

**St. Charles County Master Gardeners (MG)
Steering Committee (SC) Minutes (Approved)
Friday, August 11 – 2023 09:00AM
In C conference room.**

*Our mission is: To **provide horticultural information and training to the gardening public** based on University of Missouri research that is specific to the local climate, soils, and plants.*

Meeting at Extension room C
No Zoom Meeting

Steering Committee: Rebecca Poon (Treasurer), ~~Laura Steimel (Vice President)~~, Cindy Platzer (Demo Garden lead), Patti Kolek (Education Committee), Eli Isele (Program Coordinator), ~~Catherine Ebone~~

Invitees: ~~Cindy Heider, Marsha Brown, Donna Lindsey, Mary Medina, Terri Scheer, Bonnie Winkeler, Waneta Parmenter, Nancy Torke, Valerie Mertz, Sydney Turner, Deana Dothage~~

Also Present: Rebekah Davis

9:00 Call to order: Joe Walker

Quorum Count and Attendance: Catherine Ebone cannot attend Joe Walker took minutes

Secretary's report: Review of June meeting minutes
Motion to approve minutes made by Patti Kolek, motion was seconded and discussed. The Minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

Treasurer's report: Rebecca Poon Financial position report
Motion to approve report made by Patti Kolek, motion seconded and discussed. The report was approved unanimously as submitted.

Rebecca Poon reviewed Credit Card options and pros/cons.

Cindy Platzer made a motion to authorize treasurer to apply for a regular (Visa) credit card at Commerce Bank for the MG corporation. The motion was seconded and discussed. Motion approved unanimously.

Cindy Platzer suggested when reporting to membership that funds be reported as allocated vs unallocated, so that it is clear how much discretionary dollars are truly available. Treasurer will review suggestion.

MU Horticulturalist Specialist/Coordinator: Eli Isele

Sharing Eli's earlier thoughts on Level 1 training in person in 2024:

I think the MGs could provide a lot of assistance:

*Creating a committee of MGs that would participate and execute the training
Communication with trainees
Setting up and tearing down the room
Acting as liaison for the speakers
Opening and closing the building if after hours
Providing snacks the first day and having a potluck for graduation
Taking on mentoring roles to the trainees to answer questions*

*Providing input on the training course and contacting instructors
Gathering presentations from instructors and making them available to trainees*

That is off the top of my head the assistance the Mgs could provide. I'm sure there is more.

St. Louis has two trainings each day when they provide training, so I don't think that we will be able to use the same instructors on the same day as that is an excessive teaching and traveling load for one day.

Trying to coordinate and populate a training for this fall isn't feasible.

I wouldn't imagine more than one training in St. Charles in 2024. I'm not sure if it would be in the fall or the spring, I would think that in the fall the MGs would have more capacity as there is no plant sale then, or a large education event.

Eli's notes were discussed. Potential of having the class beginning in early January, during the week day was suggested by Eli. Some members of the SC felt that we will lose a lot of potential participants if held during the workday. Eli also noted that he currently has no budget for any class expenses. Also, a preliminary list of possible instructors was presented by Eli.

Eli has asked for a follow-up planning meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday August 31 in the C conference room at 1:00 PM. This group will be called the Level 1 Support Team and will be open to all St. Charles MG members.

Extension: Deana Dothage, Laura Steimel
Nothing to report.

501(c)(3) update. Marsha Brown.

The annual filing is done. I've printed a copy and will put it in the filing cabinet. So, we are still in good standing with the State of Mo.

MOMGA/State conference 2026

Guidelines have been sent to membership for review (see 'old business' below)

Standing Committee Reports -

1. Membership committee: Sydney Turner, Waneta Parmenter, Bonnie Winkeler.

In-house 'cooking from the garden' class was approved for CE credit, but not for Demo Garden volunteer credit.

Eli has confirmed some additional guidelines about what can and cannot qualify for Master Gardener CE credit. (Questions have been asked about other classes such as canning.)

Eli summarized:

Yes, to the following:

- Food handling for our garden production is a YES
- A hands-on cooking/preparing the products that we derive from our garden (as a group activity at the extension) is a YES.

No, to the following

- Canning/freezing/food storage is a NO
- Food nutrition would be a NO
- A general cooking video with no hands-on is a NO

These will get incorporated into the online guidelines.

2. **CE and AT:** Bonnie Winkeler
Bonnie and the committee continue to provide updates to the class list
3. **Education Committee** Patti Kolek

'Winter in the Garden' classes are being developed, speakers being identified. Looking for someone to help with tool maintenance class.

Tentative information

- The dates are January 27th, February 24th and March 23rd.
- Two class classes per day are expected to run from 9:00 am until noon, and will be run back-to-back.
- Cost will be \$20.00 for the day.
- Eventbrite will be used to take reservation, credit cards only.

Boys and Girls Club – Ofallon summer program has completed.

4. **Plant Sale, Greenhouse, Hoop House:**

Plant Sale Activities Marsha Brown, Nancy Torke
We'll be working on 2024's money needs

Greenhouse: Laura Steimel, Nancy Torke.
Some door replacement may be necessary.

Hoop House: Donna Lindsey

5. **Communication** Mary Medina
6. **Demo Gardens:** Cindy Platzer

- We will be doing tomato taste testing before the general membership meeting this month. Maybe peppers too.
- Two cooking classes scheduled for August
- 16 Fall Demo Garden Tours are set up
- From the Ground Up project.

Beka Davis reports that the project is going well and there is a lot of participation and enjoyment. This is a project that allows people to participate in all aspects of planning and developing a garden area 'from the ground up'.

- Placement of award bricks project started.
- Leads meeting Sept 9

It has been suggested by Val that if we have the money, perhaps sending leads to national or regional educational conferences should be considered?

No discussion took place during the meeting. There are budget issues to consider first.

7. **Hortline update:** Patti Kolek

8. **Farmer's Market Table Update** Patti Kolek

9. **Upcoming Speakers and meetings:**

August 24th meeting - Amanda 'Amy' Templer (one of our own MG) will present "Trees in the Urban Environment" - An overview of how trees in our urban forest are able to mitigate stormwater and run-off, assisting in ecosystem benefits for cleaner water. Plus, 10 of the best native shade trees for the job and a few smaller stature trees and shrubs of merit are discussed.

Other status and information reports

Old Business:

1. Monarch Madness??

No one has gotten any update on Monarch Madness. Patti will contact Mary Medina to confirm what we know. Tentatively we would like to have a table there.

2. State Conference:

Brief discussion of how adjacent counties have participated in prior state conferences. Specifically, Franklin and Jefferson.

Feedback #1

I have read the guidelines, and I think that we can handle the task. I've been involved in helping with Montessori conferences several times, and I can tell you that it simplifies the process if you contract with a hotel that can offer both catering and rooms such as Embassy Suites.

What time of year is the conference? We'd have at least two years to plan and secure contracts, etc. I counted about 11 committees plus the steering committee, which will probably be made up of the heads of the other committees. I think we could get some folks from the St. Louis MGs to help us as well, at least in a consulting capacity.

I'll be glad to help in the effort.

Feedback #2

When doing a survey of members to find out how many MG are willing to volunteer toward the MG State Conference 2026 it may be best to get a commitment on # of hours they can commit.

I feel there is a handful of MGs who commit a lot of time to the gardens and then the rest of the MGs only meet minimum required. How much can we ask of those already giving a lot of time?

Also, what will we not get done that we are currently doing?

As for myself, with "life happening" I know I wouldn't be able to volunteer more than a few hours a month

Feedback #3

It's too big of an event for the few number of people who attend. He recommended simplifying it.

Feedback #4

I too think it's too big for the number of people coming. We could re imagine it, i.e., downsize it. I think the groups who have to do it after us would be thankful.

New Business:

1. From Val:

Nominations for Paul Hendricks award due Oct 31st. Awarded in Jan.

2. From Mary M.:

Holiday Party this year???? First week in December???

A motion was made by Cindy Platzer that the holiday party be scheduled for Friday, December 1 2023. The motion was seconded and discussed. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

3. From Rebekah Davis:

I had something regarding the Iris Encounter Garden that I wanted to discuss/seek permission for. There is a nation-wide non-profit group known as the Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS.) They have an "Historic Iris Display Garden" program which I thought would be a nice feather in the Iris garden's cap. However, the program requires us to be part of their membership first to qualify for the designation. I have already spoken with the program's Coordinator, and she said that it would be fine on their end for us to register a garden as a group so long as one contact is provided with the membership dues. I do want to ensure that everything would be alright on our end as far as seemingly endorsing another education-based nonprofit group first before moving forward with the other program requirements.

The benefits for registering the Iris Encounter Garden in the program:

- "Historic Iris Display Garden" metal sign
- Advertisement of our garden on the program's nation-wide registry of display gardens
- Potential article about us in HIPS's online newsletter, which has an extensive audience
- Increased awareness among local iris enthusiasts (HIPS is an affiliate of the American Iris Society, a leading authority on iris)
- Providing our visitors with awareness of another educational group

-Rebekah

It was noted that, similar to the 'Bringing Conservation Home' signage and recognition, we will first need approval by the Extension Council to place the sign in the garden. Funding for annual HIPS dues were discussed, and the 3-year membership gave us the best annual membership rate. No new bulbs will need to be purchased since we have some of the candidate bulbs in the garden, and Beka will donate the others from her personal garden.

Patti Kolek made a motion to approve the process of our MG organization joining the Historic Iris Preservation Society, with the benefits as outlined by Beka. The motion was seconded and discussed. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.



Become a HIPS Display Garden!

DO YOU COLLECT HISTORIC IRIS?

DO YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR GARDEN WITH OTHERS?

If you answered 'yes' to both questions, The Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS) invites you to join their Display Garden program and share your garden and your historic irises.

The current requirements to become a HIPS Display Garden are:

1. You must be a HIPS member in good standing.
2. You must have a minimum of 15 correctly named historic irises* in your garden (as per the America Iris Society Checklists).
3. Your irises must be identified. This can be done with either a garden label or a garden map.
4. You are willing to have your contact information published on the HIPS website.
5. You will make your garden available for public viewing at least once during the bloom season, either via a scheduled open house or upon request.

If you like, you may write a review of your garden for *ROOTS*, the journal of the Historic Iris Preservation Society. It is a great way to stay in touch with HIPS members and satisfy your inner journalist ... or photographer, should you want to submit a photo essay.

HIPS will provide you with a sign to display in recognition of your contribution. The first is provided free while additional ones may be purchased. They are 7" x 10" aluminum plaques, as depicted below.



Good of the Order:

- Marsha Brown noted that as a 501(c)(3) we will need to be more disciplined in producing our income statements, and in securing funding for anticipated 'must pay' expenses as well as re-establishing an emergency pool of funds for known long-term capital replacement and revenue generating expenses such as for the plant sale. This will require projecting expenses on a multi-year basis, and setting up a plan for building up the reserves. The goal is to document procedures and guidelines for setting aside dollars to cover anticipated costs, and then prioritize the release of excess revenue for projects during the year. This will likely impact the demo garden leads budgeting process the most, since most of the spending there will need to be flexible based available dollars.
- Another discussion took place on providing better guidance to membership on which classes can qualify as Advanced Training (AT). It was suggested that if people are finding it difficult to find AT classes that suit their interests or that will help them to earn

their Advanced MG badge, that they should contact the AT committee to help address their concerns.

Adjournment:

Next SC meeting is Friday September 8