

Northeast TN Master Gardener Board Meeting

Ron Ramsey Agricultural Center

Date: March 6, 2023

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Barbara Voigt, Brenda McKinnis, Karen Rowell, Millie Sue Hawk, Chris Ramsey, John Hitchcock, Mary Ann Lovelace, Nancy Shilling, Don Davis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary Cain, Carl Voigt, Kathy Wagner, Larry Wagner, Linda Spisak, Karen Todd, Andrea Belcher, Teresa Gaffner, Barb Radice, Betts Leach, Gwen Ellis, Heather Duby

GUESTS: Adam Watson, Washington County Extension Agent

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by the President, Karen Rowell.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Mary Cain

The minutes were reviewed from the 1-9-23 Board meeting and the 2-6-23 Membership meeting were approved. Millie Sue Hawk made the motion to approve the 1-9-23 minutes and the motion was seconded by John Hitchcock. Don Davis made the motion to approve the 2-6-23 membership minutes and was seconded by Mary Ann Lovelace.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mary Ann Lovelace

Mary Ann presented the budget as of 3-6-23.

The proposed total expenses were \$6750.00. The actual expenses YTD were \$764.46.

The beginning checking balance as of 1-1-23 was \$11,559.56.

The spendable NETMGA Endowment balance was \$2052.69 as of 11-30-22.

The motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Millie Sue Hawk and seconded by John Hitchcock. The motion was approved. It was agreed that the amount Karen suggested for the Project/Mini Grants should be increased to \$2,500. The audit looked good and will be on file with the Treasurer.

PROJECT REPORT AND GRANTS FOR 2023: Don Davis

There have been communication issues with the Unicoi County Hospital project. Some Board members think that there were members who were working at the Unicoi Hospital project and recording their hours under hospitals. A suggestion was made for each hospital to have their own heading for volunteers to record project hours. Chris will make modifications to the UT drop-down reporting box to improve the reporting procedure.

Project grants this year will be \$350.00. After discussion, it was decided that the form and the budget for the project should be sent to Don Davis by April 12. Project managers will be notified by April 26 if their project is to receive a grant. Expense receipts must be

turned in by October 1, 2023. It was agreed that funds for this program will be from our local funds and not the foundation. Receipts will be presented to Andrea Belcher or Mary Ann Lovelace.

Don expressed concern that quite a few projects were started and approved but ended up failing. He had suggestions for improving the process for getting projects approved so that this does not continue to happen. He pointed out that only 50% of volunteer hours need to be accomplished on an approved project. Don agreed to submit his suggestions for improving the process for a project to be approved.

Requesting an annual report from Project leaders was discussed and everyone seemed to be in agreement that this was a good idea. These reports could be shared with other members as a way to learn from each other. The *Master Gardener Thymes* could be a good way to share project information with the membership.

PROGRAMS FOR 2023: Susie Morrison

Susie was absent. Karen Rowell will follow up with her to get an update on the April program.

MEMBERSHIP/CERTIFICATION REPORT: Mary Cain

Mary was absent but submitted a detailed report. The full report will be on file with the secretary. Highlights of that report are as follows:

1. There are still discrepancies between the UT roster and the NETMGA roster but Andrea Belcher has said that steps were being made to correct the UT roster. Inactive members have been marked inactive. Several current members have not registered on the UT site. As of 2-27-23 there are 133 paid members on the NETMGA roster and 19 remaining Master Gardeners that have not paid 2023 dues. These non-paying members will be sent a letter stating that they will be marked inactive on the UT Roster. It was noted that a few of these non-paying members have given notice that it was their understanding that since they had Lifetime membership status, they were exempt from paying annual dues. The rules for requiring membership dues and paperwork were changed 2-03-20 and the membership was informed. Discussion on this matter ended with the result that Chris Ramsey would consult with a UT attorney about liability involved in non-members working on Master Gardener projects.
2. The Google Drive roster contains the 13 Washington County 2022 interns which increases the total NETMGA membership to 167.
3. There are 32 active members who did not return their printed copy of the *Volunteer Agreement* which is to be updated annually. The board members present agreed that an email reminder should be sent to those who did not submit the form.

PUBLICITY: Brenda McKinnis (Nancy Shilling)

Brenda reported that publicity meets once a month to decide topics for the *Ask a Master Gardener* articles. They would appreciate membership input about upcoming events so they could be included in the *Ask a Master Gardener* publication. John Hitchcock is working to change the webpage platform to WIX. This change will allow all *Ask a Master Gardener* articles to be cataloged on line.

COMMUNICATIONS: Heather Duby

(absent)

NEWSLETTER: Betts Leach

(absent)

FACEBOOK: Heather Duby

(absent)

MENTORS: John Hitchcock

John reported that mentors have been assigned and are meeting with the mentees.

WEBSITE: Carl & Barbara Voigt

There was nothing new to report.

HOSPITALITY: Larry & Kathy Wagner

(absent)

SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT: Chris Ramsey

Chris reminded everyone that there will be a grafting class on March 16.

WASHINGTON COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT: Adam Watson

Adam will be hosting a *Growing Vegetable Transplants* class on March 14. It will be in person and by Zoom. He also reported that he is working on a possible class project for the new Master Gardener interns. He will be getting a class representative for the NETMGA Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Karen Rowell announced 3 new volunteer opportunities that will be sent out by Heather Duby via email.

1. Neil Brown at *Keep Kingsport Beautiful* Pollinator Garden Support would like 1-3 volunteers for each of three elementary schools in Kingsport to assist project leads in final design and plant selections for pollinator gardens.

2. There is a need for a 20 to 30 minute presentation to a senior group at Indian Springs Baptist Church about ways to garden for less physically capable gardeners. The date for the presentation is April 25 at 11.30 a.m.
3. The Jonesboro Garden Gala is June 3. They have 9 gardens in the event and need 2 Master Gardeners per garden during each of the two shifts which are 2.5 hours each.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING PLANS

Information about the April 4th meeting was not available.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 1 at 6.30 p.m. at Ron Ramsey Agricultural Center. The July 10 NETMGA Board meeting will be at the Jonesboro Extension Office.

Meeting was adjourned by Karen Rowell.