

Concord Garden Club Board Meeting
March 7, 2022
9:30am (Draft)

Present: Johane Telgener, Lauren Savage, Gretchen Coughlin, Gena Moses, Nancy Betchart, Linda Gilbert, Gayle Kimball, Pam Young, Kim Arndt, Robyn Cotton, Tricia Wentworth, Jeanie West

Not able to attend: Peg Blume, Kate Russo, Melissa Detwiller, Jo Ann Jordan, Millie Lafontaine

- I. Approval of December Meeting Minutes. Nancy drafted minutes that Johane sent out in advance for review. Minutes were unanimously approved without amendments and will be posted on the CGC website website.

- II. Financial Report. Gretchen prepared the financial report that Johane sent out in advance for review. There were a couple of minor questions for clarification. We currently have a cash balance of \$4985. The financial report was unanimously approved. Gretchen received a letter from the Audubon Society thanking us for a donation of \$1499.88 but we did not make that donation, so Gretchen will call them to clarify that we did not donate that money.

- III. Annual Meeting Report.
 - a. Linda and Nancy reported that the meeting will take place from 10-12:00 at the Audubon Society for strategic planning, pastry, coffee and tea. Washington Street Café will cater the food for \$4.00 per person and the directors will make the coffee and tea. The CGC will cover the cost of the food and there is no charge for the room since we are Audubon members. We will need to have RSVPs since the room holds 35 people and we want to have as many members attend as possible. Gena will send out an email to invite people to respond soon. We discussed zooming the meeting and Gayle, Robyn, and (maybe Barbara) will run the zoom.
 - b. Strategic planning at the annual meeting. Tricia Wentworth will moderate the annual the strategic planning session to explore which directions we want to go. Do we want to be more of a philanthropic organization which may require more fundraising or do we want to focus on our current mission that includes cultivating the spirit of gardening, education, community service, e.g., beautification, and fostering conservation. The goal is to hear from as many members as possible. Do we want to have our charitable contributions come primarily from the Polly Perry Fund? When asked how we would achieve consensus, Tricia explained that she would conduct a SWOT analysis to take a look at what we do well, do poorly, what are the threats. We will have a visioning session, i.e., where do we see ourselves in 5 years. We'll break up into groups by interest that will prioritize what members want to focus on. There was a suggestion to send out some kind of questionnaire in advance. The key to this is that everyone can have input, but final decisions wouldn't be made at this meeting. This idea for strategic planning arose from previous discussions

about whether we should raise the dues. Kim pointed out that we need to separate the “we shoulds” from the “we wills” in order to ensure follow through.

IV. Committee Reports

- a. Membership. No new members this month. Jeanie pointed out the procedures for admitting new members has changed in the last two years due to both Covid and the use of the CGC website, so the information in our membership and program booklet needs to be updated.
- b. Fundraising. Gayle led the discussion. With the Polly Perry fund we have some philanthropy money. Gena pointed out that our bylaws say that the fundraising goals are to support the financial health of the club; however, in seeking sponsorships, we have provided prospective sponsors with a litany of projects and community organizations we have donated to. There was some discussion of perhaps discontinuing “camperships” and the library donation, although the only camperships we’ve donated to recently is the Audubon Camp since Spaulding closed. Gayle suggested looking into sustaining some of our past projects, e.g, the playground at the former’s Children Place.
Later in the meeting we returned to fundraising, specifically an update on the July 9th Garden Tour fundraiser. The tour will begin at the Kimball Jenkins estate where people can pick up their reserved tickets or purchase tickets. Advanced purchase cost is \$20/ticket; same day purchase is \$25/ticket. The tour will focus on the North End of Concord. Confirmed gardens are Kimball Jenkins Estate, Franklin Pierce Manse, the gardens in the new development where St. Peter’s was, Barbara Jobin’s, Mary Rosenthal’s, and Lauren Savage’s. Other gardens may be added. People can tour in any order once they have picked up their tickets at the KJ Estate. There will be a modest level sponsorship for the program booklet and Diana Wiita will be doing a lot of it in-house. They also plan to reach out to Judith Malloy to help. They may need volunteers to be placed at the gardens.
- c. Community Service. Kim and Pam reported that their committee would update the table decorations at the Friendly Kitchen for St. Patrick’s Day. Kim suggested that working with the new Americans might be a good opportunity. E.g., donating seeds or small vegetable plants for their community gardens. Kim will find out who is in charge of the gardening program for new Americans. Lauren suggested that the Northeast Organic Farmers’ Association might be a good organization to work with. Linda suggested Anna Marie Dipasqual, who is the ESL teacher at the high school, as a good lead for what new Americans might need. There was a discussion of local beautification initiatives, e.g., clean-up at Canterbury Shaker Village and what a good response we have had from members. Jeanie mentioned that in Peterborough, volunteers plant beautiful flower boxes on the roads and we could possibly create and maintain some beautiful flowers on Main Street where we’d get visibility. Gena ran the flower barrel program on Main Street which is abandoned when a new fund from the Main Street

Redevelopment program was implemented which does some planting and maintenance on Main Street. The traffic circles could use help which Gena welcomed and Linda suggested that the city parks need sprucing up.

- d. Art in Bloom wrap-up meeting. Johane reported that the one big concern was the date. The league wanted the date to be moved to the 4th weekend in January so there is more time after Christmas for the artists to get organized. It was agreed to move the event to the 4th weekend in January which coincides with Black Ice which might be a good complementary event. There was a suggestion to do a zoom educational meeting on how to participate in Art in Bloom and what is expected, where to get flowers, etc. The League was pleased that the garden club volunteers were there. Gayle wondered whether Art in Bloom sponsorship money could go to the League.
- e. Program Committee. Robyn reported that the Ellen Ogden program (Author of a book on heirloom gardening) is coming up March 25. Ann Mills will be taking care of the logistics. It will be a zoom event since Gibson's is not doing in-person events until April. People need to register through the website including the public. The April meeting is at the Concord Country Club and Barbara thought it would be a good idea to invite the Concord Country Club membership to come. The last program of the year will be in June on botanical cocktails. This zoom meeting will take place at the Kimball Jenkins Estate where participants will mix and taste drinks. Robyn and Barbara are stepping down from the program committee, but most of the committee will remain intact. Robyn said that it was very helpful to understand what the budget is before planning the programs. She also pointed out that program costs were coming in well below their budget this year. She asked if the unused budgeted monies could be rolled over to programs for next year. Laurie pointed out that dues will not be changing this year. Robyn and Barbara are considering sending out another program survey.
An additional program was announced - Dr. Freeland's talk about the health effects of climate change the effects of climate change on pollinators, brought to the club's attention by Millie. It will be via Zoom on the 1st or 2nd Thursday in April and offered to CGD members free of charge.
- f. Publicity. Geena noted that she is being asked to send out more communication and that is technically not part of publicity's responsibility, but with the website, she is one of the few who can send out communications. However, she will not be the publicity person next year, so we will need to change the description of the duties to include having that person in charge of sending communication.

V. Other Business. Gena reminded us that last meeting we discussed updating the by-laws. If we are going to make changes we need to have a small meeting to work on changes, then bring it to the April Board meeting, then send them out to the whole club before the May meeting to vote on them. Next meeting will be on Monday, April 11, 9:30 at Lauren's home.

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 am.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Betchart, Secretary