

Central Gorge Master Gardener™ Association
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Next meeting: Tuesday, June 11, 2019, OSU Extension Service Office

Attendees: Axtell, Sydney; Bosler, Eric; Bosler, Shari; Bradley, Christie; DeTar, Laurel; Rousseau, Sandi; Sanchez, Sue; Slagle, Nancy; Stevens, John; Suits, Rachel; Taylor, Renee; Winfield, Bill

Secretary's Report (Christie): The April minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report (Nancy): Nancy received a contribution from Intel for \$975. The revenue on the plant sale was \$6640.25 with a net of approximately \$4600 (unless there are more outstanding expenses). Eric noted that there will a propane bill coming in and there was some discussion on whether the propane will be charged to the greenhouse budget or the plant sale budget.

Nancy paid the OMGA dues, which was \$462 for 66 members.

Nancy got a notification of an upcoming OMGA treasurer workshop, and there are four planned for this year. The goals are to get the treasurers familiar with each other and to discuss tools and methodologies. Eric made a proposal that the association pay for Nancy and one additional person to attend the June meeting in Central Point. The motion passed and Nancy will be putting something in the newsletter to see if anyone is interested in attending with her.

OSU/Extension Report (Rachel): The Master Gardener of the Year recipient is due to Gail, so Rachel will work with the committee to select the winner.

The Hood River County budget committee has been working on the budget proposals in case the ballot measures do not pass. The association needs to make contingency plan as well, and the Executive Committee plans to meet on Friday the 24th at 10 am to discuss this.

There are four candidates for regional director and a decision needs to be made. A recommendation was made, but Lindsay Shirley needs to make the final decision.

Rachel will be out of the office a lot in May and June. If you need to contact her, email is best. But you should still expect a slow response.

OMGA Report (Eric for Barbara): There is an OMGA quarterly meeting on the second weekend in June. The OMGA needs to fill two positions, secretary and president elect. They may also be looking for a newsletter editor.

Changes to Bylaws (Renee for Sandy M): Sandy wants to add the past president to the executive committee to increase continuity. The past president would be appointed by the current president and approved by the executive committee. This would be a change to the bylaws and would need to be approved by the membership. It was noted that a quorum is 50% + 1. More work will be done on this proposal offline.

Japanese Heritage Garden Update (Sandi): There will be one more work party on Thursday. The brochures have been updated, and the speakers and Portland Taiko have been confirmed.

There is a setup work party on Thursday. Friday morning the Odell Garden Club will be preparing floral arrangements. Both lots will be used for the festivities.

Plant Sale (Laurel): The plant sale was very successful. \$900 in sales were paid using credit cards (the squares). There were a lot of tiny plants, which had not been the plan. This was probably due to the timing of seed propagation and transplanting. The schedules from the previous years was not followed. In addition, the sun shade needs to be pulled at night.

People were impressed with the greenhouse and shade structure. Solex was particularly interested in the way it was constructed, since this was the first time the Solex shell was assembled on a Conley infrastructure.

We need to schedule a post mortem for the plant sale and get ideas about what went well and ideas for improvement for next year.

Left over bags of soil will be sold to master gardeners for \$5.

Project Goals and Objectives (Renee): There was a brainstorming session on project goals and objectives and there will be a continuing focus on evaluating projects against the CGMGA mission statement and ensuring there is an educational focus.

New Business

Garden Tour (Renee): Garden leaders have been identified for all of the gardens. There will probably be some shuffling of volunteers to ensure the staffing is adequate at each garden.

Seed to Supper (Renee): There have been about 25 Seed to Supper learners, which is a huge class. Renee has some ideas about combining some of the classes into either 4 or 5 weeks. She may also want to split the classes up into two sets if there are this many interested people next year. The classes are still being advertised on the radio even though they are already in progress and people are straggling in. Renee had to go to get more textbooks.

11 of the Seed to Supper learners came to the plant sale with their certificates and most used their \$10 voucher and then purchased additional items.

Parkdale Memorial Garden (Nancy): Mike and Heidi Nastasi donated a picnic bench to the Parkdale Memorial Garden. Bill Sturman coordinated installation of the bench. It took 9 people to place it. Shari suggested that they put a photo and a blurb about the gift in the newsletter. The garden club gave Bill a certificate of appreciation for his work at this garden.

Program Coordinator Retreat (Rachel): Rachel attended a two-day program coordinator retreat. This was the first time all of the Oregon program coordinators met. Some had attended a conference in Madison last year and put together some proposals that they presented at this retreat. Some of the things discussed included state-wide challenges. They also looked at aspects like the vision and mission statements and conducted brainstorming sessions.

One conclusion was that the mission and vision statements had not been reworked in many years and they may not reflect what they want to program to be now. There are many changes needed to the program design. The job descriptions of the program managers need to be updated, and issues like burnout, adequate time to administer the program, and compensation need to be addressed to tackle the high turnover rate.

They also conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and looked at possible improvements in the form of short and long term recommendations. Some examples include developing a way of onboarding new program coordinators as well as improvements to volunteer management and communication between the state and local chapters. They would also like to look at training in different areas, including non-violent and passionate communication and mental health.

They discussed some of the programs being done around the nation. One of these is a flipped classroom, where students have online modules with content and then go to a classroom for activities. Another was to address different tiers of education for different types of training requirements and students of various expertise levels. One need is training for remote locations and materials delivered through alternative formats, such as webinars and online classes.

Recommendations will be taken to a working group where they will be distilled to more specific deliverables. Then they can be taken to the program coordinators and turned into a new vision.

Volunteer Hours (Renee for Sandy): Sandy has two mentees and they are having trouble getting enough volunteer hours – most of the available hours are during the weekdays. Rachel noted that new Master Gardeners can sign up with their mentors to do plant clinics, but they need to let Rachel know so she

can set the shifts up to facilitate this. She will add something to the newsletter about it. Project leaders also need to think of ways of facilitating volunteer times on other schedules. Sydney will be training more leaders for the FISH garden so they can set up additional times.

2020 Classes (Rachel): 2020 classes will start in March. Rachel will be making some changes to the way they work and address some confusion about what classes are required. Veterans can pick and choose 24 hours of classes but, for new people, they need more hours and this year they are getting behind. She also wants to improve the balance of needs in community the programs that best fit that. She wants to evaluate the projects to ensure there are enough volunteers to support the projects we have.

There also needs to be a more comprehensive review of projects. The learning garden is a huge time commitment, and it was built to educate and the master gardeners have learned a lot from it. But it has gotten to the point where it moved from an educational tool to a maintenance tool. So an evaluation needs to be done on making projects more educational again.

One idea Marion County has implemented is to have workshops that are combined with maintenance.

The primary focus of CGMGA has been to educate ourselves as a group and there has not been enough emphasis on serving the entire community. Programs like Seed to Supper have been put in place for community education and the structure of the winter classes has been a good opportunity to pull in the community for education. We could also look at adding more workshops, for example, at the library, to make more of a hybrid master gardener/community relationship.

Outreach and marketing will be a big part of the solution. We need to learn to use our resources more. Margo has been doing a great job of marketing and this will continue to help address the issues. The project leaders could get together and talk about leveraging each other's skills. A directory could be put together to document the skills of the members.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05.

Meeting minutes taken by Christie Bradley