

**OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2023**

Members Present: Alnisa Allgood, Susan Goodwin, Maurice Sheppard, Laura Peterson, Julie Bernauer, Renee Boyce, Matt Cornwell, Bill Patek, Betty Chewning, Liz Dannenbaum, Moira Harrington, Laurel Neverdahl

Members Absent: Philip Bradbury, Bethany Ordaz, Juscha Robinson, Julie Rupert, Sandi Statz, Eric Knepp, Tanya Zastrow

Advisors Present: Jt Covelli, Kevin Hess

Staff Present: Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Katy Nodolf, Liz Parker, Joe Vande Slunt

Guests Present: Ryan Lay (Baker Tilly)

I. **The meeting called to order at 4:05 pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Harrington and seconded by Ms. Bernauer to approve the meeting minutes of March 21, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

IV. **REPORTS**

Before reports were given, President Allgood passed around a card for the Board to sign for Kai Skadah, who recently accepted a new position as a Financial Specialist in the UW Space Science and Engineering Center. Ms. Skadah worked for Olbrich for 18 years, and the Board is deeply grateful for her service.

A. Presentation of the 2022 OBS/OBSF Consolidated Financial Statements (Audit) by Baker Tilly US, LLP

- a. Ryan Lay from Baker Tilly presented. He noted that Baker Tilly met with the Executive Committees of the Olbrich Botanical Society and Olbrich Botanical Society Foundation Boards last week. The biggest change in this year's financials and the audit was due to an accounting change at the Madison Community Foundation (MCF). Olbrich Botanical Society is a fundholder at MCF. Decades ago, Olbrich established a fund at MCF, and since then, some donors have made contributions to Olbrich's MCF fund. MCF has updated their bookkeeping to better reflect which assets are Olbrich's and which assets are MCF's. MCF determined that an additional \$124,107 was designated to Olbrich from donors, but the assets belong to MCF. Olbrich can no longer record these particular assets on its balance sheet. As a result, there is a \$124,107 loss related to MCF recorded on the 2022 books. Additional losses occurred in 2022 from investment performance and the Society's final capital campaign payment to the City of Madison. On the positive note, it was another great year of operating budget performance, with revenues up across all departments, especially the Gift Shop. Mr. Lay thanked Treasurer Peterson, Liz Parker, Tanya Zastrow, and Joe Vande Slunt for their cooperation throughout the audit.

A motion was made by Treasurer Peterson and seconded by Ms. Goodwin to accept the results of the 2022 audit. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Update on the Board Retreat

- a. Mr. Vande Slunt shared that a date had been set for the Board Retreat, Friday, May 5, from 8:30 – 12:30 p.m., at Olbrich. The Executive Committee is working on finalizing the agenda, which will be specific and focused, as we have a lot of ground to cover. He shared that Executive Director Zastrow reached out to Tim Prince from Findorff to potentially serve as a facilitator. Mr. Prince helped with the community listening sessions during Olbrich’s strategic plan and is familiar with the organization.

President Allgood mentioned Board Members will be at the Board Members retreat, and that Advisors will receive an e-mail inviting them to a separate retreat, also to be held in May at a date TBD.

C. Director’s Report

- a. **Updates** – Mr. Vande Slunt shared that with Kai’s departure, Executive Director Zastrow is splitting Ms. Skadah’s full-time OBS position into two separate OBS part-time positions (20 hours, benefits eligible). The first position will be an Administrative Assistant, who will help Tanya, the OBS Board, the OBSF Board, and board committees. The second position is for an HR Specialist, who will help us with growing staff, from recruiting, hiring, on-boarding, retention, payroll, and more. Ms. Zastrow is asking the Board to share the positions within their networks. The positions are posted on LinkedIn, Madison365, Handshake (Madison College), Indeed, and Olbrich’s website.

Mr. Vande Slunt also shared that we will soon be able to post positions for Director of Horticulture and Director of Guest Experience. Mr. Sheppard asked if we had enough help currently to get all the work done. Mr. Vande Slunt said that we are hiring as much as we can and we would keep the Board updated. Ms. Laschinger commented that for some City positions, like Facility Maintenance Worker, we are able to use the City’s existing pool of applicants to expedite the search.

Mr. Vande Slunt shared that a group of four staff (Education Director Kim North, Herb and Wildflower Garden Horticulturist Erin Presley, Sunken Garden Horticulturist Sam Malone, and himself) are headed to Fort Worth, Texas in early June for the national conference for the American Public Gardens Association. Recently retired Horticulture Director Jeff Epping will also be joining the Olbrich crew on the trip, as he is receiving a major award from APGA. We can’t say too much about the award right now – but we will keep you posted once we’re able to make an announcement.

D. Financial Report

- a. Treasurer Peterson reviewed the February financials. The year is off to a strong start. She noted that Ms. Parker and Mr. Vande Slunt are continuing to work to input the monthly budget into Quickbooks, which means that the financial reports are being presented a bit differently at the moment. Vice President Goodwin asked if this delay is yearly or a one-time occurrence. Mr. Vande Slunt explained that it is one-time occurrence. The creation of a new department – Guest Experience – requires new revenue and expense accounts to be created, and also impacts how payroll functions within the system.

E. Other Department Reports

- a. Other updates were discussed among Board and staff, including:
 - Veevart, the software that will work within Salesforce and serve as a more comprehensive payment processor, is still with the City’s approval process.
 - Ms. Nodolf noted the new website is a couple weeks away from launching. Olbrich won’t make a big splash publicly when launching, but will let the Board know.
 - Ms. Dannenbaum asked about the impact of construction on the Garden’s operations and finances. So far, Olbrich has not noticed a large reduction in visitors or revenue, and

Executive Director Zastrow continues to attend the weekly construction meetings for updates. Ms. Chewing and others also discussed construction signage and traffic flows, which is something that Ms. Nodolf is working on with the City and Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

- The Perennial Plant Sale, which has replaced the Plant Sale with the Pros, went live on Olbrich’s website today. Check it out!

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

VI. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no new announcements.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made at 4:55 p.m. by Ms. Goodwin and seconded by Mr. Sheppard to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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