

St. Charles County Master Gardeners Association
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2025

Attendees: President: Laura Steimel Demo Garden Leads: ~~Cindy Platzer~~, Beka Davis
Vice President: Jackie Johnson Education/Hortline: ~~Patti Kolek~~
Secretary: Sandra Newsom Plant Sale Coordinator: Donna Lindsey
Treasurer: ~~Mary Coyle~~ * line through indicates absence

MU Program Coordinator: ~~Eli Isele~~

Invitees: Kevin Lynch (Membership), ~~Joe Walker (Immediate Past President)~~, ~~Bonnie Winkler (CE/AT)~~,
~~Valerie Mertz (Programs)~~, ~~Deana Dothage (MU Extension Engagement Specialist)~~, ~~Melanie Elick (Communications)~~

Call to Order: President Laura Steimel called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

Quorum and Attendance: Sandra Newsom verified Quorum and Attendance.

Secretary's Report: Sandra Newsom | Minutes of the July 11, 2025 meeting were distributed on 8/5/2025 and were available during the 8/8/2025 Steering Committee meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2025 Steering Committee meeting. The minutes were reviewed, and minor corrections were made. The motion was amended to approve the minutes as revised. The motion was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Coyle | Mary is working through the transition to the Treasurer position. There are some technical issues with equipment and software. Access to all the financial accounts and software has been achieved. The Reconciliation Reports showed a 6/30/2025 ending balance of \$47,489.60 and a 7/31/2025 ending balance of \$46,359.77. A bank statement reported balances as of 8/7/2025 of \$43,347.27 in the Business checking account and \$11,095.22 in the Business savings account. Mary will develop standardized reports for the monthly reporting. The Steering Committee and garden leads can review the reconciliation reports presented to confirm the correct coding of expenses. More details are needed in the check register regarding split payments. The \$3,000 transfer from the checking account to the savings account that was approved at the June Steering Committee meeting was completed in August. A motion to accept the reconciliation reports was postponed pending a scrutiny of the reports by Steering Committee members and garden leads.

[8/9/2025 Email Vote: After reviewing the financial reports provided by Treasurer Coyle and confirming that beginning and ending balances for May to June and June to July were correct and reviewing the plant sale expenses (checks), Donna Lindsey moved the Treasurer's reports for June and July be accepted. The motion was seconded by Cindy Platzer. The motion was unanimously approved.]

The Year to Date (YTD) QuickBooks reports were requested for the September Steering Committee meeting. The Treasurer's files should be brought to the MU Extension office for storage in the file system.

MU Horticulturalist Specialist/Coordinator: Eli Isele | No report. Eli is currently travelling out of the country.

MU Extension Engagement Specialist: Deana Dothage | No report.

President's Report: Laura Steimel | The SCCMGA will continue to operate as a 501(c)(3) entity. Laura worked with Eli (with assistance from several Master Gardeners) to complete the necessary paperwork to register with

the University of Missouri as an affiliate organization. The paperwork was filed electronically on 7/31/2025. Copies of the application are filed in the MU Extension office and SCCMGA records. Key points of being an MU affiliated organization include:

- Maintain 501(c)(3) status
- Submit required annual filings
- Operate under an affiliation agreement
- Access MU Extension branding and support
- University fundraising policy still applies (no games-of-chance fundraising events)

The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MU Extension will probably be impacted by the change in relationship status.

Standing Committee Reports

Membership: Kevin Lynch | Current policy is that members are recognized and receive awards for volunteer hours served annually at either the January or February General Membership meeting. It is difficult for the Membership Committee to complete an audit of the volunteer hours reported through year end (12/31) in time for recognition in January. An early cut-off date of mid-November for reporting hours was proposed but several negative consequences were identified. Designating the February General Membership meeting as the Awards Program will ease the pressure of preparing for the awards recognition. It is critical that members report their volunteer hours throughout the year as the hours are earned. The exception allowance for late reporting should be used only in rare cases.

Kevin shared the **Guide for Reporting Volunteer & Education Hours**, and discussion was held regarding the Description of Work that was provided for various Project categories. No changes were suggested for the description of the Continuing Education project. The description for the Offsite Gardens project will be revised to add a requirement for pre-approval by the Steering Committee. Kevin will modify the current description and submit it to the Steering Committee for review.

The membership badge order for August will not be fulfilled by the August membership meeting. The badges will be presented in September and new Master Gardeners affected will be notified. Requests for replacement badges are submitted separately and there is an associated cost.

Kevin's expertise with Membership Reporting is appreciated and he is looking for ways to simplify the system.

The **Master Gardener Classifications** document was distributed for review. The document will be published on the website pending review. It was noted that terminology for Master Gardeners certified by MU Extension are referred to as Extension Master Gardener (EMG).

Continuing Education/Advanced Training: Bonnie Winkeler | The committee's recommended **Advanced Training Guidelines** was approved at the July Steering Committee meeting, but further editing was needed before the document could be posted to the website. Discussion was held about Hortline Support qualifying for advanced training credit and the **Guidelines** was revised to include: Horticulture Answer Service (Hort Line) hours should only be counted when the time spent is researching and responding to a question or inquiry from the public. Beka Davis will provide the Course Approval Form to be included with the **Guidelines**. The website will be updated as soon as possible.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the CE/AT Committee.

Continuing education and advanced training opportunities are published weekly in the *Monday Blooms*. Publication in the *Monday Blooms* is evidence of pre-approval.

Education: Patti Kolek | The SCCMGA will participate in local farmer's markets including:
St. Charles Market 1st Saturday – May 3rd through September 6th
Pollinator Palooza September 27, 2025

Registration is open for the 9/13/25 **In The Garden** class with one registration as of 8/2/25. The winter classes are scheduled for the third Saturday in January and February 2026. Speakers have not been identified for the winter classes.

The recent St. Charles Market was busy, and MGs handed out a lot of flyers and spoke to a lot of people there.

DJ Sutcliffe has assumed the duties of Speakers Bureau lead and is updating the files for the website. She will get with Joe Walker on getting those files and the new contact email address on the site.

An Education Committee meeting is planned for September.

Plant Sale: Donna Lindsey, Catherine Ebone, Cindy Heider Greenhouse: Jeanne Debold, Nancy Torke Hoop House: Donna Lindsey	The Plant Sale Team leaders are busy working on plans for the 2026 Plant Sale. Greenhouse cleanup will be scheduled when the weather cools.
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Demonstration Gardens: Cindy Platzer, Beka Davis | The brick project is complete. The Herb Garden project is complete. Unused funds for that project will be reallocated to the Pantry Garden. The Steering Committee approves a total budget for Demonstration Gardens and approval by the Steering Committee for reallocation of funds among the individual gardens is not required.

Tours continue to be scheduled. A recent group tour by the St. Charles Center for Advanced Professional Studies led to an interest in hosting classes on food and gardening. More details to come.

The Warren County Nutritionist (part of the Missouri Extension Nutrition Program) toured the gardens and was very excited about the possibility of a collaboration where the nutritionists could be trained in growing and harvesting the Pantry Garden crops. In a recent update, it was learned that the Nutritionist position has lost its funding and there will be no progress on a collaboration.

Discussion was held about deadlines for 2026 budget planning. Looking back at 2024, budget requests were due in September, and a 2025 budget forecast was prepared in late October. The addition of the AAS Garden impacts the ordering process but Donna feels sure all the necessary information will be available on time to make plans for 2026. The overall Demo Garden budget is due to the treasurer by October 31, 2025.

Communications: Melanie Elick | Laura will schedule time with Jackie Johnson and Melanie to discuss communication training needs in the areas of: Constant Contact, Website, Face Book and Google Cloud Storage.

Upcoming Speakers and Meetings: Val Mertz | General Membership Meetings are held monthly except November and December. Social time begins at 6:00 and the program begins at 6:30 followed by a business meeting. Program topics for upcoming meetings are:

August 28	Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, an organization dedicated to planting and growing a resilient tree canopy across Missouri, to support healthy people, healthy habitats, and a healthy planet.
September	Speaker is not confirmed.
October 23	Our Missouri Native Hollies and More presented by Joe Corio, an active Emeritus Gardener in Jefferson County. Joe is currently the board chairman of Kress Farm Garden Preserve.
November	No monthly membership meeting.
December 5	Holiday Party

Old Business: Bond insurance and liability insurance for board members has been obtained from State Farm. The annual premium is \$131.

New Business: The self-paced online Extension Master Gardener Training Course presented by MU Extension begins August 10, 2025. We should request a roster of registrants from St. Charles County so they can be subscribed to the *Monday Blooms* newsletter. Laura will create a new Welcome letter, and we should work to engage the trainees early in their training.

Volunteers are needed to coordinate plans for the Annual Holiday Party scheduled for December 5, 2025.

Good of the Order: Laura has received input from those who attend the monthly membership meetings via the Zoom option. She will incorporate the suggestions to improve the user experience.

Adjournment: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the August 8, 2025 Steering Committee meeting at 11:05 a.m. The motion received unanimous approval.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Newsom, Secretary