

WASHINGTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Minutes

January 7, 2020

PRESENT: 102 Members and 6 Guests (Total = 108)

Call to Order

President Susan Young called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new year. She encouraged all new trainees and any interested existing members to go to the corner of the room during the evening to have their picture taken for our membership book. She then turned the meeting over to Washington County Cooperative Extension Agent, Colin Massey.

Colin introduced the trainees from the fall Zoom training and asked them to stand to be recognized. He next introduced the seven new trainees signed up for the online course just getting started. Trainees from both classes were warmly welcomed. Colin next turned his attention to the Washington County Master Gardener Board members starting (in humor) with a prayer of “Lord, help us”. He introduced all members of the outgoing 2019 Board and asked them to come to the front to be recognized.

Using a homebrewing analogy, Colin then installed the 2020 officers and board, describing a board’s work as an “art as well as a science” in that “the ingredients only shine when they are infused with cooperation”. He administered a collective oath of office to the following 2020 Board members:

Past president - Susan Young

President - Kathryn Birkhead

Vice president - Steve Brizzi

Secretary - Ruthanne Hill

Treasurer – Chris Bell

Assistant Treasurer – Wanda Gore

Members-at-large – Jane Morrow, Diane Standefer, Mel Zabecki

With that, Colin turned the meeting over to newly installed president, Kathryn Birkhead who introduced a couple of members with appreciation gifts for Susan. Mariette Spidel presented Susan with an incredible and incredibly large garden hat. Tanya Collins presented her with a Mason Bee House crafted by Steve Brizzi. And, finally, Kathryn presented Susan with a gift from the 2019 Board – a gift certificate to White River Nursery and *This Day*, a book of poetry by Wendell Berry. With loud applause, the group thanked Susan for her leadership during 2019.

Kathryn then called the business meeting to order at 6:47pm.

Approval of December 2019 minutes. It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of November 2019 Treasurer's Report. It was moved and seconded that the Treasurer's report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

New business

Approval of Garden Tour as a Sanctioned Project. Kathryn shared that Keith Blowers had attended the October and December meetings of the board to discuss the possibility of this long-time NWA Garden Tour becoming a Washington County Master Gardener sanctioned project as the founding organization, the Flower, Garden and Nature Society, has disbanded. Kathryn explained that Gail Pianalto has stepped forward to be the project chair, that seed money for the project would come from the county depository, and that it would serve as a fundraiser for WCMG. Currently, WCMG has no annual fundraisers. In response to a member question, Kathryn answered that, yes if accepted by the membership as a project, we would have the tour in 2020 and that recommendations for gardens to include in the tour would be needed. It was moved and seconded to accept the Garden Tour as a sanctioned project. Motion carried. Anyone with gardens to suggest for the tour should speak with Gail.

Kathryn then announced that our February meeting will be a Project Fair and members will be able to review all the projects and sign up to work on the Garden Tour or other projects at that time.

Announcements

Newsletter. Judy Smith – asked that members watch their email for a short mailchimp survey coming out tomorrow (1/8) requesting input on the newsletter.

2021 State Conference. Steve shared his excitement about us hosting the 2021 State Master Gardeners conference. The Committee met for the first time last night (1/6) with committee chairs and co-chairs plus Bernie and Julie from the state office. He recognized the committee members by having them stand and then announced the winning conference theme, "Ozark Adventure," submitted by Dolores Stamps and presented Dolores with the gift of a bee house for winning our theme contest. Ruthanne gave an overview of the fundraising activities for the conference including corporate, organization, and individual giving and invited the members to share their suggestions on who we might contact for sponsorships and/or donations. Steve had distributed feedback forms for this purpose.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the group, with a motion to adjourn, the business meeting ended at 7:01pm

Awards Program

Jan Lefler started the annual awards program by recognizing Joyce Mendenhall, who has organized this program for many, many years.

The following awards were presented:

- **Master Gardener of the Year** – Chris Bell
- **Rookie of the Year** – Trudy Carrigan
- **Project of the Year** – Veterans (VHSO) Community Garden
- **Excellence in Education** – Garden Explorers
- **Friend of Master Gardeners** – Alexis Walker
- **Yes, I Can** – LaDeana Mullinix
- **Rookie Yes, I Can** – James McGinty
- **Mentor of the Year** – Doris Cassidy
- **Trowel Awards (Members serving 200+ Hours)** – Kathryn Birkhead, Steve Brizzi, Doris Cassidy, Mary Beth Lohr, Lisa Owen, Gail Pianalto, Joyce Veasey, and Neta Winston.
- **Watering Car Awards (members serving 200+ hours for 5 years)** – Dorothy Carney, Mary Crumley, Susan Gardner, Dian Holmes, Gayle Howard, Jan Judy, Jan Lefler, Joyce Mendenhall, Kitty Sanders, Truman Stamps, and Martha Ward.
- **Perfect Attendance** – Geri Alvis, Kathryn Birkhead, Anita Bukey, Karla Caraway, Jan Judy, Steve Lisle, Judy Smith, Dolores Stamps, Truman Stamps, and Susan Young.
- **Years of Service** – While certificates will be presented mid-year for those achieving 5 and 10 years of service in 2019, Jan took a moment to distribute certificates from past years that had never been picked up.

The awards presentation concluded at 7:37pm with door prizes and an invitation to share in refreshments.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruthanne Hill, Secretary