

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2018

Members Present: Bill White, Dick Wagner, Mary Phillips, Kevin Hess, Alnisa Allgood, Renee Boyce, Philip Bradbury, Erik Lincoln, Tim Sherry, Michelle Taschek, Betty Chewning, Brad Hinkfuss, Laurel Neverdahl, Nancy Ragland, Roberta Sladky

Members Absent: Julie Rupert, Dan Lauffer, Susan Derse Philips, Angela Jenkins, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Barb Tensfeldt, Paul Williams

Staff: Tom Fullmer, Mike Gibson, Jake Immel, Patti Jorenby, Lisa Laschinger (City Parks), Katy Plantenberg, Kai Skadahl, Hannah Tubbs, Randy Wiesner (City Engineering)

Guests: Janine Wachter, Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau

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 September 18, 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. Get a Taste of the Garden to Glass Experience Project – by Katy Plantenberg, Tom Fullmer and Mike Gibson

Janine Wachter of the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) provided some background information about the creation of the Experience Project. It is meant to assist local attractions to create a tourist experience, which helps the GMCVB sell Madison, and helps create a new revenue stream for the attraction. Olbrich Gardens applied in January 2018 and staff participated in the project for seven months. Nine different attractions created 12 different experiences – Olbrich Gardens created two. GMCVB is marketing these experiences, as is Olbrich Marketing team. You can find information about all of the experiences at www.experiencemsn.com

The project started for all groups by learning why experiences are attractive to tourists and essential for attractions. A storyboard was created, followed by a complete script. The project is not about ‘talking at the visitors’ it is about hearing touching and tasting the experience. The next step is to learn how to “sell” the experience. Staff is reaching out to social clubs, wedding planners, hotels, senior travel groups, etc... The cost for the current experience, Totally Tropical, which takes place indoors, is \$25. This includes the experience and a signature drink in a souvenir glass. The public sessions are scheduled for Thursday nights at 5 pm and people purchase tickets online. Groups of 10 or more can also request a private tour on a different day (same fees apply), if available. In June, an outdoor element will be added and cost will be \$35.

The Board will be invited to go through the experience, free, in November or December. Details and a poll to see which month people prefer will be emailed soon. Board members are

our best ambassadors, so if you enjoy the free tour, talk to your friends and book one of our private sessions for 10+ people in 2019.

V. **REPORTS**

A. **President's Report**

a. Capital Campaign Update – classrooms have been named for Mathwich Family, Levy Family and Sherry Family.

b. Project Update – Randy Wiesner (City Engineering)

A written report is in your Board packet. Randy noted there is a link on the Olbrich website that will take you to his updated page that includes project history and monthly updates. The are installed so you'll be able to see photos and videos of the progress. We received a grant from the Madison Community Foundation to purchase enough urban ash to use for window frames in the Learning Center.

B. **Financial Report**

a. August 2018 Financials – Ms. Phillips reported that overall we are performing favorable to budget for the month and YTD. Development budgeted for a 25% increase in 2018, but due to staffing shortage much of the year, they are not there. They are planning for a strong end of year appeal. Special Events and Gift Shop had higher revenues than budgeted.

b. Approval to file the 2017 OBS 990 Tax Return

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Sherry to approve filing the 2017 990 tax return. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Cash Handling Policy – this is a new written policy to clarify procedures put in place in September which will satisfy the auditors' concerns from previous years. A question was asked whether this will impact volunteers. Volunteers will not be asked to sign off on the policy, and are, for the most part, using a cash register to document transactions. A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Ms. Neverdahl to approve the Cash Handling Policy. Motion carried unanimously.

C. **Director's Report**

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports and gave highlights.

D. **Development Report**

Please review the report in your packet.

E. **Marketing & Public Relations Report**

Katy Plantenberg reviewed the staff report and gave highlights.

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

The Board will have at least two opening, so let the Executive Committee know if you have suggestions for potential Board members.

VII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There are no announcements.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.