

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2022

Members Present: Philip Bradbury, Alnisa Allgood, Laura Peterson, Matt Cornwell, Susan Goodwin, Bethany Ordaz, Maurice Sheppard, Bill White, Betty Chewning, Liz Dannenbaum, Moira Harrington, Laurel Neverdahl, Tanya Zastrow

Members Absent: Renee Boyce, Julie Rupert, Julie Bernauer, Juscha Robinson, Tim Sherry, Sandi Statz, Eric Knepp

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

Staff Present: Jake Immel, Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Katy Nodolf, Kaylee McDonald, Marty Petillo, Kai Skadah, Joe Vande Slunt

I. **The meeting called to order at 4:01 pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Goodwin and seconded by Ms. Peterson to approve the meeting minutes of February 8, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

IV. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

- a. **Nominating Committee** – President Bradbury noted that there's one vacant Director seat on the OBS Board. Ms. Zastrow reported that she and Ms. Allgood would be meeting with a potential new Board member. She added that this recommendation came from a current Board member.
- b. **Staffing Update** – Ms. Zastrow announced that Elizabeth Parker was hired as OBS's new Financial Coordinator, and would start on March 28. She briefly described Ms. Parker's familiarity of working with the Stoughton Hospital Foundation and Partners of Stoughton Hospital, that she's a MATC grad, and that she's an Olbrich fan and is looking forward to joining the team. She noted that there wouldn't be a Financial Report at this Board meeting, and catch-up would start once Ms. Parker was on board. Ms. Zastrow shared that two new Gift Shop Retail & Hospitality Associates had just been hired. She added that interviews were taking place this week for the Youth & Family Programs Coordinator and the Seasonal Tram Drivers.
- c. **Parks Commission Approvals** – Ms. Zastrow reported that the following requests were approved: Olbrich Garden hours from April 1 – Sept. 30, 2022 would be 10 am-6 pm and Oct. 1, 2022-March 31, 2023 would be 10 am-4 pm. Closures of the Bolz Conservatory to make lighting upgrades (April 4-8), early closure to prepare for Summer Breeze (June 17 & 18) and GLEAM opening night (August 27), and full closure of the Bolz Conservatory for Blooming Butterflies preparation (July 11 & 12). Permanent fee structure for Bolz Conservatory admission: \$6 for ages 13 and up, \$3 for ages 6-12, free for ages 5 and under & Olbrich members, continuing to keep the free Wed. and Sat. mornings from 10 am-noon, & offering free scholarship passes to anyone that asks.
- d. **Thai Pavilion Update** – Ms. Zastrow noted the link that was included on the agenda: [Olbrich Gardens Thai Sala \(Pavilion\) Condition Assessment | Engineering, City of Madison, Wisconsin](#). She added that staff are continuing to work with Parks and UW Madison, and that a decision would be made by May 2022 on whether netting would be installed or access to the pavilion would be blocked, to protect visitors from falling roof tiles.

- e. **Strategic Plan** – Ms. Zastrow asked the Board three questions during the meeting (and uploaded them to the Google Drive after the meeting) to gather additional feedback from the Board: What are the goals for our strategic plan? What should the process include? What should the final product include? She explained that she is in the process of working on a Request for Proposal that would be sent to multiple firms, and that two firms would be selected to interview this summer. She added that the Strategic Plan would align with Imagine Madison, the Public Garden Sustainability Index, and the Climate Toolkit.
- f. **Awards** – Ms. Zastrow congratulated Erin Presley for being selected to receive a [Garden Scholars Award](#) to attend the 2022 American Public Gardens Association (APGA) Annual Conference. She noted that Erin received the inaugural ‘Gerry Donnelly Future Leaders scholarship’ from the APGA and Directors of Large Gardens (DLG) and that this was an important honor that would be celebrated at the [American Public Garden Association Annual Conference](#) this June in Portland, OR. Ms. Zastrow also shared the news that Olbrich Botanical Gardens had received the 2022 Garden Stewardship Award from the American Horticultural Society, an award that is given to a public garden that embraces and exemplifies sustainable horticultural practices in design, maintenance, and/or programs. She added that Olbrich was the second garden to win this award. This news was shared on AHS’s website here: <https://ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/national-awards/great-american-gardeners/2022-award-winners/>

B. Audit Report – Mr. Vande Slunt explained that most of the fieldwork done for the audit took place between Feb. 15 – 18 and that the audit was currently in ‘partner review’. He added that Baker Tilly would present the final results of the audit to the Executive Committee and the OBSF Board at the Exec. meeting in early April, and present to the full OBS Board at the April 19 meeting. Mr. Vande Slunt noted that as part of the audit, Baker Tilly looked into OBS’s eligibility for the Employee Retention Credit and found that the Society was eligible, but for a minimal amount that was not worth pursuing. He added that OBS applied for PPP2 loan forgiveness, which was fully forgiven by the U.S. Small Business Administration. President Bradbury expressed his gratitude to former OBS Financial Coordinator Rylee Schuchardt, for her organizational skills and for leaving OBS in great shape for the audit.

C. Director’s Report

Staff Written Reports – Ms. Zastrow briefly reviewed the Staff Written reports. She emphasized the successful sales in the Gift Shop during January.

D. Development Report – Mr. Vande Slunt reviewed the Development report. He highlighted the surge in membership households over the past few months and noted that the Spring Flower Show member preview party had 452 attendees. Mr. Vande Slunt announced that the Partnership Guide was recently updated, and that it would be updated quarterly and posted on the Olbrich website. There was a question about what kind of demographic information, specifically on location, was collected from Olbrich members. Mr. Vande Slunt replied that they are able to look up member households by zip code.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements.

VIII. ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.