

**St. Charles Master Gardeners
Steering Committee Minutes
February 14, 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: Rebecca Poon * line through indicates absence

MU Program Coordinator: Eli Isele

Invitees: Kevin Lynch (Membership), Joe Walker (Immediate Past President)

Call to Order: Laura Steimel called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Quorum and Attendance: Sandra Newsom verified Quorum and Attendance.

Secretary's Report: Sandra Newsom | Minutes of the January 10, 2025 meeting and minutes of the January 31, 2025 email vote related to the Memorandum of Understanding were distributed prior to this meeting. Rebecca Poon provided some clarifying language for the January 10, 2025 treasurer's report specific to the footnotes used on the financial reports. There were no further corrections or additions.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2025 Steering Committee meeting and the January 31, 2025 email vote. The motion received unanimous approval.

Treasurer's Report: Rebecca Poon | The financial position as of 1/31/2025 was reported as \$26,455.54 in the checking account and \$8,075.18 in the savings account. The treasurer's report also included the Statement of Financial Position as well as the Statement of Activity for January 2025. A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial report. The motion received unanimous approval.

Cindy Platzer asked about use of the MG credit card for purchasing supplies and materials for the Herb Garden project. Authorized users of the credit card need to be updated to Laura Steimel (President) and Rebecca Poon (Treasurer). Methods of payment other than the credit card were discussed.

Form 990N has been filed.

Per SOS - no need to update changes in the board of directors between filing dates. Next filing date is 2026 when the new slate of officers should be provided.

Rebecca will file the "change in registered agent" form to change the name from Marsha Brown to Laura Steimel. The address has already been changed to our business address (Extension Office) but currently still in Marsha's name.

MU Horticulturalist Specialist/Coordinator: Eli Isele | Eli introduced Eliza Pessereau who joined the Extension team. Eliza shared her background and interest in horticulture and looks forward to working with Eli and the Master Gardeners Association. Eliza Pessereau will attend the MOMGA quarterly meeting.

The Friday, March 7, 2025 MOMGA quarterly meeting will be held at the St. Charles Extension office. Zoom and Owl equipment will be required. The reservation for the meeting room has been confirmed. The meeting is by invitation only and two representatives of the St. Charles County MG Association will be designated as attendees with voting privileges. Joe Walker and Cindy Platzer were selected to represent the MG Association. In person

attendance was estimated at ten people with others joining by Zoom. Joe will provide doughnuts, and Cindy will prepare coffee and host a garden tour.

Extension: Deana Dothage | The Memorandum of Understanding with UM Extension, as approved by the St. Charles Master Gardeners group on 1/31/2025 was returned to Deana who clarified the status of the MOU. It was discussed at the Extension Council meeting and tabled for further research. They need to investigate whether the status of having a 501c3 changes the status of volunteers covered by the policy. They are researching with the insurance company and university personnel. Currently, the 2016 MG MOU is still in place. Deana will be back in touch as more information is gathered.

Standing Committee Reports

Membership: Kevin Lynch | Year-end processing of volunteer hours has been completed. It will take two weeks to produce certificates, and Kevin will check the inventory of pins. It was suggested that members scheduled to receive a certificate or pin be notified by email to encourage their attendance at the meeting.

Kevin confirmed that the count of active and emeritus members of the association was 147. Dues of \$2 per member must be paid to MOMGA by the end of February with the estimated total being \$294. A motion was made and seconded to approve the payment of dues up to \$300 to MOMGA. The motion received unanimous approval.

The Membership Committee met to discuss exceptions to the membership reporting of volunteer hours. Year end processing and review of the hours reported involves much time spent reconciling the volunteer hours reported by the members and requests for special handling because of late and/or incorrect reporting. Members should be encouraged to report volunteer hours as soon as they are earned and to pay careful attention to the annual hours required for volunteer work and education to maintain active status.

The Membership Committee may propose new rules in 2025 of no exceptions allowed related to membership reporting and moving the cut-off date for reporting to November.

Continuing Education/Advanced Training: Beka Davis for Bonnie Winkeler | No update since the last meeting. Cindy Platzer would like for the CE/AT committee to better define what qualifies as an MG (internal) class.

Education: Patti Kolek | The *In The Garden* class on February 8, 2025 was attended by 43 people who had positive comments on the presentations by Beka Davis on Landscaping and Chuck Baur on Ground Covers and Mulching. The next *In The Garden* class will be held on April 12, 2025 covering Native Plants and Moles.

The Core class facilitator sign up still has a couple of openings for April. Patti is looking for someone who could possibly help out at the last minute if we have a facilitator who cannot make it. Those in the Core class are asked to keep a record of the hours and enter them when they have an assigned a log-in for member hours.

Peggy Hammond and Dawn Tucker are organizing the scavenger hunt event for the spring/early summer season of 2025 in the Demo Gardens. Cindy Platzer mentioned that the Extension office expressed concern with the current plan for the event and the number of visitors who would be on the property unattended.

Dawn Tucker talked to the library about holding a book club there for MGs and the public, but the response was not positive. They have had difficulties with book clubs in the past. Dawn will continue to explore options.

The Education Committee suggested that there be a central person in charge of advertising MG events and classes in the local news outlets. No one has been assigned, but Cindy Platzer has organized a list of those news outlets.

Plant Sale, Greenhouse, Hoop House: Donna Lindsey | The next seeding and transplanting party will be held on Wednesday, February 19, 2025. There is a lot to accomplish, and the greenhouse will be completely full after the seeding/transplanting. Volunteers from the current Master Gardener class have provided enthusiastic support. The Greenhouse is open for watering and inspection of the growing plants.

The upcoming plant sales will be advertised:

Cool Season Vegetables and Pansies

March 15: 9 a.m. – noon

March 16: noon – 2:00 p.m.

Tomatoes, Peppers, Herbs, Annuals, Perennials, Natives

April 26: (by reservation via signup Genius) noon – 2 p.m.

April 27: noon – 2 p.m.

Communications: Melanie has asked for guidance regarding roles and responsibilities for whoever maintains and coordinates communications for several media groups including Facebook, mailing lists, website, and Monday Blooms newsletter. Laura Steimel will schedule a discussion group (probably via a Zoom meeting) to address the overall mission/purpose/goals for the above. She will attend an upcoming MG class to recruit volunteers for the Communication and Membership committees. Jackie Johnson offered to help with Communications.

In general discussion about opportunities in the area of communications, it was noted that the MG Facebook page has over 700 followers. The *Monthly Blooms* newsletter has an open rate of 60%.

Demo Gardens: Cindy Platzer | The new St. Charles County Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens brochure is complete.

The Herb Garden renovation will start on March 15, 2025 with a planned completion date by the end of April. Six beds will be replaced during work sessions held on Wednesdays and Saturdays beginning March 15. The ambitious construction schedule and work plan will require extra volunteers to stay on track. The Herb Garden renovation was identified as a 2025 Master Gardner Class project. In addition to bed replacement, a buffer zone will be created between the Native area and Herb Garden.

No word has been received on the grant application submitted to request funds for the Herb Garden renovation.

Hortline: Patti Kolek | A training session is planned for Hortline volunteers on April 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the B room.

Farmers Markets Table Update: Patti Kolek | St. Charles Master Gardeners are signed up to have a booth at the Plant Expo in Weldon Springs on May 17, 2025 from 10-3. Invitations to the local markets have not been received to date.

Upcoming Speakers and Meetings: Val Mertz | The schedule for upcoming general membership meetings is:

February - Membership Awards presentation

March - Ben Davis, a Public Land Forester for MDC, will speak on Exotic Invasive Plants in St. Louis Region

April - Rosanne LeBaige will focus on the impact of light pollution.

Val asked for gift suggestions for those who decline the honorarium offered to speakers at the monthly meetings. A gift of honey was proposed and could be obtained from Three Rivers Beekeepers who maintain bee hives within the Demonstration Garden area.

Other status and information reports: None

Old Business

Marsha Brown Memorial Bench: Donations for the memorial bench will be collected through the February general membership meeting.

Records Retention and Disaster Recovery: Some discussion was held on the topic of a central storage plan for spreadsheets and other operating documents that are maintained by the Garden Leads and MG Association officers. Volunteers should be identified to join a committee to develop a records retention policy that identifies a permanent file storage solution for important documents.

New Business: None

Good of the Order: None.

Adjournment: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the February 14, 2025 Steering Committee meeting at 10:08 a.m. The motion received unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Newsom". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sandra Newsom, Secretary

Next Steering Committee meeting date is Friday, March 14, 2025.