

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes DRAFT
January 15, 2019

Members Present: Julie Rupert, Renee Boyce, Mary Phillips, Susan Goodwin, Kevin Hess, Erik Lincoln, Laura Peterson, Dick Wagner, Angela Jenkins, Eric Knepp, Laurel Neverdahl, Nancy Ragland, Roberta Sladky

Members Absent: Philip Bradbury, Bill White, Alnisa Allgood, Susan Derse Phillips, Tim Sherry, Betty Chewning, Brad Hinkfuss

Advisors Present: Jt Covelli, Janet Loewi

Staff Present: Colten Blackburn, Amanda Dix, Terry Hodge, Jake Immel, Katy Plantenberg, Kai Skadahl, Elizabeth Spry, Hannah Tubbs, Joe Vande Slunt, Randy Wiesner (City Engineering)

I. **The meeting called to order at 4:02pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Hess and seconded by Ms. Ragland to approve the meeting minutes of December 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. OBG Here & Now – Conservatory Edition – Colten Blackburn, Amanda Dix, Terry Hodge

The Conservatory Staff introduced themselves to the Board for the first time and talked about their backgrounds and what their roles are in the conservatory. Colten Blackburn spoke about the restructure of the conservatory department and showed a graph of each employee's responsibilities which included the number of plants each staff member produces and manages, the amount of greenhouse space each staff member is in charge of, and what events they are involved in.

Amanda Dix gave a production update. Seed production just started at the rented space at Fitchburg Farms the past week and the production volunteers have stuck with the project and have been making the drive out to Fitchburg.

Terry Hodge talked about the orchid collection and how he is planning to revamp the Orchid Aerie in the conservatory. He has been spending a lot of time with the orchid collection, touching every plant and working on double-checking the records and making sure that we have an accurate list of all the orchids.

With the transition of Terry taking over the orchid collection, Colten has been able to focus on other areas that have been needing attention in the conservatory. There has been soil fertility problems that are being resolved and new canopy birds have been introduced. Researching an alternate to an Excel spreadsheet to maintain plant records is also an ongoing project.

Conservatory staff will take on one of the outdoor garden beds (between the conservatory and the parking lot) where they plan to display a small tropical oasis.

See pages 8-10 of the January Board packet for more details on their presentation.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

a. Welcome & Introduction of New Board Members

President Rupert welcomed new Board members in attendance - Susan Goodwin and Laura Peterson - and everyone in the room described a little about themselves. She welcomed Philip Bradbury in his new role as Vice President and Renee Boyce in her new role as Secretary. She also thanked past presidents for their leadership and for continuing to serve on the Board.

b. Capital Campaign Update – Joe Vande Slunt reported that the current balance is \$4,895,305. He is now including a new, detailed Rooted & Growing Capital Campaign report in the packet (page 20 of the January Board packet.) There will be a special Capital Campaign/Capital Project edition of the newsletter this summer.

c. Project Update – Randy Wiesner (City Engineering)

Randy described the new conservatory environmental control system, Wadsworth SEED system. He also showed the video of the construction progress since the beginning of November. He noted there is a link on the Olbrich website that will take you to his updated page that includes project history and monthly updates.

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/projects/olbrich-gardens-expansion-project-1>

d. 2019 Goals

OBS Board Goals – President Rupert presented the 3 goals for the Board:

1. Refresh the Garden masterplan to include expanding the Gardens to the 10 acres across the bridge.
2. Complete the fundraising for the Learning Center and Greenhouse project.
3. Energize the Development Committee again and a Board member to lead that committee.

Staff Garden-wide Goals – Ms. Sladky presented the 4 garden-wide goals prepared by the staff leadership team:

1. Plan to develop ways to embed diversity and inclusion in our work – seek to attract and retain the best talent, obtain new insights, enhance collaboration, strengthen leadership, and ensure relevance to a broad and diverse public as we work to celebrate the importance of plants in a sustainable world. (adapted from the Morton Arboretum plan)
2. Start the development of a masterplan for the 10 acres adjacent to the Thai Garden – seek support from the OBS Board and the Parks Department to begin this important next phase for Olbrich's future.
3. Prepare a collaborative, fun, learning-filled grand opening activities for the learning center and greenhouse.
4. Collaborate with the City of Madison web team to complete the update of the Olbrich Garden website

B. Financial Report

a. November 2018 Financials – Ms. Phillips reviewed the November financial report. She noted that November trends are consistent with the whole year and it appears we will be favorable to budget for YTD for revenue at the end of December. OBS Financial Coordinator,

Rylee Schuchardt, has done a great job of wrapping up 2018 and preparing for the audit at the end of February.

Ms. Sladky passed around the Audit Planning document that BDO provided and noted that BDO will be at the April Board meeting to do a presentation of the 2018 audit.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports.

D. Development Report

Joe Vande Slunt reported that there was a great response to the year-end appeal. He will be attending the Non-Profit Draft Day on January 19 to possibly identify potential Board members for the current vacancies.

Ms. Sladky commented on the smart thought process that Joe and Jake have come up with for sending out year-end appeals.

E. Marketing & Public Relations Report

Katy Plantenberg reported that we will be contracting Shanna Wolf of S. Photography to take photos at select events again this year. A primary goal of these photo shoots is to showcase the diversity of our visitors.

Madison was selected as the 2019 location for Joe Veneto's "Experience Lab." Joe Veneto was the consultant the GMCVB hired to lead the Greater Madison Experience Project.

Garden Expo takes place February 8-10 at the Alliant Energy Center. If Board members are interested in signing up as a membership ambassador or want to help staff the booth and share your love of Olbrich with attendees, let staff know!

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Jenkins noted that she and Ms. Allgood just published the 5th edition of the newsletter they have started to answer neighborhood questions.

VIII. ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm.