

Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Board Meeting

Rocky Mount Historical Site

Date: May 5, 2025

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Brenda McKinnis, Janet Smith, Karen Rowell, Susie Morrison, Mary Cain, Nancy Shilling, Michelle Hejny, Barbara Voight, Brenda Snead, John Hitchcock.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Betts Leach, Gwen Ellis, Mary Todd, Heather Duby, Carl Voigt, Beth Cox, Adam Watson, Mary Ann Lovelace, Donna Fowler, Sherry Ragsdale, Carl Voight, Don Davis.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Karen Rowell called the meeting to order.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Brenda McKinnis requested a quote contributed to her be removed from the minutes. After Janet Smith agreed to delete the quote, John Hitchcock motioned to approve the minutes. Michelle Hejny seconded the motion and the board approved the May minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Michelle Hejny presented the budget as of 05/05/2025.

Michelle displayed some older MG shirts of assorted colors that could be sold to members. She stated that she will look into the cost of producing camp shirts with new colors and different styles. Nancy Schilling motioned to approve the treasurer's report and Brenda McKinnis seconded the motion. The board approved the report.

PROJECT REPORT AND GRANTS FOR 2023: Don Davis

Don Davis was absent from the meeting. Karen Rowell stated that all the project grants have been approved.

PROGRAMS FOR 2024: Brenda McKinnis

Brenda McKinnis also presented the following list of upcoming membership meetings:

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.

Brenda McKinnis also stated that volunteers for the Jonesborough 29th Annual Garden Gala on June 7th are needed to man the Master Gardener Booth and help with tours of designated gardens.

John Hitchcock said that The Hands on Museum at Discovery are hosting music concerts in the garden on Thursdays at 6:30 pm. Karen Rowell suggested that donations jars be place on the Master Gardener tables to raised money for the Association. The Board agreed with the proposal.

MEMBERSHIP/CERTIFICATION REPORT: Mary Cain

Mary Cain sent out an email to let members who have paid their fees but have not reported their volunteer hours that they will be marked as inactive on the roster. She stated that she will follow up with those members to see if they are volunteering at any of the Master Gardener projects. She currently has 143 members on her roster. However, The UT Roster has 152 members.

PUBLICITY: Brenda McKinnis (Nancy Shilling)

Brenda McKinnis stated that Susanna Barry and Nancy Weaver have volunteered to write articles for the "Ask a Master Gardener" column in the local newspapers.

2025 Intern Class Report: Susie Morrison

Susie Morrison stated that sixteen people graduated from the 2025 Master Gardener Intern Class in April. The class has voted to have four co-leaders who will represent them at Board meetings. Susie stated that she is confident that a large number of the graduates will complete the required number of volunteer hours to be certified. Two of the graduates have already complete the 40 hours needed. The members of 2025 Class are currently planning a class project to create a garden at the VA Hospital in Johnson City, TN. Barbara Voigt expressed a concern that the interns should be volunteering at established Projects who need help before creating a new project.

Karen Rowell mentioned that the graduates need orange intern name tags when they are working at project sites and could be ordered online thru the UT website. The board can make a request for the intern name tags to new Extension Agent when he/she is hired in July.

COMMUNICATIONS: Sherry Ragsdale

(absent) Brenda McKinnis stated that the use of the Genius Sign Up App is going well for signing up volunteers for events.

NEWSLETTER: Betts Leach (Absent)

**FACEBOOK: Sarah Cox
(Absent)**

MENTORS: John Hitchcock

John Hitchcock will call all the new members to see where they are volunteering. Mary Cain suggested that project leaders assist the new members with recording their hours. Brenda McKinnis stated that she is sending an invitation to the new members to some workdays on May 16th and 17th to get them interested in working at the Carver Peace Garden.

WEBSITE: Carl & Barbara Voigt(absent)

Barbara Voigt said that the new members should be getting the Master Gardener Newsletter. She would like an update list of the interns.

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

The position of Sullivan County Extension Agent and liaison to the board is currently vacant. However, a new agent should be hired in July.

NEW BUSINESS:

Karen Rowell stated that a new Extension Agent will be hired in July and will hopefully attend the July 7th board meeting.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING plans:

The next membership meeting will be held at Derry Inn in Blountville, TN on August 4, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

Next Board Meeting Plans:

The next board meeting will Be at Mary Cain's home on July 7, 2025 at 6:30 pm.