$100.00 and required approval, Herb motioned to approve the expenses with Joseph seconding the motion. All in attendance voted "Yes." APPROVED.

Old Business:

Website Update Requests, update pricing

Miriam updated the Board that Gayle Clayton has made all the changes we asked for. Please let Miriam know if there is anything else we would like to see changed on the website.

Holiday Open House – Sue Sheridan (chair of the Holiday Open House committee) has been made aware that the committee needs to present to the MG of BC Board any proposals requesting donations from the MG of BC for the Open House. Theresa recommended that Sue should come to us in the spring with their committee's needs. Suzanne suggested we reach out to Sue. Herb works with Laura DeFlora (co-chair of the open house committee) at Thielke, and offered to speak with her.

2022 Budget – was approved earlier in the meeting.

2021 year-end committee reports – Melody reminded committee chairs to turn in their reports to her and to Keith.

Committee Reports

Community outreach liaison - Arnie Friedman

No report.

Hospitality – Sandi Liberti

Melody reported that Sandi is relocating to Pennsylvania and will be resigning her position in March.

Membership – Theresa Schneider

There are 78 paid members for 2022; 130 paid members for 2021.

The new process implemented last year of sending in applications with dues payments to Pat Vellas and Pat transferring the applications to Theresa is working well. Theresa mentioned that Dorothy Penkalski had archives of past meeting minutes. Theresa will arrange a time to pick up the records from Dorothy, and drop them off with Karen Riede to be stored in the Hackensack office.

Newsletter – Miriam Taub

Miriam reported that she has received articles for the February Potting Shed. Miriam asked Karen Riede to provide her with the email addresses for the new Master Gardener class members, and will send them the current Potting Shed as well as add them to the list for future distributions. Board members were encouraged to submit articles.

- Garden Club liaison – Janet Schulz
Only the Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club is currently holding monthly, in-person meetings

Rutgers Cooperation Extension liaison – Karen Riede

RCE Report to MG Association Board Mtg. 1/25/22

Joel Flagler

1. The following statement from Jan Zientek was received on 1/20/2022: “I am writing to formally advise you that Rutgers Master Gardeners' annual reporting requirement (volunteer and continuing education hours) has been reinstated for 2022.

The public health challenges of the COVID pandemic are still unknown for 2022 but most indications are that we will be able to resume a more active volunteer program during the spring and summer. Since it is reasonable to anticipate that there will be fewer in-person volunteer opportunities than during our "non-COVID" past, remote volunteer options should remain viable opportunities for our volunteers to earn these required hours. RMG coordinators need to work to maintain remote volunteer opportunities while restarting in-person events as allowed by RCE and their specific county public health guidelines.

Regardless how safe we (and Rutgers) believe our programs to be, individual volunteers retain the right to make decisions to protect their health. These decisions must be respected. Therefore, it will be up to the local MG coordinator to decide how best to work with individuals who want to maintain their Rutgers Master Gardener certification but have trouble meeting the annual minimums”.

RCE report – cont...

2. Jan. 31, 2022 is the date that Rutgers gave us most recently for ending previously stated restrictions on in-person indoor activities. This does not affect outdoor in-person volunteering. It may be that they provide an update in the coming days and we will share that with all. For the moment at least, there are to be no in-person indoor activities for the RMG volunteers-- as well as Rutgers students and faculty alike.

3. The North Jersey Ornamental Hort conference was a huge success for the 61st yr. Karen and I are on the small team of RCE faculty and staff who put the 3-day event on. We had hundreds of arborists, tree experts, turf managers, landscape contractors and more. Most came from Bergen and Morris counties, with some from Passaic, Union and Essex as well. I have served on the team since 1987 and it is a joy to see how valuable it still is, according to evaluations from attendees. Also, most report that they learned IPM and also about soil testing; and now apply fewer pesticides and fertilizers as a direct result of our training. That is IMPACT.

4. The newest class of RMG trainees in Bergen County is pretty large. We had an excellent pool of applicants. Karen and I conducted phone interviews for all and we are excited to introduce them to the MG community in Bergen County. With luck, and if the creek don't rise, we can SAFELY start outdoor hands-on activities this spring. Fingers Crossed!

Best wishes to all. It's almost Imbolg (look it up) and the Earth is stirring beneath the surface; soon the sap will rise.

Joel

RMGANJ report – Herb Arbeiter

There are no meetings scheduled until March, 2022. As of now, there is no definite date set for the conference in September.

Site coordinator liaison – Liz Gil

Liz reported that Paula Leibowitz will be the site coordinator for Teaneck Creek Conservancy. We are looking for a site coordinator for the Hackensack River Greenway. Liz requested an announcement be put in the Potting Shed.

Volunteer Records – Suzanne Danzig

Suzanne has been getting familiar with the Better Impact program after taking over the volunteer records chair responsibilities from Autumn O'Shea last year. As of now, there are approximately 3,000 hours logged. Karen Riede has a report due to Rutgers by February 15. As such, we are asking that all volunteer and continuing education hours be logged into Better Impact no later than Saturday, February 5.

Volunteer records – cont...

Going forward, entries should be made in Better Impact soon after the hours are completed and not held off until the end of the month and entered in bulk.

Suzanne will outline in an email, but suggested to Liz, that it might be helpful if she could reach out to the site coordinators and inform them that they can record hours prior to the shutdown if their hours were not in-person, ie., planning, phone calls, virtual meetings, etc., during the period of 3/12/20 – 5/1/21 as long as their hours were not on-site or in-person.

Programs – Donna Faustini

Tonight's speaker will be Dorothy Smullen whose topic is Mushroom Mania.

February will be Don Torino who will discuss Butterflies in the Garden. Arnie Friedman will be our speaker in March, discussing Bonsai. April will be a joint meeting with Passaic County and as of now, a speaker has not been named yet, and in May, David Robinson will speak about climate change.

New Business

Logging Volunteer Hours

Karen Riede did a presentation reviewing the changes to Better Impact. There was a discussion specifically concerning the feedback fields, where additional information will be required for recording hours for Continued Education, Special Projects and Teaching Hours. Karen will email members how to log on to Better Impact and record their continuing education hours.

Adjournment

Motion - A motion was made by Joseph to adjourn the meeting. Suzanne seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.