

Bedford Garden Club
Minutes
Executive Committee Meeting
9 am December 14, 2022
Via Zoom

Attendance: Beth Sachs, Suzanne Bowers, Tina Winchester, Cynthia Mas, Jayni Chase, Susan West, Ellen Conrad, Leslie Wortmann, Heather Langham, Varner Redmon, Anita Stockbridge, Cecilia Wolfson, Wendy Cushman, Heidi Fahey, Diane Lewis, Susan Burke, Virginia Maybank, Emily Grand

Welcome: President's Report Beth Sachs

Beth welcomed everyone to our Zoom meeting and said she was very thankful for all that the Bedford Garden Club has accomplished this year. She thanked Leslie for the amazing Greens Day that took place on December 7 and the incredible job that she did with her committee. Leslie makes Greens Day look effortless and we all know how much work and coordination it takes. Beth said it was a very happy gathering and very well attended by members and guests.

Beth announced that we will wait to approve the Executive Committee Meeting minutes from the September through December 2022 meetings until our next Executive Meeting in January to give everyone a chance to review them. At that time, we will also approve the minutes from the Monthly Membership meetings from the past few months.

Treasurer's Report: Virginia Maybank

Virginia reviewed the Statement of Activity report and the Operating Budget report. She encouraged the Standing Committee chairs to use their budgeted amount as those amounts were allocated to each committee for their use. She noted that the Ward Pound Ridge Wildflower Garden still has \$8000 remaining from the \$50,000 that was allotted. A discussion ensued regarding the finances of the Zone III meeting in June. Heather noted that costs have risen and that they are doing everything possible to stay within budget but wanted to note that it is a very expensive undertaking. Heather said the Zone III Treasurer has been very helpful in the accounting process. Beth thanked Heather and Nancy for their care and creative efforts to find ways to stay within budget.

Standing Committee Reports:

Civic Affairs and Conservation: Ellen Conrad and Jayni Chase

Ellen reminded everyone of the Webinar that will take place on January 11th at 6:30 pm entitled "Neonics, the Toxic Truth: The Pesticides Threatening Bees, Birds and Our Health". Ellen said that Jayni has worked tirelessly to organize this for the entire Zone III and asked everyone to please try and attend. A notice will be sent to our membership shortly with a link to register. The webinar will feature two important hosts: Dan Raichel, Acting Director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Pollinator initiative and Dr. Kathleen Nolan, a pediatrician, President of the Physicians for Social Responsibility, New York Chapter, and Senior Research Director at Catskill Mountainkeeper. Diane Lewis noted that the GCA is a huge supporter of this initiative and that the state is currently very receptive to it. As of January 1st, NY State will be limiting and restricting the use of Neonics, and this initiative will support the banning of Neonics entirely.

Ellen also reported on the recent Conservation meeting that was held at Jayni's house and attended by many Seedlings. Two good suggestions from the meeting: (1) organizing a Conservation showcase at the

February meeting with 2 tables providing diverse info on Conservation topics and (2) all participants were very excited about "Tips and Tales" and will be submitting ideas. Jayni said there is no bad idea or bad question! They will be sending a short email to the membership about Tips and Tales in the near future.

Jayni reported that on the morning of January 18th, the Garden Clubs of Orange and Dutchess Counties have organized a Zoom meeting for all Zone III clubs featuring Bill McKibben, author of "The End of Nature" which Jayni said was a very informative and inspirational book. She said that Bill is very difficult to get and that this is a wonderful opportunity for all.

Jayni also reported on "I love my State Park Day" which will take place in May and said that she hopes for more participation from our club this year. More information on this to follow.

Floral Design: Leslie Wortmann

Leslie thanked everyone for coming to Greens Day and especially thanked Jamie Edgar for his help with the AV equipment and Steve Richter for his help with the details of the day at Westmoreland Sanctuary. Their help really ensured the success of the day and she was very grateful. Everyone thanked Leslie for the terrific job she did and said it was very helpful to pay for boutique purchases via Zelle.

Horticulture: Virginia Maybank, Tina Winchester

Tina reported that there will not be a hort workshop in December but that they are busy planning several to take place in the spring from January through May. She will provide the dates to Tersey for the calendar. They are also working on the Almanac and will continue this in the New Year.

Membership: Cynthia Mas

Cynthia reported that most of the candidates who will be proposed this year were able to attend Greens Day. She will be sending an email to all proposers in January to remind them of the deadline/timeline for letter submission. Cynthia said it was a real treat to have Cathy Graham as the Greens Day speaker and that it was a great opportunity for the candidates in attendance to see the Garden Club in full swing.

Photography: Anita Stockbridge

Anita said that there hasn't been much activity within the Photography committee as of yet but that she will plan meetings starting in January and will work in conjunction with the Photography schedule for the Zone III meeting.

Garden History and Design: Varner Redmon, Susan Burke, Wendy Cushman

Varner has been working with Nancy Vincent on the new website to post photos from the Smithsonian of Members' Gardens from as early as 1921 along with the forms for documenting gardens which she hopes is helpful.

Gardens: Betsy Mitchell

Beth reported on behalf of Betsy that all is going well with the garden projects and that Betsy will have more to report in January. Betsy will be our featured speaker for our February monthly membership meeting.

Programs: Kim Morris and Michaela Beitzel

Beth reported on behalf of Kim and Michaela, thanking them for the tremendous work they have done with programs this past fall. Beth mentioned the exciting meeting featuring Storm King that will take place at the Bedford Playhouse in January and co-hosted by Rusticus. She also mentioned the possibility

of an Irish Garden Tour which Kim spoke about during Greens Day and said that we will hear more about that in the near future.

Special Committee Reports:

Grants and Scholarships: Cecilia Wolfson

Cecilia reported that she has received two proposals to date, one from the Bedford Audubon and the other from Westmoreland Sanctuary for summer interns. She will present these to the Executive Committee in January for approval. She noted that the Hospital Garden is slowly coming along and has been frustrating at times, but she feels it will make a big and important difference to the lives of many. Emily noted that Destination 39.3 may be looking for some additional funding for their beautification project in the 3 hamlets. Cecilia said she would be happy to receive a proposal from them.

Historian: Susan West

Susan reported that our history of helping the Northern Westchester Hospital has been ongoing for 69 years which she finds exciting and impressive. Susan has not been able to find out anything more about the Alice Sloan Memorial Terrace and the plaque there despite her efforts. Nor has she been able to find out more about the Eagle Scout and his project of raised beds at the Hospital. She has found some interesting items for the Almanac after reading through many of the Club's past newsletters (Clippings) and will submit these to Virginia and Tina. Beth thanked Susan for having so many irons in the fire and for the wonderful history minute that she provides at each of the monthly meetings.

Seedling: Emily Grand

Emily said there was a great Seedling turnout at the recent Conservation meeting at Jayni's house. She said that Ellen sent her an email with time, date, and topic and she forwarded this to the Seedlings which she said was a big help. She suggested that it would be great for all Committee chairs to do as it helped to encourage the Seedlings to attend (4 out of 6 Seedlings attended the meeting).

Website: Nancy Vincent and Varner Redmon

Varner reported that they need photos of projects funded by the Garden Club so they will be sending emails out to many members for these. She said that Maureen has been great to work with, and that the website is time consuming and complicated but that she thinks the end result will be very worthwhile. She asked that everyone reply to Nancy and Varner as soon as possible when they request something.

Zone Meeting: Nancy Kronenberg and Heather Langham

Heather reported that she and Nancy are working around the clock for the Zone meeting in June. She said the schedule for the Flower Show (co-chaired by Leslie Wortmann and Kerry Wilson) has been written and submitted and that it will be a "tour de force". Heather said that organizing the two days of business meetings can be described as "puzzles within puzzles" but they are making headway in conjunction with Rusticus. She acknowledged the invaluable help from two Zone III leaders, Pamela Sherlock and Julia Burke. Heather said that Zone III is considered to be one of the most important in the GCA and that within Zone III, the Bedford Garden Club and Rusticus are prominent clubs. There will be a Hospitality Tent on the Village Green which will showcase Bedford, its beauty, history, and dedication to conservation and the environment. Once January hits, they will be firing on all cylinders, and they look forward to an exciting 6 months ahead.

New Business:

Beth asked that we discuss the ongoing topic of new member participation in the Garden Club and how we can better engage our newer and younger members. She also noted that Joyce Corrigan has requested help with the Club's Instagram and asked if Emily could canvas the Seedlings to see if anyone would be interested. A discussion ensued. Emily noted that it may be too daunting for a Seedling to be in charge of a public forum such as Instagram as it would be best for the person in charge to have a real understanding of the club, its workshops, events, etc in order to best portray this on Instagram. Emily shared a few ideas about how to better engage younger members: (1) Each Committee Chair should send a quick email to Emily regarding the time, date, location and topic of a workshop so that Emily can forward this to the Seedlings in advance, (2) continue the diversity of scheduling events so that Seedlings can attend some events outside of working hours, (3) host more events at night with cocktails, (4) hold proposers accountable for Seedling expectations. Emily said it is unfair for people to propose a new member and then depend on Emily to engage them. There has to be clear communication of expectations so that new members are aware of expected participation in club events. Varner noted that it would be great to try a Provisional year for new members. Beth proposed that a task force be formed to study these ideas. Varner, Jayni, Emily, Wendy, Diane and Ellen volunteered. Wendy suggested reaching out to other Garden Clubs to see how they engage their younger members and said that the Zone III meeting may be a good time. Heather said that she attended a GCA Leadership meeting in NYC recently and one of the topics was "How to Attract New Members". Heather said she feels the glass is half full in our club currently and that we have a great deal of momentum and excitement building. Beth agreed that our club is going from "strength to strength". We will continue to discuss this topic in the New Year.

Beth thanked everyone for their participation and hard work and wished everyone a very happy Holiday and Happy New Year.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held via Zoom on January 11, 2023 at 9 am.

Respectfully,
Suzanne Bowers
Recording Secretary