

**NEEDHAM GARDEN CLUB
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2021
(19 members present)**

Co-President Jane Lischewski called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. The meeting took place via Zoom.

Recording Secretary:

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November Board meeting; said motion passed unanimously.

Corresponding Secretary:

Bonnie Waters sent a card to Kay T, who was recently hospitalized, but is back home. Bonnie will send a card to Kathy L, who is at home after being ill.

Treasurer/Finance Committee:

The November and December Treasurer's Reports have been circulated to the Board. November's report reflects the following: November began with \$20,820.75 in the checking account and \$280 cash on hand, for a total of \$21,100.75. There was no income for the month; expenses were \$228.26. At the end of the month, the checking account balance was \$20,592.49 and cash on hand was \$280, for a total of \$20,872.49. December's report reflects the following: December began with \$20,592.49 in the checking account and \$280 cash on hand, for a total of \$20,872.49. Income for the month was \$40.00; expenses were \$106.48. At the end of the month, the checking account balance was \$20,526.01 and cash on hand was \$280, for a total of \$20,806.01.

With respect to reimbursements, there was discussion about who can make purchases under the club's guidelines, and reimbursement to members for purchases. It was agreed that purchases need not be confined to committee chairs, as long as the chairs are aware of what their members are purchasing/spending. Nancy has been receiving receipts through the mail and mailing reimbursement checks. Given the pandemic, the policy requiring that receipts be accompanied by reimbursement slips, which not all members may have, has been loosened. Discussion also ensued about reminding those making purchases of the club's tax-exempt status. Those board members who do not have a laminated card with the club's tax exempt number to present to merchants should let Nancy know; cards will be provided.

Communications Committee:

Publicity — Gail Davis stated that articles have appeared in the local paper about the club's programs, and have encouraged the public to go to the website to view recordings of same. Gail inquired whether there was data reflecting whether the articles have driven traffic to the website. Nancy A indicated that she can gather only minimal data about views from the website, but stated the traffic has been minimal.

Discussion ensued about members-only programs, and the possibility of recording them – for viewing on the members-only portion of the website - since they are being held virtually this spring. It was agreed that speakers can be asked if the program can be recorded for members-only viewing, and that any agreement regarding this be memorialized in writing (email documentation would be fine); if permission from the presenter is not given, recordings cannot be made.

Yearbook —Trish Cruickshank had no update, but inquired about the policy for updating members' contact info. Updates to contact info should be given by members to the Membership Committee; the Membership Committee should then forward the information to Yearbook, Website and the Presidents, to disseminate the information to the club in a non-public manner. It can also go to Newsletter to identify new members for the club to welcome.

Facebook — Lyn Jekowsky provided a breakdown of data relating to interactions with the club's Facebook page. Pre-Covid, the January program about Behind the Scenes Flower Arranging at the MFA, and February's program by Jen Kettle about Drought Tolerant Plants, generated a significant number of interactions. Post-Covid, November's orchid presentation generated the most interest.

Website —Nancy Agler reported that the website has been updated, including the posting of January Horticulture Hints.

Community Outreach Committee:

Lynne Jones reported that the library urn whose base had collapsed is still lying tipped over among the broken base. Following discussion, it was agreed that because the existing urns leak badly, new urns, perhaps self-watering ones, should be purchased. It is unknown who owns the existing urns, or who the club might call upon to have them removed. It is believed that the Friends of the Library may privately contract with vendors for certain library-related work; this might provide a lead for the urns' removal. Trish also suggested the Needham Revitalization Trust may be able to refurbish the iron railings, which are in poor condition. Jane L will call Ann McFate at the Library to see if she knows who owns the urns. Lynne J will look into self-watering urns and provide a proposal at the next Board meeting for the club to purchase replacement urns for the library.

Flower Arranging Committee:

Carole Grosberg shared that Debbie Kraft was one of a small pool of floral designers chosen by the MFA to participate in a virtual Art in Bloom this year. Carole will be working with Debbie on this project, which will take place at the Chelsea Flower Market, where the arrangements will be displayed along with photographs of the artwork being interpreted. Carole shared a picture of the sculpture to be interpreted. Debbie and Carole plan to use the \$400 which the club has included as a budget item for this purpose. Other details are to be determined and will be shared at a future time.

Carole also mentioned that Sue Kaplan at TBS Garden Club is organizing a smaller scale Art in Bloom for the NHS art students. It will be a virtual program with a fairly quick turnaround time, starting in January. It is estimated that only 10-20 floral designers will be needed. Carole will inquire if this is a TBS-only event, or whether other clubs can participate.

Horticulture Committee:

No update.

Hospitality Committee:

No update.

Membership Committee:

Debbie Wentworth reported that a new member, Christine Fleskes, has joined the club. *On motion made and unanimously approved, Diana Conroy will serve as Christine's mentor.* Debbie will send Christine's contact info to Nancy and to Martha for updating on the website and for dissemination to club members. After consulting Nominating Committee information, Anne Carlson suggested that

Christine be placed on the Flower Arranging Committee, and given the option to also serve on the Horticulture Committee if she wishes to take on more. These were among the committees that Christine expressed interest in. Diana will pass this information along to her.

Newsletter Committee:

Martha thanked the Newsletter Committee for the most recent issue. Carol Alper expressed her pleasure that the club had remained so active despite the pandemic. Carol noted that the deadline for submissions of articles and photos for the March/April newsletter, which she will prepare, is February 10th. She will save space to report on the February program as well.

Nominating Committee:

Anne Carlson stated that, as previously discussed, due to the pandemic the Committee is asking those in leadership positions – officers and committee chairs – to remain in their roles for another year. Several people have agreed to do so, and she has not heard from anyone who is unable or unwilling to continue. Anne requested that if there is anyone who does not wish to continue with their present role, please contact her. The Committee also will be exploring tri-chairs for some of the committees, to assist with a smooth transition post-pandemic.

Program Committee:

Bonnie Waters reported that the virtual program on January 19 will be on Gardening for the Future. The speaker, Master Gardener Nancy Riggs, will use NGC's Zoom account. Martha will facilitate questions through the chat function. Bonnie will coordinate payment to the speaker with Nancy. Bonnie also will inquire about recording the program within the parameters previously discussed.

Pat Hession stated that the program following that will be by Master Gardener Kathi Gariepy, who will speak on forcing bulbs. Pat will confer with Nancy concerning necessary payments. Pat will report more on this program at the next Board meeting.

There was also discussion of whether to use the Massachusetts Master Gardener Association ["MMGA"]'s Zoom, or the club's Zoom, for speakers who are affiliated with the MMGA Speaker's Bureau. It was agreed that the club should opt to use the MMGA's Zoom when possible, as a facilitator to curate questions asked via the chat function will be provided, and the MMGA would handle technical aspects of Zoom relating to screen sharing and the like. The Program Committee will forward any Zoom links provided by the Speaker's Bureau to Martha and Jane L for dissemination to members in advance of the programs.

Additional discussion followed about how to proceed with programming for the upcoming program year. It was agreed that the club should try to book the library's Community Room as usual, in the event the library reopens and in-person meetings can be hosted. With respect to hiring speakers, it was agreed that speakers who are willing to do, and whose programs are conducive to, both live and virtual formats, be sought. The Program Committee welcomes suggestions.

Ways and Means Committee:

No update.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

1. *A motion was made to convene a Board meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 9:30 via Zoom. Said motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

2. This year is one in which NGC would normally participate in MassHort's Festival of Trees ["FOT"]. Diana volunteered at the 2020 FOT which recently concluded, and felt that MassHort took appropriate pandemic-related precautions, and that the FOT was well-received. Diana and Caryl Johnson have an idea for a tree for this year's Festival, and they are willing to spearhead its preparation and the development of the theme. Upon inquiry, Carole G stated that she and Lyn J had discussed but not committed to leading the NGC's FOT effort, and she was amenable to Diana and Caryl leading that effort this year. Diana will send a note to Martha for dissemination to the club membership regarding this project and seeking volunteers.

Following *a motion, voted on and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned* at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Brand, Recording Secretary

Present: Nancy Agler, Carol Alper, Anne Brain, Jane Brand, Anne Carlson, Diana Conroy, Trish Cruickshank, Cathie Cummings, Gail Davis, Cathy Flaherty, Carole Grosberg, Pat Hession, Lyn Jekowsky, Lynne Jones, Jane Lischewski, Terry Luskin, Martha Schleck, Bonnie Waters and Debbie Wentworth.