

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2018

Members Present: Bill White, Julie Rupert, Dick Wagner, Mary Phillips, Kevin Hess, Alnisa Allgood, Rene Boyce, Philip Bradbury, Tim Sherry, Michelle Taschek, Erik Lincoln, Angela Jenkins, Eric Knepp, Roberta Sladky, Brad Hinkfuss

Members Absent: Dan Lauffer, Susan Derse Phillips, Betty Chewning, Laurel Neverdahl, Nancy Ragland

Advisors Present: Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Barb Tensfeldt

Staff Present: Sarah Ellis, Patti Jorenby, Kim North, Katy Plantenberg, Kai Skadahl, Joe Vande Slunt

I. **The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Bradbury and seconded by Mr. Hess to approve the meeting minutes of April 17, 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no members of the public who wished to comment on items not on the agenda.

IV. **OLBRICH STAFF PRESENTATION**

a. Explorer School Programs – by Kim North, Youth and Family Programs Manager and Sarah Ellis, Youth and Family Programs Coordinator

Kim North described the history of the Explorer School Program, which started in 2002 with Botany Explorer; Tropical Explorer and Ecology Explorer were added in later years. Four thousand three hundred elementary-aged students attended Explorer in 2017, plus teachers and chaperones. Teachers have commented that the Explorer curriculum is a great addition to their science classes because kids are able to see the plants – especially the tropical plants that they don't easily have available in the school. The sessions are 90 minutes long. They start with a large group introduction, followed by breakouts into smaller groups. They visit three stations and have an indoor or outdoor garden tour depending on the topic.

Sarah Ellis taught the 'seed' lesson that she has with the students and showed a short video of students dissecting a lima bean seed. She noted that the other stations in this session are 'leaves' and 'stems'.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

a. Capital Campaign Update – Joe Vande Slunt reported that staff are scouring grant opportunities and submitting applications when appropriate.

b. Project Update – the project as planned is within budget, but there are additional costs that are outside of our control (fire suppression, storm water management, dealing with poor soils). These items were not anticipated and will add nearly \$2 million to the estimated budget. Mr. Knepp will be taking a budget amendment to the Common Council tonight to amend the \$10

million estimate to \$12 million for the project. The additional \$2 million will be shared equally by the two partners. Ms. Sladky will send a link to Mr. Wiesner's presentation given to the Park Commission on May 9.

B. Financial Report

a. March 2018 Financials – Ms. Phillips distributed a revised report at the meeting and noted that the March revenue is \$15,000 under budget, but that the YTD is on track. Expenses are about the same. Development revenue is off by \$18,000, due to the Spring Appeal, which was budgeted to go out in March, but went out in April. Specials Events budget differences are also due to timing issues, which should balance out in April.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports and noted there is no attendance report due to a problem with Rec Trac – she will get that report to you when it is complete. We had @ 4,000 visitors on Mother's Day. The Plant Sale was cold, wet, and horrible and many thanks to the volunteers that stuck it out for the entire two days. Matt Gall will fill the Maintenance Mechanic II position on June 4. He is transferring from Engineering. The Volunteer Potluck takes place May 21st and Board members are invited.

D. Development Reports

Joe Vande Slunt reported that membership is going well and on budget for the year – even with the aggressive goal that was set. There is a new membership assistant, Graham Washburn, and his first day was at the membership table on Mother's Day. There was discussion about a gift-giving guide being developed that will be brought to the Board for review, so that no opportunities are missed.

E. Marketing & Public Relations Report

Katy Plantenberg noted we have had lots of publicity with the Bucky on Parade out front – plus another one right across the street. Olbrich was named a 2017 All Star with Constant Contact, our e newsletter provider. We have over 15,000 followers on social media – if you are active on Facebook and see our posts, please “like” it, say you are “interested” in our events – this helps spread the word to your friends and contacts. Katy is finalizing an arrangement with HGTV House Hunters to film a couple at Olbrich Gardens while they are searching for a home in Madison.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are no announcements.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.