

**St. Charles Master Gardeners  
Steering Committee Minutes  
January 10, 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                      \* strike through indicates absence

MU Program Coordinator: Eli Isele

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

**Call to Order:** Laura Steimel called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom because of inclement weather.

**Quorum and Attendance:** Sandra Newsom verified Quorum and Attendance.

**Secretary's Report:** Sandra Newsom | Minutes of the December 13, 2024 meeting were distributed prior to this meeting. It was suggested that major budget category details be included in the minutes. A short version of the approved budget will be attached to the December Steering Committee minutes. A correction was made to the date of the first seeding party: January 3, 2025 should be January 4, 2025. There were no further corrections or additions. Once the minutes are approved by the Steering Committee, they should be sent to Joe Walker for posting on the MG website.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2024 Steering Committee meeting as revised. The motion received unanimous approval.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rebecca Poon | Reconciliation reports, bank statements and statement of activity were provided to the Steering Committee for review prior to the meeting. Discussion was held on the proceeds of the Holiday Auction being reported as part of the Chapter Meetings expense line item. The proposed 2025 Budget that was approved at the 12/13/2024 Steering Committee meeting was reviewed in detail: projected income is \$22,600 and projected expenses are \$21,222. The 2025 Budget was developed with a conservative approach to estimating income and expenses. Rebecca will add a footnote to the budget document to indicate that:

2025 Projected Income will be realized at the end of April and be available to cover expenses in the later part of 2025 and early 2026.

2025 Projected Expenses will be covered by funds in the Checking Account until the end of April when new income is realized.

The 12/13/2024 Steering Committee meeting approved a special project expenditure in 2025 of \$3,548 for the herb garden renovation. This expenditure is not reflected in the 2025 Budget. A footnote was added to the 2025 Budget document that will be presented to the membership.

The financial position as of 12/31/2024 was reported as \$26,973.87 in the checking account and \$8,071.75 in the savings account.

The treasurer's procedures should be reviewed to confirm that an additional person has online access to the bank accounts and accounting software. The procedures document should outline the process in the event the treasurer is unavailable.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion received unanimous approval. The approved 2025 Budget will be included as an attachment to the Steering Committee minutes and distributed to the membership via the Monday newsletter and the next general membership meeting.

**MU Horticulturalist Specialist/Coordinator:** Eli Isele | Eli thanked Joe Walker for his service as president and welcomed Laura as incoming president. Forty-one people are registered for the Master Gardener class that will begin on January 16, 2025. Classes will meet weekly on Thursday from 9:00 – noon through April 24, 2025. Requests for speaker time at the individual classes should be sent to Laura Steimel.

The Herb Garden Renovation project will be presented to the incoming class as the 2025 class project.

The Friday, March 7, 2025 MOMGA quarterly meeting will be held at the St. Charles Extension office. The meeting is by invitation only and two representatives of the St. Charles County MG Association will be designated as attendees with voting privileges. There is no registration fee. Food will not be served. Cindy Platzer offered to host a garden tour.

UM Extension requires that volunteers sign the Code of Conduct each year before they begin volunteering time in the garden or at other MG events. The online renewal process via the website is going well. Copies of the Code of Conduct are being provided at volunteer events. The signatures collected are scanned and forwarded to the UM Extension office.

**Extension: Deana Dothage** | The MOU is being reviewed by the Extension Council but has not yet been presented to the MG Steering Committee. The Extension office is determining if the MG mailing lists that go out through the Extension are subject to 'Unsubscribed' recipient processing. Can we determine how many of our intended recipients that affected?

Cindy Platzer suggested that Deana Dothage be invited to attend the January membership meeting to talk about the brick paver fundraiser.

**501©(3):** Newly elected board will need to be reported to the State of Missouri in 2025.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Membership:** Kevin Lynch | Year-end processing is underway, and the volunteer numbers have been verified. The cut-off for reporting hours was 12/31/2024. The committee will provide a report on who met the requirements for active status in 2024, annual award recipients, and lifetime achievement award. Requests for emeritus status can be considered at any time during the year. It is important for emeritus members to report their hours because it helps the chapter. Kevin will report who still needs to sign the Code of Conduct. It may take individual contact to accomplish all the renewals.

**Continuing Education/Advanced Training:** Beka Davis | The committee is redefining criteria for what qualifies for CE/AT. There are no major revisions, but the goal is to create an easier but rewarding journey toward engaging in CE/AT. The committee will submit a report prior to the next Steering Committee meeting. Eli's review of the committee's report was recommended.

**Education:** Patti Kolek | The first in the series of 'In the Garden' classes is scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2025 from 9 - noon. Seventeen are registered and session topics are: 'Succession Planting' and 'Lighting for Indoor Seedlings'. Future sessions will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of February and April.

Peggy Hammond and Dawn Tucker are planning to organize a scheduled scavenger hunt event for the spring/early summer season of 2025. Organizers provided a detailed proposal of possible elements for the event. Demo Garden Leads would be invited to participate, and children's activities would be offered. The event would entail an estimated \$200 budget request for supplies. Organizers would be responsible for recruiting MG volunteers to help execute the event.

The Education Committee will meet next on January 23, 2025 at 5:00 p.m., prior to the regular membership meeting.

**Plant Sale, Greenhouse, Hoop House:** Donna Lindsey | The first seeding party held on January 4, 2025 had a good turnout. The next seeding and transplanting event will be Saturday, January 25, 2025. The greenhouse will be turned on January 22 and the propane supply is good. The pansies are growing very well. A donation of lights has been received. The watering crew needs more volunteers.

**Communications:** Melanie Elick is receiving questions from members regarding classes reported in the Monday newsletter and which classes count as continuing education. Articles calling for volunteer activities should include where the volunteer hours are to be charged. Articles should be submitted as PDF files because PDF files can be read from a variety of devices.

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 to address the overall mission/purpose/goals for the above.

**Demo Gardens:** Cindy Platzer | The gardens are sleeping. The team is working on the overall Demo Garden plan. The compost bins are being repaired with the assistance of Kevin Minard.

**Hortline:** Patti Kolek | A training session is planned to recruit volunteers for the Hortline. Chuck will help with presentations to the MG class. The theme will be sharing interesting conversations from the Hortline. A beautiful 2025 calendar featuring photos of the demo gardens was delivered to the Hortline desk. The photographer might be Beka's neighbor and Beka will facilitate a thank you message. The Hortline recorded 407 public contacts in 2024. Hortline volunteers will start working from the Extension office in mid-March.

**Farmers Markets Table Update:** Patti Kolek | Invitations to the local markets have not been received to date. She would like to continue working with the St. Charles Farmers Market. The New Melle Market is seeing less vendor participation in its market.

**Upcoming Speakers and Meetings:** No speakers are planned for the January and February meetings. Plans for the meetings were generally discussed. Social time and a cold food potluck was suggested for January. The Demo Garden Leads, Hortline, Plant Sale, etc. could make brief presentations about volunteer opportunities in the various gardens. It was suggested that a 2024 Annual Report could be presented celebrating the volunteer efforts and successes over the past year. Awards will be presented in February with the Paul Hendricks Award being possibly presented in January if the recipient is available. The recipient information is confidential until the award presentation. Applications for the MOMGA awards are due in mid-March.

Zoom support for the January and February meetings was discussed. Attendees who don't drive at night might appreciate the Zoom option for the January and February meetings. The Zoom option is not offered in January and February because there is no speaker at those meetings. The Zoom option has issues such as poor reception, slow download/upload transmission, poor sound quality. The screen sharing option (used by the speaker to display meeting notes, photos and related material) was identified as a source of some of the issues.

**Other status and information reports:** None

### **Old Business**

**Herb Garden Special Project:** The budget of \$3,548 was approved by the Steering Committee at the 12/13/2024 meeting. There is a need to communicate the project as currently budgeted. Cindy expects to hear from the funding grant application in the coming weeks of January 2025.

**Marsha Brown Memorial Bench:** A group plans to purchase a memorial garden bench and brass plaque to place near the entrance to the Fruit Arboretum. Bids for the bench range from \$300 to \$700 and for the plaque range from \$94 - \$300. The group will scale the project according to donations received. Cindy Platzer will collect donations and cash donations will be solicited at the February meeting. Funds received exceeding the project cost will be donated to the Arboretum's operating expenses.

**Records Retention and Disaster Recovery:** Cindy Platzer encouraged discussion of a central storage plan for spreadsheets and other operating documents that are maintained by the Garden Leads and MG Association officers. She suggested that Melanie could help with this effort. Others should be identified to join a committee to develop a records retention policy that identifies a permanent file storage solution for important documents.

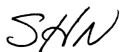
### **New Business**

**Meeting Facilitators:** Laura thanked Joe for setting up and shutting down each of the monthly membership meetings during 2024. For 2025, Laura will solicit volunteers to set up the meetings which includes: setting up tables, preparing refreshments, attendee signup sheets, returning the tables to storage, general cleanup.

**Good of the Order:** None.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the January 10, 2025 Steering Committee meeting at 10:34 a.m. The motion received unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,



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Sandra Newsom, Secretary

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