

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2018

Members Present: Bill White, Julie Rupert, Dick Wagner, Mary Phillips, Kevin Hess, Alnisa Allgood, Renee Boyce, Philip Bradbury, Tim Sherry, Michelle Taschek, Erik Lincoln, Angela Jenkins, Betty Chewning, Laurel Neverdahl, Roberta Sladky, Brad Hinkfuss, Nancy Ragland

Members Absent: Dan Lauffer, Susan Derse Phillips, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Fred Anderson, Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Elizabeth Ogren Erickson, Dale Mathwich, Barb Tensfeldt

Guest Present: Randy Wiesner, Architect 3 City Engineering

Staff Present: Eva Ballering, Issy Bilek, Oliver Hall, Missy Jeanne, Patti Jorenby, Mia Kennel, Katy Plantenberg, Kai Skadahl, Sarah Smilanich, Joe Vande Slunt

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

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Rupert and seconded by Mr. Bradbury to approve the meeting minutes of June 19, 2018. It was noted that "Advisors Present" section was missing from the minutes. The following Advisors attended the meeting: Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Sandy Dolister, Elizabeth Ogren Erickson, Janet Loewi, Dale Mathwich, Barb Tensfeldt. Motion carried unanimously with the addition of Advisors Present.

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. Meet Olbrich's Interns – Ms. Sladky outlined the intern program and introduced some of our interns. They all shared their backgrounds and education. Sarah Smilanich noted that the internship helped her learn that she does like doing horticulture work and it helped her get a job that will start in the fall. Eva Ballering grew up in Madison and visited the gardens a lot. She recently bought a house in the area and loves being back in the neighborhood. Issy Bilek graduated from Sarah Lawrence and worked at New York Botanical Gardens and loves that Olbrich is a free garden. She likes the smaller, personal feel of the garden and that you can meet the Board and ALL the staff at a staff meeting. Oliver Hall is staying with a host family during his internship and said he could not have done it without that arrangement. Mia Kennel is the Conservatory intern and grew up in Northern IL, and visited the gardens often. She said the smaller garden lets her get involved in more aspects of the job than she could have in a larger garden setting.

We appreciate all their hard work and excitement. Staff will prepare a potluck lunch in August to thank the interns before they move on to their next adventure.

V. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

a. **Capital Campaign Update** – Joe Vande Slunt reported that he is working through the database to identify additional individual donors. The staff went to Goodman Community Center to see how they are conducting ‘hard hat’ tours of their new spaces.

b. **Project Update** – Randy Wiesner reported that bids were opened on July 12 and that Joe Daniels is the approved bidder with a bid of \$9.53 million (1.4% over estimate – which is good). Horticulture and Conservatory staff have a lot to do in the next 6 weeks to remove plants, trees, containers, supplies, electrical fixtures, etc. The contractor will be on site the first full week of September. Question was asked about contingencies and Randy noted there is a standard 8% contingency built in.

President White noted planning will begin for a groundbreaking ceremony.

B. Financial Report

a. **May 2018 Financials** – Ms. Philips noted that Riley Schuchardt, new Finance Coordinator, started on Monday and is jumping right in. May 2018 is down compared to May 2017, but is favorable compared to budget. Ms. Philips remarked that in her time working with Olbrich, she has noticed that many anomalies in the monthly financials are related to timing issues.

C. Director’s Report

Ms. Sladky reviewed staff reports. Blooming Butterflies volunteer training took place yesterday and the exhibit opens for members on Wednesday and the public on Thursday. The Bolz Conservatory canopy is not as dense as previous years, so we expect the butterflies will be more active at kid level. The Home Garden Tour went well. Cindy Cary, longtime Conservatory staff person, is retiring at end of August. She is training staff on the Blooming Butterfly event and we appreciate the lead-time she is giving us in finding a replacement.

D. Development Report

Joe Vande Slunt reviewed the report. Missy Jeanne gave a Rhapsody in Bloom wrap-up (distributed handout) and discussed future changes. Due to construction in 2019, Rhapsody will be on hiatus and Development staff have proposed a few other new events to fill in revenue gaps and entice new crowds to the gardens.

E. Marketing & Public Relations Report

Katy Plantenberg described the Experience Project (working with GMCVB), which will debut in October. It will conclude in the Conservatory, and will take place either before or after the public hours. Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau will be providing publicity and this will work on marketing it to our rental events, weddings, bus tours, etc. There will be a public time available on Thursdays, but we also plan to do let people book their own private event on other dates – so plan a group visit with your friends!

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Allgood updated the Board about new things at the Schumacher Library. Patrons can check out an “explorer backpack” which includes cool gadgets to help explore the gardens while visiting. A new children’s reading area was also developed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm