

Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Board Meeting

Rocky Mount Historical Site

Date: March 3, 2025

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Brenda McKinnis, Mary Ann Lovelace, Janet Smith, Karen Rowell, Susie Morrison, Mary Cain, Donna Fowler, Nancy Shilling, Michelle Hejny, Don Davis, Sherry Ragsdale, Carl Voigt, Barbara Voigt, Brenda Snead.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Valerie Jondahl, Betts Leach, Gwen Ellis, Heather Duby, Mary Todd, Heather Duby, Barbara Voigt, Carl Voigt, Beth Cox, John Hitchcock, Adam Watson, Sarah Cox.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Karen Rowell called the meeting to order.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mary Cain made a motion to approve the minutes. Suzie Morrison seconded the motion. The board approved the minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Michelle Hejny presented the budget as of 03/03/2025.

The board approved the Treasurer's report.

Michelle Hejny also presented a current price list of MG merchandise sold at membership meetings. She pointed out that the association was losing money because the price of items sold at meetings did not cover their cost. Karen Rowell suggested a 25% mark up on items. Don Davis stated that the cost of the merchandise could be reduced if they were bought in larger volumes. He also suggested letting the supply companies know that NETMGA was a nonprofit organization to reduce the price/ taxes. Don will work with Karen Todd to research suppliers and costs. The board agreed on price increases and further investigation into the suppliers of the merchandise.

PROJECT REPORT AND GRANTS FOR 2023: Don Davis

Don Davis stated that all projects grant requests need to be sent to him by May 1, 2025. All requests will be reviewed for approval by Karen Rowell, Suzie Morrison, and Don Davis. If approved, the project leaders will receive a reimbursement form for \$350.00. These forms should be sent to Michelle Hejny once they are completed.

PROGRAMS FOR 2024: Brenda McKinnis

Brenda McKinnis distributed a detailed description of a program chairman's duties and responsibilities. She also presented the following list of upcoming membership meetings:

April 7, 2025- Wendy Sibley and Jess Strong from Sibley Farms LLC in Blountville, Tn will give a presentation on plant propagating. The membership meeting will be at the Ramsey Center at 6:30 pm. All members need to RSVP on Signupgenius.com to attend.

June 9, 2025- There will be a field trip to Midfield Lavender Farms. The cost will be \$8.00 per member. Carpooling will be necessary due to a lack of parking. Members will need RSVP to attend. Carpool information will be provided.

August 4, 2025- There will be a field trip to Deery Inn in Blountville, TN. More information will be available later.

MEMBERSHIP/CERTIFICATION REPORT: Mary Cain

Mary Cain will be sending an email to all members concerning certification requirements and unpaid dues in June. She stated that even if a member paid their dues but is not certified because of a lack of volunteer or CEU hours, they will be identified as inactive. There is no policy to waiver fees if the person is considered a lifetime member. Mary will be sending a list of members to Michelle Hejny from 2019-2025 whether they are certified or not.

PUBLICITY: Brenda McKinnis (Nancy Shilling)

The television interviews for the Internship Program went well. No further updates currently.

2025 Intern Class Report: Susie Morrison

Suzie Morrison stated the Intern Class is going well. Sixteen members of the class attended the classes on a regular basis. Karen Rowell complemented the class as being an exceptionally good group this year. Suzie requested the members start receiving Notifications concerning MG activities and will be sending Sherry Ragsdale their email information. Karen Rowell also suggested that the class members get discount cards upon their graduation in April.

COMMUNICATIONS: Sherry Ragsdale

Sherry Ragsdale stated that she appreciated the opportunity to be the new communication chair. She is still learning the sign up and emails programs so please be patient. Karen Rowell said to ask for help whenever she needed it.

NEWSLETTER: Betts Leach (Absent)

FACEBOOK: Sarah Cox (absent)

MENTORS: John Hitchcock (absent)

WEBSITE: Carl & Barbara Voigt

Barbara stated that Karen Todd will backup for the NETMGA website. Carl updated the MG textbooks online to include levels 1,2, and 3. The new NETMGA reimbursement form has been added to the NETMGA website at the bottom of the first PROJECT Page, along with some other forms. It is also at the bottom of FAQ PAGE.

WASHINGTON COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT: Adam Watson (absent)**SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT:**

Chris Ramsey has come back from retirement to work part-time until a full-time agent can be hired in 2025. The Greenville Extension agent, Melody Rose, is available to assist NETMGA as well until the new hire is complete.

NEW BUSINESS:

Janet Smith stated that she spoke to Adam Watson, The Washington Extension Agent, concerning NETMGA setting up an account with the University of Tennessee Extension Services to have zoom board meetings with unlimited time when the weather is too bad for in-person meetings. Adam said he would investigate it and offered to host the zoom meetings on his account whenever the board needed it if he was available.

New Volunteer opportunities:

1. Stem Program hosted by American Institute of Chemical Engineers East Tennessee on May 5-6. MGs will assist in a presentation on Photosynthesis.
2. Stem Program on May 17, MGs will assist in a presentation on growing your own food.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING plans:

April 7, 2025- Wendy Sibley and Jess Strong from Sibley Farms LLC in Blountville, Tn will give a presentation on plant propagating. The membership meeting will be at the Ramsey Center at 6:30 pm.

Next Board Meeting Plans:

The next Board Meeting will be held at Rocky Mount Historical Site at 6:30 pm on Monday, May 5, 2025.