

Virtual Meeting of The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden

August 27, 2020 update
7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Connelly at 7:08 PM. We needed to vote in order to waive notice of meeting time, date, and place. Acceptance of the waiver was proposed by Melissa and seconded by Lauren Husting. Motion carried.

Present:
Candy Bartol Kathy Connelly Jennifer Olson Jim Pundt
Colin Bartol Melissa Hansen Jim Proctor J. Pam Weiner
Gary Bebeau Lauren Husting Sally Pundt
Steve Benson
Absent:
Susan Wilkins (ex officio)

Approval of Agenda: Approval of the Agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Jim Proctor requested striking the last sentence and substituting Park for Garden which Susan also indicated along the the striking a sentence about children's activities in her Curator's report [\[edit needed to this sentence\]](#). Steve Benson moved and Pam Weiner seconded a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Annual Meetings have been scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 2020 from 1 to 3 PM on Zoom with Lauren Husting [to host](#).

Reports:

Volunteers by Melissa Hansen: Melissa reminded us that volunteers are not allowed in Garden this year. The volunteer event usually scheduled in the fall will not occur either. They got the official word in August that no volunteers would be needed at the Garden this fall. When asked about the reactions to Covid19, Melissa responded that some of the volunteers have been worried. All six new volunteers in 2020 remain enthusiastic for next year's training.

Membership by Christi Bystedt sent in writing and presented by Kathy: We are not getting new members in 2020. Christi has contacting some to keep connections up. During recent years Membership has remained pretty consistent in the low 200s. Kathy relayed a thanks to Christi for all her hard work and membership suggestions. Gary Bebeau brought up the fact that 19 of 20 gift memberships generally are not renewed after the first year. [Christi's proposal](#) suggests [that the donor be given chance to renew and these memberships kept in a separate category to track if this modification is more effective.](#) Jennifer Olson wondered if a donor could give the membership in honor of the recipient? Kathy added we might want to better acquaint the person receiving the gift membership of the advantages of this membership. [Board members asked how a gift membership is different from tribute gift?](#) Lauren asked [whether we want to send the renewal notice to the original donor, and then go to person who received the gift if the original donor does not renew it?](#) Kathy stressed that there is a difference between membership and a one time gift [that has different returns for the organization and administrative burden for the membership coordinator.](#) Gary suggested maybe we should consider gift memberships as a one year deal. Pam Weiner says that she gives the gift of membership to people who don't live here, but feels it is a way for them to still connect to the Garden. It was suggested we put an article in Gention about this. [Christi's proposal \(attached\) to alter tracking of members was unanimously approved.](#) Based on [the discussion, Pam and the membership group will discuss a proposal on gift memberships.](#)

Treasurer/Investment/Memorials report by Gary Bebeau: Based on the economic issues involved, a downward adjustment in March and April occurred, but things were back up in June because of the strength of what we're invested in. He [did thinks we will](#) not make membership goals, but memorials were a strong area, especially for Harriet Betzold. [He suggested we can't do anything much about membership under current circumstances.](#)

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Deleted: wants a decision one way or the other. Should she contact the donors right away to see if they want their gift to be renewed for the next year? Could we offer gift memberships dedicated to spring, summer, a birthday, a special event for Mother's Day, or for a Garden event...?

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Gentian by Colin Bartol: Colin was really positive about work surrounding the Gentian due to input given by Gary and Lauren. He announced that we are going to new publisher provided by a minority business. We discussed how many to print for the summer issue, considering this year's difficulties for getting copies out. Digital accounts for 40, so they do not require a print copy. The rest on the mailing list requires About 146 hard copies are required for the official mailing list. Pam needs about 100 hard copies because she distributes them around, and Melissa usually needs some too, but not right now because of Covid affecting volunteer Service this year. It was decided we need at least 300 copies for this issue. Gary and Lauren added that each of them needs 25 copies.

MPRB Ecological System Plan and FIPAG by Jim: Garlic mustard has proved a challenge, but he has found a lot of success with small groups doing pulls. He thinks this is pretty incredible. Where removing the buckthorn is concerned, he has noticed they actually died sometimes without removal. He and Kari have noticed that they can cut it high. To him these techniques represent a form of triage, so they are making various procedures part of their process from now on. It depends on the site being treated, for example, a shady area. With sun buckthorn will more likely grow back. He wants to avoid erosion whenever possible. They are still trying to find effective ways to avoid erosion. The grass plot they've planted has been pretty much unsuccessful, but rye grass is at least somewhat promising, while wild ginger and common sedge have worked on steep slopes. There are funds available to spend in low areas.

Jim mentioned being part of a focus group about restoration work. A goal is assessment of all the land. He will continue to update us on this.

The intent is to keep a natural plan for the future, but he want to keep input ongoing. Jim says we need to pay attention to what happens in future. If we have problems, we can contact MPRB board members. Kathy says we should keep our ears open. Kathy offered thanks to Jim for all his involvement.

Old Business:

Annual Membership Meeting: The Annual Meetings will be virtual and scheduled for October 18, 2020 from 1 to 3 PM on Zoom and hosted by Lauren. Steve P. wondered how members will be informed. Lauren has announced the meeting in the newest Gentian, and she will send blast.

New Business:

Susan provided an MPRB donation request from the Friends for 2021, for additional funds of between \$5,000-\$10,000 that could be needed. They propose coming to us with a proposal before we would commit to any particular expenditure. Kathy would like to have an allocation for these requested funds built into the budget so we are prepared with funds available in cash, and not tied up in a way that would make it difficult to access. Gary thinks we have plenty of reserve funds that would be readily available, and wants to know in advance what this money will be needed for before making any allocation, since the funds will have to be withdrawn from reserves in any event. It was proposed that we consider applying the additional funds for the budget beginning January, 2021. Pam moved and Steve B. seconded a motion to allocate an additional \$10,000, in addition to the standing \$7,500 annual allocation for Garden projects, for a total of \$17,500 for the 2021 Friends Budget for Garden projects. The motion passed, with all voting in favor except Gary, opposed.

Slate of officers and Directors for Annual Meeting: Let Kathy know if your 2021 commitment will change as soon as possible, or at least by mid-September. Gary suggested putting the slate on the website.

New President search: Kathy will step down after January, 2021 meeting. She stressed that naturally the role changes with each President. Contact Kathy with your thoughts and suggestions. Unbundling the duties of the president and having board members take on particular parts of the role that appeal to them may be a way to make the role more attractive to a candidate. Kathy suggested. No current board members indicated an interest in taking on the role at the time of the meeting. No board members volunteered to work on a succession plan. Kathy said she would remain in the role, and would continue to work on a succession plan and work on the unbundling approach in the interim.

Diversity: Kathy said, diversity and equity are issues being pushed to the forefront of many aspects of our society – commercial, familial, zoning, legal, health and more. These issues concern the Friends as well. It is not the Friends' mission to ensure the Garden is a welcoming place for all users – that duty belongs to the MPRB, but the Friends can examine its own composition and ask whether the Friends is a welcoming organization, reflective of the users of the Garden, and of the communities that immediately surround the Garden that could be users if they felt more welcome.

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Deleted: Shared leadership is the way of the future for Board presidential duties, Kathy asserted.

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Steve Pundt, Steve B. and Lauren volunteered to work together, to position the Friends as a more inclusive and equitable organization. Kathy said, adding a person of color to the board just based on their skin color is not meaningful. Having served on boards where meaningful empowerment was not included in diversifying a board, Kathy cautioned against tokenism. Steve B. stated we have to start somewhere.

Volunteer Recognition Event. There were no shelter volunteers this year. The consensus was that a regular volunteer recognition event would not be safe, or appropriate under the circumstances. But the Legacy and FIPAG volunteers continued to work. It was suggested that a drawing for gift certificates would be. Jim will make available a list of those eligible. Susan likes the drawing idea and agreed that it could include the Legacy stewardship volunteers. Jim will talk Kari about this possibility.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

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- Deleted: Should we offer FIPAG volunteers and Legacy Stewards raffle items to thank them?
- Deleted: Susan mentioned a Legacy Steward event to him. If we can have a digital reward system, it sounds like an option.

Sent from my iPhone