

JCMG Steering Committee

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023, 6:30 P.M., Hybrid Meeting

Minutes

1. Call to order 6:32 P.M. (17/24 Quorum – yes)

Present:

Doug Geraets, Chair
Jackie Wellborn, Vice-Chair, Yard and Garden Information
Jean Holzhammer, Treasurer
Barb Robinson, Secretary
Chris Sedrel, Demo Garden, Fairgrounds Beautification
Lavon Yeggy, Plum Grove Gardens, Buckets of Flowers, 4H Scarecrows
Megan Garrels, Speakers Bureau
Kay Mohling, Yard and Garden Information
Linda Schreiber, Downtown City Gardens
Michael Hesseltine, Ecumenical Tower
Melissa Serenda, Thymes
Beth Fisher, Social Events
John Weeg, Ecumenical Tower
Darlene Clausen, Plum Grove, Plant Sale & Flea Market
Laurie Roehl, Demo Garden, Fairgrounds Beautification
Carolyn Murphy, Plum Grove Gardens, Butterfly House
Mike Murphy, Butterfly House

Absent:

Emil Rinderspacher, Plant Sale & Flea Market
Mary Starry, Hort Line
Karen Martinek, Coralville Schoolhouse
Barb Schlentler, Firefighters Memorial
Melanie Hauptert, Hospice Garden
Vicki Siefers, Oaknoll
Sharon Jeter, Past Chair

Others present:

Shannon Bielicke
Sharon Rude, Buckets of Flowers, 4H Scarecrows
Laurie Canady
Melissa Close

2. Approval of September 13 Meeting Minutes: clarified reimbursement amount for Barb Schlentler (\$78.11) – Minutes approved unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report (Jean)

General Fund: **\$34,680.79**

- ☐ No change from last month

Plum Grove: **\$649.26**

- ☐ *Expense: \$324.73*

Butterfly House: **\$4,579.70**

- ☐ No change from last month

New or known pending receipts (as of Oct. 10):

- ☐ John Weeg \$37.80, MG General, compost for Ecumenical Towers

4. Extension Report/ Announcements (Shannon)

a. Update on MG training sessions:

- ☐ There are 37 students participating in a hybrid course of remote and in-person sessions.
- ☐ Tomorrow, Oct. 12 at 6:00 P.M., Scott Koepke will be presenting "Garden Bridge Outreach" on the topic of how horticulture relates to both physical and mental health. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- ☐ **Wrap-up class:** Nov. 9 from 6–7:30 P.M. Project leaders are encouraged to attend, present projects and sign-up opportunities. Everyone is encouraged to attend and meet the new class, many of whom have already been volunteering.

b. Update on Growing Together Grant

- ☐ Shannon has submitted final report outlining the use of the \$2200.00 grant to help the Coralville Community Food Pantry, including the building of raised beds, tomato containers, Preserve the Taste of Summer presentation, etc.
- ☐ Donated produce to date has been 2830.7 pounds and there will be more with final harvests. The deadline for the grant report has passed but we may be able to update final donation totals.

5. Review of JCMG Steering Committee Meeting Calendar (Doug)

a. October

- ☐ Nominate steering committee officers
- ☐ Develop fiscal budget with project leaders

b. November

- ☐ Approve fiscal budget
- ☐ Approve steering committee officers
- ☐ MG project brochure review (Laurie and Shannon will be working on this)
- ☐ Reporting hours reminder

c. December – no steering committee meeting

- ☐ Project Coordinator reports due

6. Old Business

a. Vote on Solon Public Library as approved project

- ☐ Doug reminded the committee that we are voting to approve an additional core project and to add Kathy Erenberger, coordinator, as a voting member of the Steering Committee.
- ☐ The SPL project as presented at the Sept. Steering Committee meeting by Kathy Erenberger & Jan Dallas **was approved** with one abstention.
- ☐ Discussion: Linda suggested that for consistency, a list of requirements for new project approval be added to the Bylaws Appendix C, JCMG Approved Core Project Application: 1) a minimum of 2 years of consistent work on the project, 2) recruitment of MG volunteers who participate on regularly scheduled workdays, and 3) two year project review be conducted. This suggestion was unanimously approved.

b. Vote on Bylaws Revisions

- ☐ Discussion: Linda pointed out that in the Sept.13, 2023 version of the Bylaws, the requirement that the Treasurer have accounting skills is not listed.
- ☐ It was agreed that the wording of the Quorum section needs to be clarified.
- ☐ Doug will compile changes from previous versions of the Bylaw and work on wording for final vote at the November meeting. He requested that everyone please review the document and send comments and suggestions to him before the next meeting. The vote will be delayed until the November meeting.
- ☐ The most recent version of the Bylaws is Sept. 13, 2023 which was attached to Shannon's meeting announcement.

7. New Business

- a. Use of *consent agenda* at future meetings (with one motion for minutes, treasurer's report, and calendar)
- ☐ In order to use our time more efficiently we will begin to use this process at the November meeting.
 - ☐ It will be important for SC members to review the minutes and agenda prior to the meeting and send corrections to Doug ahead of time.
- b. Review of Project budget requests for the 2024 fiscal year. All amounts will come from the MG General account unless otherwise noted.
- ☐ Plum Grove Gardens: \$800 from PG account including carryover for fencing that wasn't installed in 2023
 - ☐ Plum Grove Taste of Heritage Party: \$600 from PG account
 - ☐ Plum Grove Tomato Taste: \$200 from PG account
 - ☐ Demo Garden: \$500
 - ☐ Downtown Gardens: \$700 for new perennials

- ☐ Ecumenical Towers: \$450 for mulch, new plantings, signage, etc.
- ☐ Fairgrounds: \$500 for possible tree plantings to be discussed with the Extension Council. Liinda suggested memorial trees.
- ☐ Plant Sale: \$3280 for additional signage and planting medium (given pre-approval at Oct. 8 meeting)
- ☐ Steering Committee: \$4000 for Kirkwood scholarships and fair awards. Shannon will check on clerical error involving the extra 2023 Kirkwood scholarship award.
- ☐ Speakers Bureau: \$100
- ☐ Thymes: \$400 carryover for prizes (MG merchandise) not awarded in 2023
- ☐ Yard/Garden Info: \$50
- ☐ Hortline: \$200 for purchase of reference materials
- ☐ Butterfly House: \$2500 from BF house account
- ☐ Oaknoll, Hospice Gardens and Solon Public Library have not submitted budget requests. Funding would be reviewed and approved as needed.

c. Introduction of candidates for Vice-Chair

- ☐ Megan Garrels and Melissa Close presented their written applications and presented themselves.
- ☐ Doug and Jackie explained the tasks involved in serving as Chair and Vice-Chair.
- ☐ A paper ballot vote will occur at the November meeting.

8. Administrative Reports & Announcements

a. JCMG Project Coordinator Description & Responsibilities

- ☐ Doug presented a document that has been approved by the Executive Committee and requested that everyone review and send suggestions to him.

- ☐ Linda suggested that the document be made part of Appendix C of the Bylaws.

9. Adjourn (8:26 P.M.)

- a. Date of Next Meeting: **Wednesday Nov. 15** (Shannon has a conflict Nov. 8)
- b. Thymes Newsletter Deadline: **Friday, Oct. 27**

Project Reports

(submitted in advance of meeting)

- **Yard & Garden Information** – no report
- **Butterfly House** – no report
- **Coralville Historical Schoolhouse** – There is not much new to report with the garden. We had a scheduled work day on Monday Sept. 25 in which beds were weeded and we planted some iris bulbs. We are planning a work day at the end of October or early November to thin hostas, replant in other areas and deadhead flowers where needed. The date will depend on the weather. We also plan to tour the Schoolhouse at some point this fall.
- **Ecumenical Towers** – no report
- **Demo Gardens** – We have had such a great season at the Demonstration Garden! Last night we harvested 121 pounds of produce donated to CommUnity Pantry. That makes 1754.5 pounds in donations this season! We had a "dig" as well at the garden. We have spaces where we have not reconstructed the beds yet. We dug down about 2 feet at our little pumpkin bed and layered green material, brown material and compost to rebuild the soil. We will have another "dig" coming next week to rebuild another bed. John Weeg has led us in the reconstruction of the soil throughout the garden. We also spread cardboard over the grass area to begin the process of turning it into more growing space. We will soon plant garlic for next season as well as cover crops that will feed the soil.
- **Downtown City Projects** – This year, Master Gardener volunteers finished converting 1,920 square feet in the Capitol Street Parking Garage south garden into native perennials. The transition complements other downtown gardens featuring native perennials that are helping combat global climate change at a local level. The two-year MG project has filled in quickly to crowd out weeds giving Downtown City Gardens volunteers time to explore other area gardens.

In June, DCG volunteers visited six of eight MG gardening sites. This year and throughout the fall, DCG volunteers have participated in additional creative exchanges assisting MG coordinators and at other gardening local sites including:

- ☐ Coralville Firefighters' Memorial – planting annuals and perennials
- ☐ Ecumenical Towers – garden redesign
- ☐ Grow Johnson County – picking peppers
- ☐ Iowa City *Get Outside* – prairie seed collection
- ☐ Johnson County Fairgrounds Gardens – ongoing maintenance
- ☐ Sycamore Greenway Trail – trail maintenance, plant identification
- ☐ Oaknoll MG volunteers have indicated they are ready to update a very visible garden at the lifetime retirement residence that requires design assistance and plant material as well as labor to install.

DCG volunteers have also requested an opportunity to observe a prairie burn and this is on the list of activities to explore next. The goal of each garden visit is to broaden MGs' understanding of local organizations, their function and mission. The visits to MG-approved garden sites provided our MG volunteers insight into each garden: some projects focus on food production, others integrate the landscape into the garden, others feature strictly flora and some offer both plants and food production. In addition, each garden varies in size, location, number of visitors to the site and property ownership. All visits were to public or nonprofit organization-managed sites.

- **Fairgrounds Beautification (includes Raingarden)** – no report
- **Plant Sale & Flea Market** – no report
- **Hortline** – no report
- **Hospice Garden at Willow Creek** – no report
- **Oaknoll Garden Project** – no report
- **Plum Grove** – no report
- **Speakers Bureau** – no report
- **Thymes Newsletter** – As the year draws to an end, please consider submitting a year-end review (with pictures, if available) to share how things went for your projects. The JCMG-Thymes blog was steady with 228 views by 123 visitors in September, with more than a quarter of the views coming via a Google search, which shows that JCMG wisdom and posts are reaching an audience beyond our immediate group.