

**Master Gardener Association of Bergen County
Board Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2023**

Present: Hosting – Melody Corcoran, Arnie Friedman, Karen Riede, Janet Schulz, Theresa Schneider, Miriam Taub, Herb Arbeiter, Elizabeth Gil, Pat Vellas, Donna Faustini, Keith Mazanec, Martha Carlucci

Absent: Joseph Cooper, Suzanne Danzig

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

Officer Reports:

President – Melody Corcoran

Melody welcomed everyone back to the first in-person meeting in three years. It's good to get back.

Six MGs have indicated an interest in Community Outreach on their membership renewal forms. I have already contacted three. I have informed them that we need a few people to coordinate both the transportation of supplies to our outreach events and the set-up and take-down at the event. Only one has responded so far and I will be speaking to her at tonight's meeting. I will be contacting the other three next and hope to get a positive response.

Vice President – Elizabeth Gil

No report. Liz proposed and there was a discussion about putting together a list of goals and objectives that the MG of BC could work toward as an organization. In addition, there was further discussion about creating a presence on social media, i.e., Facebook.

Treasurer – Pat Vellas

Pat summarized the Treasurer's Report for the period ending Dec. 31, 2022.

Opening Balance as of: Oct. 31, 2022	\$ 15,001.49
Income:	
Membership fees	\$ 920.00
Member donation	\$ 245.00
Speaker donation	\$ 250.00

Total Income:	\$ 1415.00
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Treasurer’s Report cont...

Expenses:	US Postal Svc. – PO Box Rental Fee	\$	(134.00)
	Anne Meore – Speakers Fee	\$	(250.00)
	Joseph Cooper – Website fee	\$	(146.99)
	Cynthia Drennan – HOH Expenses	\$	(159.35)
	Lisa Yoler – HOH Expenses	\$	(196.90)
	Susan Sheridan – HOH Expenses	\$	(243.75)

Total Expenses:	\$	(1130.99)
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Closing Balance as of Dec. 31, 2022	\$	15,285.50
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Total Outstanding Checks:	Cynthia Drennan HOH Expenses	(159.35)
	Lisa Yoler HOH Expenses	(196.90)
	Susan Sheridan HOH Expenses	(243.75)

Bank Statement Balance as of Dec. 31, 2022	\$	15,885.50
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***Motion:** Arnie motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report and Donna seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” - APPROVED.

Recording Secretary – Keith Mazanec

Melody stated that the final copy of the November 22, 2022 Board Meeting minutes had been sent out to all Board Members for review, and that if there were no changes or questions, proposed that a motion be made to approve them. (Note: Keith was not in attendance at the November 22, 2022 Board meeting. Suzanne Danzig recorded the minutes in Nov. Melody reported on the November minutes tonight in Suzanne’s absence).

***Motion:** Arnie motioned to approve the November 2022 meeting minutes; Liz seconded the motion. All in attendance voted “Yes.” APPROVED.

Corresponding Secretary – Miriam Taub

Miriam reported one edition of the Potting Shed was sent out in December and two editions were sent out in January. Also, a sympathy card was sent to Suzanne Danzig, whose father passed in November.

Old Business:

4-H and MG of BC collaboration - update

Karen reported that Abbie Kesely, Sr. Program Coordinator 4H Youth Development, had sent out an email earlier this month concerning the partnership between 4-H and the Master Gardeners on the proposed Green Thumb collaboration, and the process of becoming a 4-H volunteer for those interested. A staff meeting is scheduled for this Friday, Jan. 20, to review those interested in participating.

Summer Picnic – Van Saun Park

Pat Vellas stated that she had spoken with Adam Strobel from the Teaneck Creek Conservancy board, who offered to assist us in getting a slot for our picnic at Van Saun Park this year. We would need to select a date. The date selected for this year's picnic is Tuesday, June 13.

Committee Reports

Community outreach liaison – Arnie Friedman

Arnie reported that a number of organizations have contacted him requesting talks. Arnie also raised a question that if a volunteer is sent out to give advice to an organization, will that person receive credit for volunteer hours spent with the organization? Following was a discussion and questions about what kind of advice is being asked; the time commitment; what's involved, etc.

Arnie to speak with Joel Flagler for clarification.

Hospitality – Martha Carlucci

Martha inquired if Rutgers could supply her with a person that would be able to assist her. She claimed the Fall Festival in September was very labor intensive, and required a large time commitment on her part. MG volunteers are assigned to work at these types of functions, and hospitality related assignments should be delegated to them.

Karen Riede stated that this year's Fall Festival will be held at Overpeck Park in Leonia.

Membership – Theresa Schneider

To date we have 83 dues-paying members for calendar year 2023. There were 138 paid members in 2022. Miriam and Theresa have developed a form for newly certified MGs, and Theresa set up a G: drive for MG membership. Arnie inquired as to any reason for the low membership. Theresa offered that some of it is driven by the recent pandemic; some people simply forget; others question what their annual membership fee is used for, while others question the value of membership.

There was a discussion that followed regarding different money transfer options to make it easier for MG's to pay their annual dues.

Newsletter – Miriam Taub

Miriam reported that she is working on the February newsletter, however she is low on photos. Beginning January 27, six speakers will be spotlighted in the Potting Shed over the next six issues.

Garden Club liaison – Janet Schulz

Janet asked that we respond to inquiries when asked.

Programs – Donna Faustini

For the Feb. 21 meeting, our speaker will be John Beirne from the Reeves-Reed Arboretum who will do a presentation on flowering trees. For March, we are working to confirm Kathy Sauerborn who will discuss hummingbirds. The April 18 meeting will be a joint session with Passaic County, and Mary Josh from Dig-It magazine will be talking about a garden tour; Michael Hagen from the NJBG will speak at our May meeting.

Rutgers Cooperation Extension liaison – Karen Riede

RCE Report to the MG Assoc. Board Mtg. 1/17/23

Joel Flagler

1. Farmland Preservation is the focus of the county agricultural development board. Joel has been an adviser to this group since its inception 20 years ago. In addition to preservation the group affords support to protect farms from complaints due to normal farm operation; e.g., trucks, dust, manure smells, etc. In many towns, the neighbors can attack farms and try and shut down their operations, even though the farms were there first. Bergen has 7 farms that are preserved, totaling around 300 acres. Most of these are in Mahwah; one in Franklin Lakes. The group will meet later this month to discuss a brand-new farm—the Patriot horse farm in Saddle River.

2. The North Jersey Ornamental Hort Conference (NJOHC) was held for the 62nd year—offering training for arborists, tree experts, turf managers, and landscape contractors. Several hundred professionals were trained and most report that they use what they have learned to improve their business operations. Of note is the high rate of adoption of IPM tactics such as monitoring, soil testing and use of biological options for managing pests. That is great news for everyone; and the environment benefits when fewer chemicals are applied, especially at the wrong time. Ditto for unnecessary applications of nitrogen and phosphorous fertilizers. The new-ish Pro-Fact program from DEP requires those who apply fertilizer for hire to be certified. The training and testing is online and is delivered for the DEP by Rutgers. The small team of Rutgers faculty and staff that plans and delivers the NJOHC includes Madeline Flahive-DiNardo (Union); Cecilia Diaz (Passaic); Pete Nitzsche (Morris); Karen Riede & Joel Flagler (Bergen).

REC Report cont...

3. The new cycle of MG training starts online Jan. 17. Karen and I conducted over 35 telephone interviews to make sure our candidates knew all about the program and were ready to make the commitment. We are excited to welcome a large number of interns, who will join the many MG teams at work in all of our wonderful, accredited volunteer sites.

4. I have snowdrops blooming on a south-facing hill and I have it on good authority that it will be an early spring. Best wishes to all in our MG family—for good health and happiness throughout the New Year 2023!

Joel

RMGANJ report – Herb Arbeiter

Treasurer's Report (Roberta Quinn): Balance is \$13,183.31

Master Gardener Coordinator, Nick Polanin, reported that Master Gardener classes are in different stages of either starting or continuing. Morris County has 27 attendees. Cumberland County is conducting interviews for a new MG Coordinator. Webinar recordings of the RMG annual conference are in progress. Links were emailed on January 11:

“Approaching Rutgers Master Gardener Helpline Plant Diagnostics” - <https://youtu.be/dh2xIXN1OAO> presented by Rebecca Magron

“Weeds in the Lawn” - <https://youtu.be/Nk9DHVid1EI> - presented by Dr. Matt Elmore

Cindi Hedrin has agreed to stay on as Recording Secretary for another term. The Vice President's slot is still open. Keiko Warner was nominated for the position.

New Business: After a three-year hiatus, the Mercer County Symposium is returning on March 11, 2023.

Sharing and Caring: A concern was raised about allowing donated plants to be accepted at plant sales. A county in Connecticut has banned this practice, as jumping worms have been found in some donated plants and it could also spread disease.

Herb reported that Jean Epiphan has been named the new agent for Morris County.

Site coordinator liaison – Liz Gil

Liz reported that the clean-up event at the Mary S. Topolsky Garden has been postponed until spring.

Volunteer Records – Suzanne Danzig (absent)

From 1/1/2022 – 12/31/2022 the following hours have been reported thus far:

Administrative:	675
Continuing Education:	691
Outreach:	4,057
Special Projects & Events:	195
Teaching:	70
Total:	5,088

Total number of volunteers: 81; average number of hours per volunteer: 70.22

Website – Joseph Cooper (absent)

No report given.

New Business

Inactive members: There was a discussion on handling requests to reactivate members and the different membership categories. Also discussed was MGs with no hours reported for 2022 and liability coverage for MG alumni volunteering at sites. Herb to speak with Nick Polanin from RMGANJ to get guidance and clarification as to what is the policy for reinstatement.

Meeting Refreshments: The Board was in favor of providing snacks at future membership meetings. Arnie will develop a sign-up sheet, as we had in the past, for members to volunteer to provide snacks. For now, we will provide 8 oz. bottles of water and individually wrapped snacks. Herb and Arnie will pick up refreshments for next month's meeting.

Trips and Tours: Miriam inquired if the membership would be interested in doing tours to different sites. Everyone was in agreement that it would be a good thing to offer.

Adjournment

***Motion:** A motion was made by Arnie to adjourn the meeting. Herb seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.