

Pulaski County Master Gardeners

Executive Board Retreat

January 14, 2022

Members Present: Randy Forst, Cindy Strauss, Sharon Priest, Carol Mendel, Sara Jordan, Pam Gadberry, Bianca Hernandez, and Deeana Montgomery. **Guest:** Garland County Extension Agent Luke Duffie. **Via zoom:** Susan Stewart, Nancy Archer, Pam Abrams, and Jan Brandeburg.

Welcome: New President Cindy Strauss called the meeting to order 10:12 a.m. Cindy presented outgoing President Sharon Priest with gifts and two red Busy Bees signifying two years of service as president. Sharon thanked board and all master gardeners for their service. Randy expressed thanks to Sharon for two years as leader in difficult times.

Minutes: Minutes for the November 16, 2021, Board and General Meetings were presented by Secretary Sara Jordan. Comments were made by President Cindy Strauss that forty-six people completed on-line training and were assigned to projects. Randy Forst corrected the website address as www.uaex.uada.edu. Corrections were made to the minutes. Cindy Strauss moved to accept the amended minutes, and Pam Gadberry seconded. The report was approved.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer Pam Gadberry presented both bank statements. Randy Forst thanked the organization for the monetary gift, which will be spent on an educational opportunity. The treasurer said that general expense donations have been disbursed. The difference between the depository and private accounts was explained. The treasurer pointed out that the organization is financially strong going forward in 2022 even though we were unable to carry out all that was budgeted. Randy Forst emphasized that as a nonprofit we maintain a large amount in our accounts. We may be told to disburse some funds in future. He also commented that projects should not be spending their own money; financial hosts should be paying the costs. However, the board could consider reimbursement if a situation arises. Financing should be discussed in project chair training. Carol Mendel moved to accept the report, and Sharon Priest seconded.

Reports: Randy Forst reported that new membership card order has not been submitted yet for cards across the state. Also, the January meeting will be via zoom.

First VP: Carol Mendel is working on arrangements for chair/co-chair training and is hopeful it can be in person. She pointed out that enthusiasm for the awards has been lacking. It was mentioned that membership stands at 556 members and the cap is 600. The new fall 2022 class has 23 members currently.

Second VP: Sara Jordan reported that help is requested for Busy Bee Committee and Stuff Committee. Sara Jordan will aid in finding a new Busy Bee Chairperson for coming year. Different suggestions were made about simplifying our Busy Bee methods. Cindy Strauss said that the Stuff Committee is having difficulty sourcing items. Board agreed that a new local vendor should be found. Carol Mendel suggested that Patti Womble would be a good source of help locating a new vendor.

Past President/Pest: Sharon Priest reminded that Pest Committee consists of past president, first vice president, second vice president, member at large, and county agent. The committee usually visits ten projects, but this year needs to review fifteen as there are thirty-two sanctioned projects. Sharon Priest will research projects and arrange visits on the second Tuesday of the month.

Board recessed for lunch 12:03; meeting resumed 12:30.

Secretary: Secretary Deena Montgomery stated that she will assume the duties of office and record the high points and decisions.

Treasurer: Pam Gadberry stated that she furnished an end of year report. Now that she has completed the report, she will begin peer review. The extension office position held by Katie Reddick will be vacant on her retirement and a new person cannot take her place until that time. Katie has knowledge of the financial files and will leave instruction for the new employee.

Assistant Treasurer: Susan Stewart had no further report.

At Large/Plant Labeling: Bianca Hernandez provided Information about the new plant labeling machines. The expense of new labeling machines was discussed. The most economical method in both time and money seems to be project use of the label machine at extension office by appointment with projects bringing lists of a category of plants and avoid trying to label all plants at once.

At Large/ Programs: Pam Abrams and Jan Brandeburg shared the schedule of speakers planned for calendar year 2022 beginning with Randy Forst for the January general meeting. They also plan to highlight individual projects during the year by assisting projects in preparing power point presentations to show to the membership.

At Large/Pest: Nancy Archer announced that for 2022 extension will hold only a fall online training class. This is because we are close to our cap of 600 members.

President: Cindy Strauss brought up a discussion concerning whether Pulaski County should have a representative at County 76. We agreed that representation would a good idea, but that our group had not seen the interest among our members. Recording hours worked should begin in February when the new recording system is installed. Also, Cindy said that photos of members can be sent to the website for those who do not have a photo.

County Agent Randy Forst: Randy thanked the board, chairs, and co-chairs for keeping the organization running smoothly. He also mentioned that we need to do better in future with recording work hours online. Many members did not get benefit of hours as they waited until the last minute. Our organization missed out on getting credit for these hours. The amount of \$28.54 is the hourly value of our volunteer work. Cindy mentioned that our group recorded 13206 hours on sanctioned projects and 2146 on non-sanctioned work. She went on to say that the new system and education should improve our recording. Cindy told us that board member Bianca Hernandez is involved in non-sanctioned volunteer work at Williams Magnet School reviving a garden, and our members could obtain non-sanctioned volunteer hours by assisting.

Meeting adjourned 1:45 p.m.