

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2022

Members Present: Philip Bradbury, Alnisa Allgood, Laura Peterson, Matt Cornwell, Susan Goodwin, Bethany Ordaz, Bill Patek, Juscha Robinson, Maurice Sheppard, Tim Sherry, Bill White, Liz Dannenbaum, Laurel Neverdahl, Tanya Zastrow

Members Absent: Renee Boyce, Julie Rupert, Julie Bernauer, Sandi Statz, Betty Chewning, Moira Harrington, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Fred Anderson, Jt Covelli, Kevin Hess, Dan Matson, Mary Phillips, Barb Tensfeldt, Paul Williams

Staff Present: Tom Fullmer, Jake Immel, Katy Nodolf, Liz Parker, Kai Skadah

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

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Peterson and seconded by Ms. Allgood to approve the meeting minutes of May 17, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

President Bradbury introduced new OBS Board Director, Bill Patek. Mr. Patek shared that he recently retired from his position as Director of SmithGroup, a national environmental consulting and architectural firm. He added that his experience with master planning and schematic design would be helpful with Olbrich's upcoming projects.

- a. **Capital Project – To pay the City of Madison \$2,241,583.48 for OBS's remaining obligation with the Frautschi Family Learning Center and greenhouse capital project, using available funds at Monona Bank. (This will include spending down all remaining donor-designated capital campaign funds [ICS Sweep Account], and spending down all available funds held in OBS Legacy Gifts, plus available cash.)**

President Bradbury asked for a motion to approve this final payment to the City. Ms. Zastrow noted that once paid, OBS's commitment to the project would be complete, even though some items remain to be completed.

A motion was made by Ms. Allgood and seconded by Mr. White to approve the final payment to the City of Madison. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. **Cash Flow Plan** – Ms. Zastrow explained the Strategic Director's Fund, which would be used at the discretion of the Executive Director, with approval by the Executive Committee, for the purposes of projects such as the new website, strategic plan, and lobby enhancements. It was noted that this fund would allow cash flow outside of the annual budget, allowing urgent projects to begin, instead of waiting to be added to the next year's budget.

There was discussion about pre-reporting spending from this fund with the full OBS Board and setting a minimum dollar amount that would not require pre-approval from the full Board. The explanation of the Strategic Director's Fund was amended to include: *Expenses under \$50K would go to the Executive Committee for approval. Expenses over \$50,000 would go to the full OBS Board for approval.*

A motion was made by Ms. Allgood and seconded by Ms. Goodwin to approve the Strategic Director's Fund, with the amended language. Motion carried unanimously, with amendment.

- c. **R. Richard Wagner Park – Update** – Ms. Zastrow reported that a joint request letter from OBS & Madison Parks Foundation was going to the Madison Parks Commission for approval, to rename Kerr-McGee Triangle Park to R. Richard Wagner Park.
A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Patek to approve the request to rename Kerr-McGee Triangle Park to R. Richard Wagner Park. Motion carried unanimously.
- d. **Thai Pavilion Update** - Ms. Zastrow shared that the virtual, public information meeting took place on June 1, where staff and project partners provided an update on the status of the building condition, the proposed scope of the work, and the rehabilitation project schedule. She reported that InSite Consulting Architects completed their condition assessment, and determined that the roof was in critical condition and that the decorative finishes required repair. For more details visit: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/projects/olbrich-gardens-royal-thai-pavilion-condition-assessment>
- e. **Atwood Construction Project** – Ms. Zastrow gave an update on the upcoming Atwood Ave. project, scheduled to begin March/April 2023 and end by Thanksgiving 2023, and that an Olbrich representative would be present at weekly construction meetings. She talked about the changes to Atwood, which included lane improvements, medians, safer areas for pedestrians, and biking lanes. She explained that the first section to begin construction was scheduled to be from Fair Oaks to Sugar, second would be Walter to OBG main entrance, and third would be Walter to Cottage Grove Rd., noting that they would always keep one driveway to Olbrich open. Ms. Zastrow added that Olbrich expressed interest in planning the medians that were wider than 6’, so they can match the design of the gardens and have irrigation.
- f. **Strategic Plan Consultant** – Ms. Zastrow announced that the collaborative team of [EMD Consulting](#), [Findorff](#), & [The People’s Company](#) had been selected to lead Olbrich through the strategic plan process. She explained that four proposals had been received and two firms had been interviewed by the Interview Committee which consisted of Tanya Zastrow, Joe Vande Slunt, Jeff Epping and OBS Board Director Matt Cornwell. Responses from the Interview Committee were shared, noting that the chosen firm had a long history of consulting with botanic gardens and many public/private partnership gardens, they were local experts on seeking and receiving stakeholder & community input, and that their focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and access (DEIA) clearly stood out.

Ms. Zastrow reviewed the strategic plan priorities: Revisiting and reimagining our Mission & Vision; Analyzing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT); Assessing the OBS & City of Madison partnership; Taking a high level overview of finances; Assessing the opportunity, risks and priorities of garden expansion & capital fund priorities; Getting stakeholder input and assessing internal culture in regards to DEIA. She outlined a draft of the strategic plan process which included workshops, focus groups, meetings and community engagement meetings & interviews, noting that this is where input would be collected from OBS Board members, OBG staff, City of Madison staff, OBG volunteers, Parks Commission, alders, and members of the community. She added that process would begin in late July 2022 and should take 6 months.

There was discussion about the OBS Board’s involvement in the process. Ms. Zastrow explained that there would be a Core Planning Team that would be made up of Olbrich staff and members of the OBS Board. It was suggested that there be a Board retreat, or listening session, with the Board to discuss priorities of the plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Cornwell and seconded by Mr. Patek to approve the hiring of EMD Consulting, with Findorff & The People Company, to develop Olbrich’s Strategic Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Zastrow explained that Olbrich would like to begin work on its database and payment systems, with Plative Consulting, to improve the Salesforce database and find a payment solution that would

allow a donor to make a donation, renew their membership, purchase an event ticket, and register for a class at the same time. She asked for a motion to accept the hiring of Plative Consulting.

A motion was made by Ms. Goodwin and seconded by Ms. Ordaz to approve the hiring of Plative Consulting, to improve Olbrich's database and payment systems. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Financial Report

- a. **April 2022 Financials** – Liz Parker reviewed the Financial Reports. She noted that as of 4/30/2022, all departments were over budget in revenue except for Development. Ms. Zastrow explained that memorial donations and donation boxes were down and that program sponsorships were greater than what was listed on the summary financial report – Mr. Vande Slunt and Ms. Parker were working to correct the financials, as actual sponsorships were higher. She noted that the reduction in revenue should not be a cause for concern, as these funds ebb and flow based on factors outside of our control.

C. Director's Report

Staff Written Reports – Ms. Zastrow reviewed the Staff Written reports. She congratulated Horticulturist Erin Presley for being selected to receive a [Garden Scholars Award](#) to attend the 2022 American Public Gardens Association (APGA) Annual Conference, which was currently taking place in Portland, OR. She noted that Erin received the inaugural 'Gerry Donnelly Future Leaders scholarship' from the APGA and Directors of Large Gardens (DLG).

Ms. Zastrow highlighted the Facilities Maintenance Team. She thanked them for the new structures they constructed in the Gardens, for repairing/replacing wood dividers on paths in the Gardens, and for beginning the installation process of sticking bird stripe dots on the new learning center windows. Ms. Nodolf mentioned that Instagram influencer, curbfreecory, visited Olbrich and was very complimentary of the accessibility of the Gardens.

Ms. Zastrow shared a story about an engraved stone on a path near the Event Garden, dedicated to peace activist Samantha Smith.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements.

VIII. ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.