

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2022

Members Present: Philip Bradbury, Alnisa Allgood, Laura Peterson, Julie Bernauer, Matt Cornwell, Susan Goodwin, Bill Patek, Juscha Robinson, Maurice Sheppard, Tim Sherry, Bill White, Betty Chewing, Liz Dannenbaum, Moira Harrington, Tanya Zastrow

Members Absent: Renee Boyce, Julie Rupert, Bethany Ordaz, Sandi Statz, Eric Knepp, Laurel Neverdahl

Advisors Present: Jt Covelli, Kevin Hess, Dan Matson, Mary Phillips, Barb Tensfeldt, Paul Williams

Staff Present: Maezy Beams, Sabrina Her, Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Barb McTee, Tatum Mueller, Katy Nodolf, Calla Norris, Liz Parker, Erin Presley, Emily Schwartz, Kai Skadah, Joe Vande Slunt, Hannah Voye

I. **The meeting called to order at 4:00 pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was noted that the minutes from the June 21, 2022 OBS Board meeting should include that the Strategic Director's Fund was capped at \$500,000.

A motion was made by Ms. Peterson and seconded by Ms. Goodwin to approve the meeting minutes of June 21, 2022, with the amended language. Motion carried unanimously, with amendment.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

IV. **OLBRICH STAFF PRESENTATION**

- a. & b. **Meet Olbrich's Interns - Horticulture Interns: Maezy Beams, Sabrina Her, Barb McTee, Calla Norris, Emily Schwartz, Al Valuch (not present at meeting), Hannah Voye & Education Intern: Tatum Mueller** – The interns shared information about themselves and their most memorable Olbrich experiences to date. They talked about how they have enjoyed learning from the staff, how reflective and therapeutic working in the garden can be, and how the internship helped them realize that they are going into the correct field. Ms. Zastrow thanked Board Member Maurice Sheppard for his help connecting Olbrich with students from Madison College.
- c. **American Public Garden Association (APGA) Annual Conference Review** – Erin Presley and Joe Vande Slunt recapped their experiences at the APGA Annual Conference in Portland, OR. They explained how they both received scholarships: Ms. Presley received the inaugural 'Gerry Donnelly Future Leaders Scholarship' from the APGA and Directors of Large Gardens (DLG). Mr. Vande Slunt received a scholarship from the Association of Fundraising Professionals – Greater Madison Chapter. He noted that in addition to the scholarships received, two donors had generously contributed \$6,000 (total) for professional development. Mr. Vande Slunt stated that they will continue to increase that funding line item in the future, so staff can participate in professional development opportunities.

They both recounted experiences from the conference, and their travels, that they found to be inspiring. Ms. Presley's areas of focus were: Urban agriculture and botanic gardens (collaborations between public gardens and community partners that would support food growing and educational activities); Connecting with Asian style gardens (connecting with the newly formed North American Japanese Garden Association); Collections strategies (start thinking about what plants they are bringing in and why); Garden design process (creating quality and memorable spaces that people can explore, play and learn in); Making new (and old) connections (meeting some colleagues in person for the first time).

During a layover, Mr. Vande Slunt visited the Denver Botanic Garden. He highlighted their 'Master Development Plan' Campaign Wall, which illustrated their goals and objectives, how much the project would cost, and whether it was completed or not. He also observed some creative opportunities for seasonal/yearly revenue generation. He laid out what his areas of focus were during the conference: The importance of planning (developing core values, strategic planning, master planning); New ideas for fund development (the importance of digital infrastructure, accessibility, moving on from programs that have reached their expiration date); Developing contacts with people that have shared experiences; and a surprise bonus of finding a translator to assist with the website and translating key pages to Spanish, Chinese, Hmong and Thai.

Ms. Zastrow noted that OBS Director of Education Kim North was chosen to be on the APGA Nominating Committee for the 2023 Annual Conference in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

V. REPORTS

A. President's Report

- a. **Strategic Plan Preparation** – Ms. Zastrow shared an Olbrich Botanical Gardens Strategic Plan Wish List from 2005, and compared it to accomplishments that had been made since then. To get creative juices flowing before the OBS Board Strategic Plan Workshop on August 8, she asked the question: What would our 2040 wish list look like? Ms. Zastrow noted that meetings with the Strategic Plan Consultants would begin the week of August 8, and that over the following 6 months we would work on and complete our strategic plan. She explained that the Plan would update our mission, vision, and core values, and would also outline our transformative goals and objectives for the next 3-5 years. She noted that one of the transformative goals would be to update the master plan, which would be the road map that shows on how we get to the gardens we see possible. She added that the master plan is where we would work on what we envision for the 9.5 acres across the creek, indoor spaces, parking, etc.

There was discussion about how closely the OBS Board members and Olbrich staff could represent people in our community. It was noted that Deborah Biddle, from The People Company, would give our plan the credibility it needed when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion and would make sure we're developing a plan that is accessible and inclusive for the community. The Board also agreed that it would be beneficial to look at other botanical gardens that are similar to Olbrich, for examples of what worked and what didn't.

Ms. Zastrow thanked the Board for helping Olbrich get to where it is today, and thanked Board Members Susan Goodwin and Bill Patek for being a part of the Core Planning Team.

B. Financial Report

- a. **May 2022 Financials** – Treasurer Laura Peterson reviewed the Financial Reports. She noted that as of 5/31/2022, all departments were over budget in revenue except for Development and Volunteers. She highlighted that Gift Shop revenue was \$117,862 over budget, thanks in part to sales that took place during the 4 days of the corpse flower bloom.

C. Director's Report

Staff Written Reports – Board members were encouraged to read the staff written reports.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements.

VIII. **ADJOURNED**

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

DRAFT