

WASHINGTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
Regular Meeting
Washington County Cooperative Extension Service Office
November 5, 2019

PRESENT: 89 (84 members and 5 guests)

CALL TO ORDER: President Susan Young called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER MINUTES: It was moved to approve the October minutes as presented. The motion was seconded. All approved.

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER TREASURER'S REPORT: It was moved and seconded to approve the September Treasurer's Report as presented. All approved.

2020 BUDGET: It was moved and seconded to approve the budget as presented. All approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

2021 State Conference

Steve Brizzi presented reasons that the WCMG should host the 2021 state master gardener conference, providing background on the process for making that decision. He reviewed the survey that he had conducted at the October meeting and how he, Patsy Louk and Joyce Mendenhall had used the results of that survey to select subcommittee chairs. He said that he has set up a steering committee to guide the process, of which he will be the overall chair, with Patsy as co-chair. Steve presented a timeline to guide the planning process (see attachment).

Berni Kurz communicated with the WCMG by Zoom to provide additional information and to answer questions on what is necessary to host a state conference. Steve asked Berni to describe his role in planning and carrying out the conference, and Berni replied that he and Julie Treat from the State Extension Office will meet every 4-6 weeks with the Washington County team to stay on track. Berni said that he believes Washington County Master Gardeners are well positioned to host the 2021 state conference. He said that early on WCMG will need develop a budget, and from that it will be clear what kind of fund development WCMG needs to do. Berni was asked if there were any other counties applying to host in the same year, and he said that there were two other counties that had considered hosting but that they have backed out. He added that there is another county that might step up if we back out. He was asked whether there were expenses involved, and he responded that that depends, and that the local organization can contribute whatever it wants to. He said that there is no set monetary commitment that WCMG will need to make to the conference, adding that Washington County Master Gardeners will receive a discounted rate for attending the conference, although that rate won't be known until just before registration opens up. Steve clarified that registration fees and sponsorships will help raise the funds to put on the conference and that the basic formula for the budget will include fixed expenses for the costs at the conference center, bus rental, speakers, etc. The committee will then work backwards from those costs to determine the registration fee. Steve said that his research had revealed that registration fees for the state conference had ranged from \$60 to \$185, with the typical fee around \$100.

Colin echoed Berni's comments that Steve and Patsy have laid very good groundwork to move forward. He said that WCMG have strong staff support from the local and from the state office and that he hopes that hosting the state conference can be a springboard to expand the WCMG brand.

Mariette Spidel moved that WCMG host the state conference in 2021, and Geri Alvis seconded the motion. A show of hands showed that all approved, with no nay votes.

There was a question on where the 2020 conference will be, and the response is that it will be in Jonesboro. Patsy said that anyone who wants to go should make their hotel reservation now and that there were no more rooms with queen beds available.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Kitty Sanders asked project chairs to send new pictures of their projects, particularly before and after shots, so new pictures can help refresh the website. She said that the photo committee had received some ideas for new photo subjects for 2020 and that any other ideas need to be submitted to her by November 11.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mel Zabecki invited new people share their bios for the newsletter. She would like to hear from transfers, new Master Gardeners, or "old" folks.
- Susan welcomed Kim Hughes, who has transferred from Polk County.
- Susan asked WCMG to continue to send Joyce cards to help her know she is thought of.
- Judie Branson expressed her appreciation for the recently reupholstered chairs.
- Karen said that she has her camera with her to take pictures of anyone who needs to have a picture taken for the directory.
- Susan reminded people that the December 3 potluck and graduation will be at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion to adjourn the business meeting at 7:10 PM.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS:

Jim McGinty presented a report on the Air Museum project.

PROGRAM: Holland Wildflower Farm

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn Birkhead, Secretary

Attachment

- November – December 2019
 - Reserve Holiday Inn Conference Center
 - Negotiate Room Rates and Space Fees
 - Set Dates
 - Past Conference have been as early as April 30 and as late as June 7.
 - We are looking at May 13-15 or May 20-22, 2021

- January 10-30
 - January 6 or 13: Initial Steering Committee meeting with Berni Kurz leading an Orientation
 - Committee Co-Chairpersons recruit their committees
 - January 26: First Report to Executive Board