

MASTER GARDENER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
May 6, 2020

The meeting of the Extension Master Gardener Advisory Committee was called to order at 9:00 am, by Candice Hart. The meeting was held via Skype. Also in attendance were: May Bach, Barb Dalhbach, Jennifer Fishburn, Karen Glynn, Pat Gunnerson, Brittnay Haag, Amy Hardwicke, Nikki Keltner, Nancy Kreith, Nancy Kuhajda, Janice McCoy, Judy Panico, Gwen Podeschi, Sarah Ruth, Jana Waite, Jane White, and Dennis Bowman.

1. Introductions were made.
2. Karen Glynn moved to accept minutes of the 1/15/20 meeting. Nancy Kuhajda seconded. Minutes were approved.
3. Dennis Bowman provided an ANR state update. Staff are creating new online content and programs. Online learning will continue to be a focus in the future. Master Gardeners appreciate the online programs. Registration reached capacity on many of the programs. A new ANR state website was created. The leadership team has been discussing Extension's summer programming plan given the COVID-19 situation.
4. There are still some vacancies on the board. Candice emailed the application to Units in the south to recruit a Master Gardener. Applications are due June 15. She also contacted Regional Directors to fill the three open staff seats. Election of new officers was held. May Bach will become Chair. Gwen Podeschi will become Vice Chair.
5. COVID-19 has affected programming and volunteer activities. The state office created new volunteer activities that can be done at home including the At Home Food Donation Garden and Citizen Science projects. Units continue to have Master Gardeners work the help desk from home. Master Gardeners will not be able to volunteer outside the home through July 5. The volunteer requirements for 2020 will likely be waived. Candice will send a policy update. The committee recommend creating signage for project sites to let the public know why gardens are overgrown. Committee members shared other Unit projects that have been developed.
6. The US Forest Service Grant *Mastering Urban Tree Health and Tree Identification* advanced training for Master Gardeners and Master Naturalist continues. Registration for the program is open until June 30. The summer hands-on workshops are cancelled, but hope to offer in the fall. Certificates and pins will be shipped to the office to recognize volunteers who have completed the online and hands-on training. Candice is working with web development staff to allow volunteers to upload tree walks to the website. She is also using remaining grant funds to create pocket guides.
7. Online training continues. There were 31 Winter 2020 participants, and currently 19 Summer 2020 participants. Registration is open through May 18. Class starts on June 15. The manual will be shipped from the warehouse to the individual's home. More people are taking the training as a non-volunteer option during this time. Unit staff did not have time to screen and interview the applicants. Peoria had some success last year when they offered classroom training as a non-volunteer training with the option to become a Master Gardener with additional training.

8. State Award nominations are due June 5. The Know More, Grow More projects will have an additional year to spend their funds. Their new deadline will be January 31, 2022. Candice is going to check to see if there are additional funds from other state accounts that can be used to fund Know More, Grow More projects in 2021.
9. The 2020 State Master Gardener Conference that was to be hosted by Will County will move to September 2021. Awards this year will be presented, but unsure what the presentation will look like. Hope to have an awards day in Champaign in fall 2020. Committee discussed having a virtual awards ceremony or a regional awards program. Also suggested creating yard signs for award winners. No confirmed plans are in place after 2021. Potential host counties are Peoria in 2022 and Lake in 2023. The International Master Gardener Conference is on September 12-17, 2021 in Norfolk, VA.
10. A new State Master Gardener website was created. The state website looks similar to the Unit websites. The sub-committee reviewed the draft in May and provided feedback. Candice is working with campus staff to make the final changes and then make it public. Nancy Kreith and Nancy Kuhajda offered to help with website management. It was suggested to have Facebook links and blogs on the state website.
11. Sub-committee memberships was updated.
 - a. Website Reconstruction: Karen Glynn, Pat Gunnerson , Judy Panico, and Sarah Ruth
 - b. Education and MG Manual: Karen Glynn, Nancy Kreith, and Gwen Podeschi
 - c. Awards: May Bach, Pat Gunnerson, and Jane White
 - d. Know More, Grow More: Barb Dalhbach and Britney Haag
 - e. State Conference: May Bach, Nancy Kuhajda, Judy Panico, and Karen Glynn
12. Other Business
 - a. Candice updated the committee about the monthly newsletter for volunteers. She is working with the web team to move emails to a usable database from VCMS.
 - b. Updating/creating Volunteer Job Descriptions could be done during this time.
 - c. Posting the Four Season webinars to YouTube are being delayed by the closed captioning requirements as part of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is a time consuming project, but progress is being made.
13. The next meeting is a Skype call on August 19 from 1:30-3:30 pm. Discussed setting up an awards judging Skype call in June.

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 am.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Ruth, secretary.