

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 18, 2017

Members Present: Bill White, Julie Rupert, Dick Wagner, Mary Phillips, Kevin Hess, Alnisa Allgood, Renee Boyce, Julie Herfel, Tim Sherry, Michelle Taschek, Betty Chewning, Brad Hinkfuss, Laurel Neverdahl, Roberta Sladky

Members Absent: Philip Bradbury, Dan Lauffer, Susan Derse Phillips, David Ahrens, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Elizabeth Ogren Erickson, Jeff Levy, Janet Loewi, Barb Tensfeldt, Paul Williams

Staff Present: Jake Immel, Missy Jeanne, Patti Jorenby, Ashlyn Mehlhaff, Katy Plantenberg, Joe Vande Slunt

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Hess to approve the meeting minutes of May 16, 2017. 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. Rhapsody in Bloom Report- by Missy Jeanne, Special Events Manger and RIB Committee Members Julie Herfel and Janet Loewi

Missy Jeanne thanked Board Members who attended, donated and supported Rhapsody in Bloom. She reviewed the Board report and noted a net of approximately \$56,000 – which is the 2nd highest amount raised in the event’s history. Event staff would like to hear from Board members about what they value as sponsors of other organizations’ events. A post Rhapsody survey was sent to everyone who provided an email address. The results were split about 50/50 on almost every aspect of the event. Some people loved the new format, others didn’t. Some liked the food options, others didn’t. Some liked the opportunity to stroll the garden and not have assigned dinner seating and others didn’t. Let Missy know if you have any suggestions about the event or would like to join the committee. The Rhapsody Committee will begin planning for 2018 in September.

V. REPORTS

A. President’s Report

a. Capital Campaign – Ashlyn Mehlhaff noted that the public phase of the campaign is officially underway with a mailing that went out about one week ago. Mailing went to approximately 600 volunteers, 5500 members, and 390 Circle members and to date have received responses from 48 donors = \$7428. Additional mailings and outreach are planned. Including a purchase of mailing lists, non-members who take Education classes or who have purchased raffle tickets.

Staff are working on information for the Lobby, signage and will make self-mailers available for pick up in the Lobby. Currently raised @ \$4.6 million. Ms. Allgood and Ms. Covelli suggested checking into using Search Engine Marketing for an online marketing campaign and more online donations.

b. Intro of new Board Member

President White introduced Brad Hinkfuss – he is Alder Marsha Rummel’s designee. Currently President of the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara neighborhood association, Mr. Hinkfuss lives nearby.

B. Financial Report

a. June 2017 Financials – Ms. Phillips reviewed the Financial Report (a new, corrected report handed out at meeting). Total Earned revenue is favorable compared to 2016 and the 2017 Budget, each by approximately \$30,000. Total Operating Expenses YTD – expenses are favorable to budget by \$130,000. This is partially due to a number of staff vacancies as the lead for hiring usually runs longer than projected. Net Income YTD is also favorable by \$161,000.

C. Director’s Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports. Ms. Tensfeldt will be recognized with the Senior Service Award at Downtown Rotary tomorrow. There are three finalist candidates for the Conservatory Curator position and two of them are from out of town. They will each have an all day visit that will a tour of the facilities, the outdoor gardens, opportunities to meet with staff in the areas the Conservatory Curator is most engaged. A formal interview will follow. Attendance is 17,000 ahead of last year – it appears to be another record year for attendance.

Some volunteer shifts are still available for Blooming Butterflies – see Marty or check the sign-up sheets in the Admin hallway.

MSR is finalizing recommendations from the public and staff meetings. When complete, they will move on to the schematic design phase. They will be on site on August 2 to begin.

Four members of the Park Commission are coming to Olbrich on Sat, July 22nd as part of their orientation. Ms. Sladky has talked with City Traffic Engineering regarding reconstruction of Atwood Ave from Fair Oaks to Cottage Grove Rd. There will be an initial neighborhood meeting in September and construction likely in 2020.

D. Development and Marketing Staff Update

Please review staff reports.

E. Marketing & Public Relations Report

Please review staff reports.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are no announcements.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07pm.