

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2015

Members Present: Kevin Hess, Bill White, Dick Wagner, Renee Boyce, Julie Herfel, Erin Ogden, Susan Derse Phillips, Julie Rupert, Michelle Taschek, Jeffrey Lewis, Laurel Neverdahl, Roberta Sladky, Betty Chewning

Members Absent: Mary Phillips, Tim Sherry, Dan Lauffer, David Ahrens, Eric Knepp, Marsha Rummel

Advisors Present: Fred Anderson, Jt Covelli, Janet Loewi, Dan Matson, Paul Williams

Staff Present: Jake Immel, Christian Harper, Patti Jorenby, Ashlyn Mehlhaff, Katy Morgan-Davies, Joe Vande Slunt

I. **President Hess called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Ogden and seconded by Ms. Taschek to approve the meeting minutes of October 20, 2015. 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. Olbrich's Holiday Express 2015 – What's New?

Christian Harper - Olbrich Horticulturist, distributed a handout with photos of some of the Lego© designs that will be part of the show. New plant material will also be featured. There will be fewer poinsettia, but more dwarf evergreens, white hydrangeas, Japanese holly fern, cyclamens also. In addition the Conservatory staff have grown Princettias® that will be used for donor gifts and for gift shop sales. Mr. Harper noted that the staff have taken notes about the performance of these new plants to improve future shows. The Wisconsin Lego© Users Group are providing the art – many of them are very large and special platforms have been created to support the artwork.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

President Hess thanked Bill White for hosting the staff appreciation event. It was well attended and everyone had a great time.

a. Capital Campaign Update: Katy Morgan-Davies noted that we are losing prospects to “snowbird” fever. There has been one Capital Campaign mtg so far and have raised \$600,000 from 7 donors.

b. Nominating Committee: If you have any suggestions for new Board members, please call Ms. Sladky. She will email you a form for gathering information about the individual.

B. Financial Report

a. October 2015 Financials

The October 2015 financials were distributed at the meeting. Ms. Sladky noted that expenses are slightly under budget and revenue is ahead of budget, so all is good. The OBS Foundation distribution was \$200,000 and was completed on October 1st. The OBSF Distribution is expected to be \$16,000 larger in 2016.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports. Attendance is on track to be close to 300,000 for the year. The Olbrich cookbook is for sale in the Gift shop and is \$13.66 (w/tax). It would make a nice holiday gift.

D. Development & Marketing Staff Update

Katy Morgan-Davies introduced new staff member Jake Immel. He has been with OBS for about 3 weeks and is the database specialist for membership and development. He previously worked for Clean Wisconsin. Katy & Ashlyn have attended a number of community events to make contacts, sell cookbooks and memberships and just generally get the word out about Olbrich Gardens. The Development staff had a team building retreat and it involved a ropes course.

The half-price gift memberships appeal and the Annual Appeal will be going out in the next 2 weeks. Different letters for the varying segments and demographics. The Bolz Conservatory chocolate exhibit member preview was a new event in 2015 and attracted more than 300 attendees. The final net revenue for GLEAM was \$59,000. It is definitely taking place next year and work has already begun to fine tune the artist requests for submissions, among other things.

E. Development Committee Report

Ms. Covelli reported that all 2016 sponsorship asks have been sent. A new brochure was created for "Sponsorship Opportunities". Only a small number was printed, so information can be updated easily when re-printed.

F. Marketing & Public Relations Report

Ms. Covelli noted the great response to GLEAM and mentioned that potential sponsors have already expressed interest in next year. Adams Outdoor Advertising is changing how they donate in-kind services. They are limiting the number of organizations they serve to ten and, fortunately, Olbrich made the list.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Holiday Express Flower and Train Show preview party is Friday, Dec 4th from 3 – 7pm.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05pm.