

Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Board Meeting
Sullivan County Extension Office
January 8, 2024

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Barbara Voigt, Carl Voigt, Brenda McKinnis, Millie Sue Hawk, John Hitchcock, Mary Cain, Karen Rowell, Susie Morrison, Adam Watson, Mary Ann Lovelace, Chris Ramsey, Karen Todd,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Don Davis, Valerie Jondahl, Kathy Wagner, Larry Wagner, Nancy Shilling, Linda Spisak, Andrea Belcher (asked to be removed), Betts Leach, Gwen Ellis, Heather Duby, Greg Lawson (asked to be removed),

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by Karen Rowell.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Mary Cain

The minutes were reviewed from the 11-6-23 board meeting. Corrections include indicating that Katie O'Lenic to remain as editor for the *Ask a Master Gardener* program. It was also noted that Gwen Ellis should be contacted about remaining on the list of board members. Susie Morrison made the motion to approve the minutes; Karen Todd seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by the board.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mary Ann presented the budget as of 1-8-24. The financial report was approved.

PROJECT REPORT AND GRANTS FOR 2023: Don Davis

Dave plans to have a memorial of some type for Doug Hilton at the *Harvest of Hope Community Garden*. After some discussion, it was decided to have 6 current projects presented to the new Master Gardener class after the first few classes have been completed. It was mentioned to have a drawing for gift cards for the Master Gardener interns who have visited at least 3 of the existing projects. Don Davis will be asked to arrange for the project presentations during the Master Gardener intern class on 2-13-24.

PROGRAMS FOR 2023: Susie Morrison (with Brenda McKinnis from Publicity)

1. There was discussion concerning the combining Programs with Publicity. Brenda McKinnis announced that Jess Zander will be presenting the program on April 1 and Doug Tallamy has been contacted to present a program on May 6. Adam Watson has agreed to set up a Zoom link for the April 1 meeting. The Tallamy program will have a speaker fee of \$500.00; there was mention of \$175.00 going to Jess Zander (?)

2. Due to Tallamy's availability, the regularly scheduled board meeting of May 6 will have to be switched with the regularly scheduled membership meeting of June 3. The question was raised as to whether or not NETMGA members can bring a guest to either program. Brenda did say that Doug had agreed to a one-hour meeting with 30 minutes for questions.
3. There was a brief mention to have the Board meeting on June 3 and possibly not having another regularly scheduled board meeting in July. The regular schedule can resume with the Membership meeting in August.

MEMBERSHIP/CERTIFICATION REPORT: Mary Cain

1. As of 1-8-24 there are 137 paid members out of 170 on the NETMGA roster for Sullivan County; this number includes the new members from Washington County.
2. The NETMGA spreadsheet roster that will be in the Google Drive shared folder and will contain the 2023 interns which increases the total NETMGA membership to 170.
3. Membership dues and paperwork for 2024 were mailed 11-15-23 with a reminder notice was requested to be sent on 12-15-23. Another email for late dues and forms was sent after the first.
4. Late payments can be made at the February 5 meeting. After all final tallies, notices will be mailed after that date to all NETMGA members who have not paid dues.
5. Mary brought up the issue of 2 certified Lifetime Master Gardeners who refuse to pay dues but report hours on the UT roster. It was decided that their contribution of hours can be recognized with a certificate but no pin and they will be classified as inactive members in accordance with the NETMGA board policy of requiring all members being required to pay dues and maintain current documentation. The motion made by Millie Sue Hawk to abide by the existing Board policy concerning dues payment; it was seconded by Brenda McKinnis.

PUBLICITY: Brenda McKinnis (Nancy Shilling)

(see notes from Programs) In addition to the above notes in the Programs section, Brenda mentioned a potential problem in the *Ask a Master Gardener* project with copyright privileges.

COMMUNICATIONS: Heather Duby

(absent)

NEWSLETTER: Betts Leach

(absent)

FACEBOOK: Valerie Jondahl

(absent)

MENTORS: John Hitchcock

John reported that there are no issues at the present with mentors. He did request that more volunteers are needed to assist with the mentor program in 2024.

WEBSITE: Carl & Barbara Voigt

Barbara mentioned that the *Ask a Master Gardener* articles will be posted on the website. She said they would be working with the Publicity people on this addition.

HOSPITALITY: Larry & Kathy Wagner (Susie Morrison) Susie explained that the Hospitality group will merge with the Publicity and Program groups. Kathy and Larry will be included in this group.

WASHINGTON COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT: Adam Watson

Adam volunteered to help as needed with SignUp Genius requests.

SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT: Chris Ramsey

Chris explained that Andrea Belcher had retired from her duties in the Extension Office and will be greatly missed. Andrea was a phenomenal asset to both the Extension Office and NETMGA.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Karen suggested creating a SignUp Genius request for people to work at the Awards Dinner on February 5. Volunteers will be needed for set up, decorations, and clean up duties. It was decided to contact *Spurlock Smokes* to cater the dinner with barbeque and side dishes. Desserts will be contributed by Master Gardeners via a SignUp Genius. There will be a SignUp Genius sent out to the entire membership to sign up to attend the dinner. Payment will be at the door. Active Master Gardeners will be asked to pay \$5.00 for each meal and non-members \$8.00. Each Master Gardener may bring one guest for \$5.00.
2. Another new business item that was brought up concerns new board members. There can be a SignUp Genius sent requesting volunteers to help with Secretarial duties and annual Certification.
3. Karen Rowell also mentioned that NETMGA will purchase a brick for \$200.00 for the front flag pole area in memory of Doug Hilton in recognition for the work he did for the organization and especially with new Master Gardeners. He, too, will be greatly missed.
4. There will be an internal audit of the financial records of NETMGA in the upcoming season for 2023.
5. The March 16 *Tree Day* project will need 4 volunteers to help on Friday, March 15 to organize the tree seedlings per order and 4 more volunteers on Saturday, March 16

to help when orders are picked up from the Extension Office. This can also be handled by way of a SignUp Genius.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING PLANS:

The next Membership Meeting will be on February 5 at the Ron Ramsey Agricultural Center. It will be the annual Award Dinner.

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

The next board meeting will be at the Washington County Extension Office on March 4.