Gwinnett County Master Gardener’s Association

Board of Directors Meeting

*May 10, 2021*

Meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

**ATTENDEES**

Present: President Lynda Pollock, Vice President Margaret Molyson, Past President Virginia Schofield, Treasurer Jack Bolton, Secretary Karen McGinty, Committee Chairs: Alice Verner, Ann Langley, Becky Panetta, Becky Wolary, Freda Steward, Gervasio Cubenas, Jessica Miller, Lori Prosser, Martha Whitman, Shirley Bohm, Susan Kosenka.

Absent: Aaron Tulin, Robert Ayer

Guests: Tim Daly, Lisa Klein

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Minutes of the February 8, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting were approved with no objections.

**Treasurer’s Report – Jack Bolton**

Current Account Balances: We currently have $8,231 in our checking account and $10,021 in our savings account. This may appear to be a sufficient balance to fund our operations, but our major fund raisers are behind us and we still have our scholarships and the majority of our grants to pay. We anticipate that we will be rewarding scholarships for $2500 and we have $4076 of grants that have not been paid. That is $6576 of our balance already committed.

Expenses for the remainder of the year: We are hoping that the pandemic will be under enough control and social distancing restriction will be relaxed enough that we can plan our annual Picnic Meeting. That typically cost about $1000.

Membership: We currently have 151 active members. That is almost exactly the same as last year, but about 35 members less than before the pandemic. We are exploring being able to join/renew memberships online and accepting dues via paypal.

Fund Raisers: We raised $3165 with the Plant Sale and $830 with the Soil3 Sale.

Discussion: Lynda is thinking about the possibility of another Soil3 sale in the fall.

The revised membership list will be updated soon and sent to Lynda and Shirley.

**Vice President’s Report – Margaret Molyson**

The May 18th meeting is the Photo Contest

The June 21st meeting speaker will be Dr. Julie Razryadov, plant collection curator at Wellesley College. Her topic is using natives as potted plants.

We have not scheduled July, August or October. We are hoping to do our picnic in September.

Discussion: No response from Joe Lampl. Shirley suggested Marika(sp) Tromp(sp) from Grower’s Outlet. Other suggestions include the owner (Katy Ross) of Night Song Shade Nursery in Canton, GA. And Master Gardener Ann Thompson could speak on herbs. Suggestions were made to revisit contacting Joe Lampl.

**EXTENSION REPORTS**

**Tim Daly** – The Office is still closed to volunteers but hoping for limited opening soon. MG class of 2021 is now accepting applications. Gwinnett is partnering with Cobb and Dekalb, with the first half of classes in Marietta and the second half at Gwinnett Tech. There are six applications so far, the deadline is May 26th.

Teacher’s MG class is coming together with 22 entrants.

Master Naturalist Program is coming along, working with Parks Department, getting speakers together, information coming soon.

I am doing evening programs, check the website and sign-up, the next class coming up is on Organic Gardening.

Make sure you are putting your hours in. Hours last year were good considering what was going on.

Thank you everyone for all your great work.

Discussion: Lynda brought up trying to get people to get hours in which Tim said are needed to help get funding for programs.

**EC – Continued**

**Past President – Virginia Schofield**

Continuing to look for 2022 Garden Tour chair.

**President – Lynda Pollock**

Hoping August will be an in-person meeting. Will talk to Bethesda about using 2 rooms, real speakers, no pot-luck.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Newsletter/Bit of Dirt –** Shirley Bohm

The Spring 2021 GCMGA newsletter, "Bit of Dirt," was mailed out to 313 subscribers on April 15th with a 63.5% open rate.  Becky Wolary also put it on the GCMGA website.

Question:  Should the newsletter be sent only to dues paying members?  What about Master Gardener Interns for one year?  Others?  I "inherited" many of the people on the current mailing list.  People who are not members could be deleted.

Articles in the Spring 2021 issue of the newsletter included:  From the Editor's Desk, Message from the President - Welcome to 2021 and GCMGA, Report from the GCMGA Historian, Report from the Publicity Committee, Report from the Social Media Committee, What are you reading these days?, Don't toss that nursery pot, When your tree might be in trouble, Coming Events and Bit of Sunshine.

Note: Answers to the game challenge in Bit of sunshine are now at the end of the newsletter instead of asking people to send me their answers to see if they were correct.

Submitted by Shirley Bohm Editor, Bit of Dirt

Discussion: The deadline for the summer issue is June 30th, get your submissions in by that date. It will be sent out July 15th. Events from other gardening groups are welcome to be included, submit the information, the date and contact before then. The fall edition will be sent out October 15th, submissions for that issue should be turned in from July 15th through September 30th.

Becky Wolary asked about members only receiving Bit of Dirt. After a discussion it was decided to keep the email list the same for the summer issue. Include in that issue a blurb saying non-members will no longer receive the newsletter, to encourage non-members to join and be a perk for members. After which, delete non-members from the e-mail list.

**Webmaster** – Becky Wolary

Will be working on the membership form and online payment with Paypal. Becky and Freda are hoping to get together in person to get new pictures on the web-site. She will update the directory with the latest membership list from Jack when he passes it on.

**Photo Contest** – Lori Prosser

The annual contest is scheduled to take place at the May 17th monthly meeting. We have 129 photos, in 9 categories, and 11 first time entrants! The power point is done, complete with music, and the judge is great.

Lori will give a write-up to Lynda to promote the upcoming meeting and Lynda will post zoom information on the web-page. Lori will get together with Lynda for a trial run. Pictures will be posted on the web-page in some format after the meeting.

**Grant Committee** – Martha Whitman

11 Grants were awarded in February for a total of $5012.20. The recipients are:
Berkeley Lake Elementary, $475
Ferguson Elementary, $470.25
GA Piedmont Land Trust, $475
Ladybug Garden Club, $475
McDaniel Farm Park, $475
Peachtree Elementary, $451.25
Riverside Elementary, $475
SE Gwinnett Food Co-op, $475
Snellville Community Garden, $308.75 + $175 Plant Sale
St. John Neuman, $459.80
Vines Rose Garden, $472.15

In order to stay in budget, each grant was reduced 5% from their requested amount. As of May10, 2021, one grant has turned in all expenses, two others have turned in partial expenses. The total dispersed so far is $938.84

There has been cooperation among the Grant Recipients with sharing plants. Snellville Community Garden donated their remaining unsold plants. Kim Fritz picked them up from the greenhouse and delivered them to many of the school gardens across Gwinnett.

Submitted by Martha Whitman

Discussion: Lynda reminded Martha that the Grant recipients need to take pictures and do a write up for a poster to be displayed at the plant sale; and a paragraph and picture to be included in the newsletter. Becky W suggested that 3 different projects could be highlighted separately with the newsletter, the web-site, and Facebook. It was then decided that Shirley will be given the first 3 to be placed in the next Bit of Dirt, and then those will be rotated to the web-site and Facebook.

Additional discussion: Martha brought up the display of signs at projects that were funded in part by the GCMGA. Becky W and Martha will work with what has been started in the past, Lynda will check with the county to see if the UGA logo needs to be put on the sign. Shirley mentioned that Gwinnett County has their own set of rules for signs in county parks. Lisa said that the County Extension may be able to help with the cost of the signs. (See Lisa further down). Martha and Becky will keep Lisa in the process. It was determined the number of signs ordered should be 25, to include future projects.

**Social/Facebook – Ann Langley**

Until May 5, the Association’s Facebook (FB) page was hobbling along. We posted information regarding the Soil3 fundraiser, the Association’s plant sale and one funny cartoon.

Last week, Dolores Stewart, a GCMGA member, offered to help beef up our page by posting 1-3 relevant articles daily. Dolores has been posting to the Norcross Garden Club FB page for some time and the Garden Club recently received a media award. In just a few days since Dolores was added as an administrator to our FB page, our feed has some remarkable posts of general gardening interest to all. If you haven’t had a look lately, please do.

Margaret Molyson has volunteered to be one of our weekly editors. She is responsible for Website Wednesdays. Each Wednesday Margaret will post a link to a helpful gardening website. Now that we have her role properly assigned to the page, look for her posts starting this Wednesday.

Also, Margaret’s daughter, Elizabeth Hall, has offered to give me tutorials on how to manage a FB page. She has experience in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) which means she knows how to get a FB page noticed.

We have not yet nailed down a date with Laurie Wakefield for a workshop. The purpose of this workshop is for Laurie to teach the membership at large on how to create appealing FB posts. She and her husband are in the process of moving so it may still be a while before we can set a definite date.

Dolores, Margaret, our President, Lynda Pollock, and I will have our first get-acquainted Social Media Committee meeting 11 AM on Thursday.

Submitted by Ann Langley

Discussion: Ann would like to see how the newsletter, Facebook, and web-site can work together to impact the public.

Margaret, the FB committee needs to create content that interest people and that is legitimate.

How to find members that have areas of expertise, add question to Membership form.

**Hospitality – Alice Verner**

Looking toward the September picnic, possibility of boxed lunches from Blue Rooster at McDaniel Farm or possibly another venue with social distance seating.

**Field Trip** – Gervasio Cubenas

Unfortunately, nothing has changed, with the Covid threat continuing, all activities are on hold until things improve. In the meantime, Carole and I continue to provide individual and web-based opportunities for events in the surrounding area, virtual tours and seminars. We will continue to provide such opportunities when possible until things return to normal. Carole is a member of a number of organizations and shares them with our group.

Submitted by Gervasio Cubenas

Discussion: Lynda suggested looking for a field trip for October-November.

**Weed and Feed/Seed Exchange –** Becky Panetta

Weed and Feed is on hold for now. She will be updating the seed exchange spreadsheet for the fall. Some seeds will need to be cold stratified.

**Education/Publicity –** Jessica Miller

The Publicity list was updated in March 2021. Jessica has given a copy to Lynda, Becky W, and Shirley, if anyone needs a copy let her know. She sent out publicity for Soil3.

If anyone has a neighborhood newsletter that you would like publicity sent to, please pass on the link to her.

Jessica has 3 possible workshops for the fall, Carole Teja making hypertufa bowls at her home, Lynda making Hyacinth Christmas trees, and when the office opens up to have an essential oils class possibly along with Ann Thompson.

**Historian** – Freda Steward

Developed pre-plant sale appreciation slides for April's Membership Meeting

Took photos at April 25th Plant Sale

Discussion: Lynda would like the slideshow to continue when we re-open, as people enter into a meeting, they can see recent happenings.

**New Business:** Becky W would like have a way for MGs to get help in their garden on a regular basis, willing to pay someone. Possibly mentoring with new trainees, while offering knowledge to the helper. Lynda offered one possibility of a forum on the web-site that would be used to ask for help. Margaret has asked help from Gwinnett Tech students. Ann also did the same and received help from a student, she also said that once FB page has a private page, that FB would be a great forum to ask for help.

**Extension Continued:**

**Lisa Klein**

The awards ceremony will be on Wednesday, May 19th at 11. It will be similar to last year’s ceremony, virtual. She will send out invites and reminders beforehand.

If you maintain a garden for a project that is on private property, and have a need for a sign that says, Garden maintained by Master Gardener’s. Let her know and she will get one to you. There are 12 signs at the County Extension office. The signs are 12 by 18 inches in size.

She is easing back into the swing of things after her recovery.

Without any more business, Lynda adjourned the meeting at 11:46 a.m. and Alice seconded it.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McGinty,

May 15, 2021