

**Master Gardener Foundation of San Juan County  
Board of Directors Meeting and Annual Membership Meeting  
April 7, 2020**

**Present:** Board members Julia Turney, Lenore Bayuk, Nancy Forker, Kate Yturri, Diana Brooks, Vicki Leimback, Susan Kunk, Glenda Pugerude, Barbara Orcutt, Pat Kuentzel, Dianne Macondray (absent Sandy May); Program Coordinator Caitie Blethen; and members Kim Howard, Judy Winer, Jane Wentworth, Sylvia McKenney, John Luders, Beth Larson.

This meeting was held via Zoom conference due to the physical distancing restrictions in place at present ordered by Washington State Governor Jay Inslee in response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. For the same reason, the Annual Membership Meeting was consolidated in the same Zoom videoconference session with the quarterly Board meeting.

**Minutes:** Review and approval of minutes of the January 7, 2020 Board meeting. Motion to approve the minutes, seconded, passed. Foundation President Julia Turney noted that there had not been a quorum present at the January 7 quarterly Board meeting, which had consisted essentially in discussion of and determination on a budget for the upcoming year and that the full Board had subsequently voted online to pass this budget.

**Covid-19 Impacts to the San Juan County Master Gardener Program and Activities:** Program Coordinator Caitie Blethen reported on how the Program and its activities were being impacted right now by the pandemic and governmental response to that. Her first point was that paramount was that we should all stay home and stay healthy, but that being said there were things we could still permissibly under the guidelines be doing to advance our mission from home and, with appropriate physical distancing, outside the home. She was very quick to point out here, though, that no MG should feel they were expected to engage in any activity they did not feel comfortable/safe in engaging in right now — safety of the individual from covid-19 infection was paramount. She noted that the Program Office on SJI was closed to the public now and that she and Brook were working principally from home. She explained that, under Governor Inslee’s current order, growing food was considered an essential activity and thus MGs may continue to grow food and veggies, distribute it to Food Banks and the public, and engage with the public in this endeavor, so long as we follow the rules - including appropriate physical distancing — in doing so. She explained that (non-food) perennials were not considered essential under the order, so this might impact our ability to offer the perennials we have been nurturing over the winter for sale at our usual “spring plant sale” in early May, unless the current order were lifted or revised. Kate pointed out that MG Myla Sherburne had many perennials right now on her deck being readied for the Spring Plant Sale, and that Myla would have limited water to keep them all viable beyond the anticipated Spring Plant Sale date. If Covid restrictions regarding the sale of non-food plants are eased by mid May - mid June, Myla, Kate and Caitie will pursue selling perennials to SJC MGs. An announcement of the sale plus Myla’s plant list would be sent out. We would tally orders and collect payment with the system set up for the veggie sale. A plan for distribution or delivery would be made at that time.

**Program Committee Re-organization:** There was brief discussion about the need going forward to re-examine our current SJCMG program and its activities in light of the framework of goals the new Washington State MG leadership has set under new State Program Coordinator Jennifer Marquis, and relatedly whether, for us, this should mean an increased reliance organizationally on program committees. Operative questions per Caitie: What we do

and why? Why do we do this work, and how does it impact our community? And how do we organize our internal structure to best fit our activities within this new framework of goals and advance those goals?

Caitie said that she was working on convening a small group of interested individuals to explore this topic and would then share the results with the Foundation. Julia suggested the Foundation have a liaison to work with this committee. The consensus was that this effort would not be launched immediately, given the more immediate concerns as described above and below, but would be launched later this year.

**Treasurers Report:** Treasurer Nancy Forker uploaded to Zoom for purposes of reporting and discussion three financial documents she had previously forwarded to all Board members by email on 4/1/20: Summary Balance Sheet as of April 1, 2020; Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual for calendar 2020, as of April 1; and Native Plant Sale Budget vs. Actual, 8/1/19 through 8/1/20, as of April 1. These 3 documents are attached to these minutes.

Nancy pointed out that as of 4/1/20 we have \$44,355.52 in the bank and that this is approx. \$9,000 less than we'd had in the bank as of 1/1/20. She explained this was because we had spent certain budgeted monies which had all come in within the budgeted amount with the exception of the purchase and installation of the new hoop house (further discussed as its own topic below), in combination with the fact that the Native Plant Sale had to be cancelled last month due to the coronavirus pandemic and thus expected revenues had not been generated. Nancy detailed the budgeted expenditures per the attached P&L Budget vs. Actual — \$975 for a microscope and camera for the Plant Diagnostic Clinic; \$2,800+ under Office Equipment for a new laptop and sound system; and under Capital Expenditure, the Hoop House Kit, which had cost \$965 more than budgeted.

Jane Wentworth, point person for the Native Plant Sale, reported that we had taken in about \$2,000 in revenues from the Native Plant Sale because many of the plant vendors agreed not to charge us for orders we did not pick up and because we had had a good community event “on salvage” over on San Juan Island enabling us to sell those items from vendors which we did have to pick up. Nancy pointed out that the Native Plant Sale Budget vs. Actual document she distributed for this meeting, dated 4/1/20, does not reflect the full numbers yet on Native Plant Sale expenses and income.

Julia noted that she, Kate and MG Lene Symes had gotten together recently (observing the protocol of 6-foot physical distancing) and potted up the root stock for the apple-tree grafts destined for Moran State Park which we had intended to do more with this season so that hopefully next year we could resume with this project. Julia noted that she had not invoiced expenses for this project as yet.

Kate raised the issue of whether there were rules regarding any upper limit on the amount of money the foundation was permitted to have in its bank account. Julia responded she was unaware of any rules in this regard and noted that the tax notifications we were required to file annually did not suggest there was any upper limit. Barbara Orcutt proffered that, based on her experience on other non-profit boards, there was no upper limit on the amount of money a non-profit could have in their bank account — you can make money and put it in the bank, you just can't hire or otherwise funnel money out to foundation board members or MGs in payment for their services. Kate noted that our foundation had not done an audit in quite a while and that, going forward, her opinion was that we should do an audit soon for the professional expertise. Someone present suggested we should try to recruit an accountant for our foundation board. All present seemed to agree, but no name was put forward or mentioned.

**Discussion regarding the upcoming Spring Plant Sale, including discussion about our new Hoop House on SJI:** Lenore Bayuk, Board member and point person on the Spring Plant Sale as well as the Hoop House Capital Expenditure Plan, reported that she and Alice Deane were still planting (in anticipation of a Spring Plant Sale that may or may not occur at all or could unfold in still-to-be-adapted-for creative ways, given the coronavirus situation). The tomato starts were a little small (the weather has been cool), and the brassicas had not yet even been planted, but otherwise planting and growth was on pace, she said, and the new hoop house was where most of these plants will eventually be moved prior to the sale date. Lenore also reported they had already paid Mullis Center in full for the (indoor) space for what had been anticipated to be the Sat May 9 Spring Plant Sale date. She said they will now approach Mullis Center about renegotiating the agreement with Mullis Center to get a refund of that money, given the physical distancing restrictions currently in place, and try to negotiate a new agreement to hold the Spring Plant Sale outdoors on their property, with physical distancing accommodations in place, over a 2-day period May 15 and 16, where physical distancing restrictions could more easily be observed.

Caitie suggested that we might consider going to a system (for a 2-day, May 15/16 sale) of offering only pre-set boxes of veggies accompanied by pre-pay online only. Someone suggested curb-side delivery. And Jane Wentworth suggested it might be worthwhile to re-brand our Spring Plant Sale as our “Spring Plant Take-out.” Consensus agreement was that this re-branding was a very good idea.

There was general discussion about how we might get some of what we have grown here for the Spring Plant Sale to families in need — the need to figure out in advance how we might give away food to the Family Resource Center and the Food Bank on San Juan Island. No specific decisions were made at this meeting.

The topic next moved to what had happened with the ultimate price tag (the vendor invoice) for construction of our new hoop house coming in so much above the initial estimate ( \$5,773.85 invoice vs. \$2,690.10 estimate). Lenore explained that their committee had erred in not requiring a written contract with honorable and well-meaning local folks who had no prior experience in construction, in a context where the committee did not have and could not find alternative bids, and then not following up periodically with the contractor to see what their hours and expenses were amounting to as they built. Lenore also noted that the contractor couple had given no prior notice of any cost overruns before submitting their bill for \$5,773.85, though such is common practice in the construction industry. Meanwhile, just prior to our Apr 7 Board meeting, the vendor (Frog Song), in response to communication from our committee members on San Juan, had owned their part in creating this difficult situation and submitted a revised invoice for \$4,061.66. There was a general consensus among the Board members that the Board qua Board should have probed further the details of the arrangement with the hoop house installation vendor and, going forward, the foundation needs to set down guidelines/ protocols for doing so in the context of future projects. The Board commended the hoop house committee members for the lovely letter they wrote to the Board explaining the concern they felt for the couple in the community who had built what everyone seemed to agree was a great hoop house.

Action: On a motion from Treasurer Nancy Forker, duly seconded, the Board voted unanimously to pay to Frog Song the amount of \$4,061.66 in payment of their revised invoice.

It was also decided by the Board that the letter to Frog Song thanking them for their revised invoice should come from the Hoop House committee members, not the Board.

**Planning for Plant Diagnostic Clinic:** It was noted that plant diagnostic clinics could start as scheduled on May 7 under the governor's current order, but only with 6-foot physical distancing being observed by all participants. Kate observed that our current space here on Orcas by the ferry dock was too small for 6-foot distancing. Kim Howard, point person on SJI for Plant Diagnostic Clinic, proposed that all clinics be held on SJI because 6-foot physical distancing could be maintained there. Consensus view was expressed that no final decision on where and when to begin clinics this season could be reached today because it was still hard to know where we'd be on May 7 with respect to guidance from the governor. However, Kate suggested that we should decide on a June start date soon so that we would have ample time to get the word out to the public.

Kim said she had already prepared clinic forms, and Julia reported these clinic forms were also available from the homepage of our foundation website.

**County Fair:** There was consensus agreement that, given the uncertainty around the coronavirus situation, it was too early to try to make any plans about what our participation in the county fair in August might consist of. Caitie noted a theme for the fair itself had been decided upon by the fair organizers.

**Lopez Heritage Apple Orchard:** Pat Kuentzel reported that the trees looked great and that the benches were back in place from their refinishing.

**Moran State Park Apple Grafting Project:** Julia reported that she, Lena Symes, and Kate had planted up the root stock recently — observing 6-foot social distancing — and that hopefully these could be planted in Moran State Park next year.

#### **Updated QCR Codes for the WSU publications in the 5 binders in our Clinic Resource**

**Boxes:** Susan reported that the original QCR codes on the front of each of the 77 WSU publications in the 5 binders in our CRBs were no longer valid as a result of WSU revising its website; that she had googled around a bit and found some alternative links that could be used for a one-click method to access these publications; and that Julia had made new sku's (QCR codes) to access the new links for all 77 of these WSU publications, as well as the one new WSU publication (on uses of horticultural oil) that we were adding because King County had added it. Julia said she would soon distribute the new QCR codes to everybody. Susan observed that, particularly during the unavailability of our CRBs to groups of us working in close proximity to each other being able to collectively access these paper resources, having a list of these QCRs to facilitate quick access to these 78 WSU publications to provide ourselves and the public with access to information from these publications should be useful, including for remote work.

**Communicating gardening, growing, and plant information to the public:** Caitie encouraged us all to think of ways in which we might make available to the public in our current (pandemic) situation resources on growing food, gardening, and plant questions.

**Announcement: Kevin Zobrist live webinar on the current conifer die-off:** Kate reported that Kevin Zobrist had offered to do a live webinar on the current conifer die-off, if we were interested. There was consensus agreement expressed we would definitely be interested. Kate will get back to Kevin on this and a date will be ascertained and circulated.

**Officer and Director Nominations and Election :** A paper ballot with the names of newly nominated Officers and Directors was displayed on the Zoom screen for purpose of discussion and voting. A copy of this ballot is attached to these notes. As shown on the ballot, Kate Yturri would succeed Julia Turney as President; Sandy May would replace Susan Kunk as Secretary;

on Orcas, Vicki Leimback would renew as an Orcas Director, and Sylvia McKenney would step into Kate Yturri's vacated Director position; on San Juan Island, Lenore would renew as a SJI Director, and Kim Howard would move into Sandy May's vacated Director position. Each nominee was running unopposed. A voice vote on the entire slate of candidates was conducted during the Zoom session of all present in the combined meeting. All voted "aye." Julia noted this constituted a valid election because all members had been given prior notice of this Annual meeting. This new slate of officers will assume office July 1, 2020.

Susan Kunk explained following the vote that she had asked Julia to find a replacement for her in the position of Secretary because she had declined to re-up as a Master Gardener but rather had asked that her status as a Master Gardener be de-activated for the coming year because of her opposition in principle to the new background check policy that would now be required of all Master Gardeners. Susan noted the basis of her opposition was the new requirement that we submit our social security number to a third-party vendor — observing that, in her opinion, privacy of confidential personal information such as Social Security numbers is a major and growing concern in the world we live in; data mining is a major industry in our economy today with data being bought and sold, in a largely unregulated market in the U.S., to anyone who will pay for it, while hacking of supposedly secure servers occurs on a frequent basis; and asserting that it was her view that, in the ordinary course of interactions with our clients, we don't interface with vulnerable adults, or even children, in contexts where abuse is even remotely likely.

Barbara Orcutt asked for a clarification whether there was an option to supply our social security numbers on paper as opposed to online on the vendor's website. Caitie said she would check on that and report back.

**Insurance:** Julia reported she had contacted our insurance provider to see whether it seemed worthwhile to purchase supplemental auto insurance to protect foundation members driving people in their personal autos on foundation business. Julia reported this would cost \$252/yr for 1-5 drivers, \$440/yr for 6-10 drivers; would be secondary to the drivers' coverages under their personal auto policies; and would require such foundation drivers to carry a minimum \$300,000 liability on their personal policies. Julia's recommendation was supplemental insurance was not worth it, and there was a consensus agreement not to purchase this insurance. Re equipment insurance, Julia said she had not yet had time to gather the information about all our equipment and which of that might already be covered under an insurance policy, but would follow through.

**Website privacy policy:** Julia reported she had drafted a website privacy policy and had sought guidance from State Program Coordinator Jennifer Marquis regarding what needed to be on the foundation website in that regard. No privacy policy has been posted to the website as yet.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted April 12, 2020.

Susan Kunk, Secretary  
SJCMGF