

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2019

Members Present: Julie Rupert, Philip Bradbury, Bill White, Susan Goodwin, Kevin Hess, Erik Lincoln, Laura Peterson, Tim Sherry, Dick Wagner, Brad Hinkfuss, Angela Jenkins, Laurel Neverdahl, Nancy Ragland, Roberta Sladky

Members Absent: Renee Boyce, Mary Phillips, Alnisa Allgood, Susan Derse Phillips, Betty Chewning, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Jt Covelli, Barb Tensfeldt

Staff Present: Samara Eisner, Jake Immel, Patti Jorenby, Katy Plantenberg, Katey Pratt, Erin Presley, Kai Skadahl, Hannah Tubbs, Joe Vande Slunt, Randy Wiesner (City Engineering)

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

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Ms. Peterson to approve the meeting minutes of May 21, 2019. 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. Outdoor Gardens Update (damage from floods and extreme cold and how we are managing this in the future and the “scouts” who are assisting with monitoring insects in the Gardens) – by Samara Eisner, Katey Pratt & Erin Presley

We had a historic rainfall last year and the water had not receded completely before the November freezes. There was flooding of the Discovery Dock, Thai Garden banks, Meadow Garden, Birch Walk, etc... Many plants died due to the extended flooding which was compounded by the polar vortex in January. Perennials did better, but mature trees and shrubs did not survive. We lost Japanese Maples, flowering Dogwood and boxwoods. Staff are noting the affected plants, doing research and choosing replacement plants that may have better chance of surviving in similar circumstances – planting, planting, planting right now.

Scouts – the Rose Garden opened in 2005 and the garden goal is to be beautiful, inviting and sustainable. The hybrid tea roses were not sustainable, so they were removed in 2016 to reduce chemical usage that adversely affected pollinators and other insects. We started using organic treatments, but found out they were still harmful. We decided to introduce beneficial insects, but need “scouts” to see if/how they are working. We created a map that identifies six “hot spots” and ask Scouts to observe and document: which insects are present; monitor the population; trial the release of beneficial insects; track insect damage; research perennials to attract good bugs; and use as teaching opportunity.

When we find bugs we don’t recognize, we have a great resource at the UW Department of Entomology that will provide identification. The American Public Garden Association (APGA) has also started a Sentinel Plant Network and they provide training to identify plants and insects that are invasive in North America. Samara Eisner and Katey Pratt attended a 2-day training in Green Bay, WI. This also provides access to a large library of materials and resources. The APGA

is enlisting public garden professionals to help with identifying emerging threats within the US and on our borders.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

b. Project Update – Randy Wiesner reported that 90% of the masonry/concrete block is installed; the roof is removed at the connection link in Lobby to start tying in the steel; the greenhouse structure arrived yesterday and much of the framing will be done by tonight. There will do a walk through tour with the Board at next month's meeting – must wear closed-toed shoes (no sandals). The project budget is on track with only one current change order. Timeline – the project is running a little behind, but no negotiations have been held with the contractor.

a. Capital Campaign Update – Joe Vande Slunt reviewed the Development Report and notes the highlights from a recent meeting on how to close the campaign strong and reach our fundraising goal:

1. To close the campaign, we need to be clear, concise and demonstrate need
2. We're going to ask for \$1.5 million to close the campaign
3. We're not going to use the \$250,000 matching gift challenge authorized by the Board. It sends the wrong message if we are using our own money – would prefer to find a donor that will match gifts.
4. Many upcoming opportunities to get the word out and lists of donors and people still to ask.

B. Financial Report

March & April financials will be available when our Financial Coordinator returns from leave later this month.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed the staff reports. Board member, Alnisa Allgood, created an app to assist visitors to find nearby restaurants. A list is also available at the Greeter Desk. Attendance is still behind YTD attendance and that is mostly due to the 1st quarter of 2019. Staff is continuing with dementia friendly training. Ms. Sladky is working on the City side of the budget – they have asked for scenarios if there is a projected 2.5% cut or a 2.5% increase as well as the base budget from 2019.

D. Development Reports

A new 2019 Partnership Opportunity packet was distributed. It was designed for potential sponsors and spells out on-going opportunities and benefits. Also passed around a sign-up sheet for the Membership table at Blooming Butterflies and Home Garden Tour. Feel free to contact staff for available dates and shifts.

E. Marketing & Public relations Report

Katy Plantenberg distributed the report and reviewed recent and upcoming marketing efforts and opportunities.

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

There is no new business.

VII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There are no announcements.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05pm.