

Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting
Home of Nancy Kronenberg
187 Guard Hill Road, Bedford Corners
December 18, 2019
9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Nancy Kronenberg, Robin Ashley, Ellen Conrad, Diane Lewis, Linda Merrill, Varner Redmon, Janet Robinson, Denise Santomero, Anita Stockbridge, Nancy Vincent, Tina Winchester

President Nancy Kronenberg called the meeting to order.

Nancy along with Liza Clymer and Janet Robinson had recently attended a Zone III meeting at which member clubs were encouraged to conduct a membership survey. We have not conducted one since Ellen Conrad was Club President in 2007-2009. A format for the survey was not provided, but would include canvassing our membership on projects we should be doing and other membership issues, particularly those that would help flesh out what our younger members want. Nancy commented that it would be helpful and interesting to see our prior survey; Ellen will try to locate it (possibly two surveys). Both Ellen and Varner said that the earlier survey had been an “eye opener” and led to changes. Ellen said that the survey for Trust for Public Land was a great one we might emulate in part. The group discussed how we should collect responses to a new survey. For the previous survey members were required to complete the questionnaire at a regular general membership meeting placing a time constraint on completion. The feeling was expressed that we would get better results with an online survey that would allow respondents time to reflect and give more thoughtful answers. Nancy K will develop a survey for our review and comment using SurveyMonkey as her template. Nancy V suggested that she speak with our Zone III Representatives for additional guidance about developing our survey.

Nominating Committee

Nancy V read from our By-Laws regarding the establishment and functioning of a Nominating Committee. According to the By-Laws, Nancy K as President is required to select a committee chair who would be endorsed by the Executive Committee. Five committee members would then be selected: two from the Executive Committee and three from the Club at large. After a brief discussion, Robin was tapped to be committee chairman and agreed to serve. A few names were suggested as excellent choices to serve on her committee. Robin will form the committee and announce its members at our February 5, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. She will provide a slate of officers at our May meeting to be voted upon at the June Annual Meeting.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Tina Winchester reported that Greens Day had been wildly successful in every way. While not all checks have been received, we will have netted at least \$2,000. BYOV in

November broke even. In addition, a few more members' dues had been received, with a few still outstanding.

Scholarships

Robin told us that **Committee Chairman Beth Sachs** and she have been discussing a project for a graduate student who would be awarded a scholarship to rationalize lists of so-called "keystone plants", those that play a unique and crucial role in the way in which our geographically specific ecosystem functions. She pointed out that such lists from various respected sources do not always agree. She has recommended that a highly qualified organization supervise the work of an intern and went on to suggest that Shanyn Siegel with her extensive work in developing seeds would be ideal. Shanyn, through her work with Hilltop Hanover Farm, has done in-depth research in growing native plants to sell into our local Westchester market. (Her organization Westchester County's Hilltop Hanover Farm received a \$4,375 grant this year from the BGC for their work. The farm will use it to cultivate plants native to Westchester County. The plants selected are low maintenance, naturally adapted to thrive in our area and support our ecosystems.)

Denise pointed out that the Native Plant Center at the Westchester Community College is actively involved in such a program as Robin is suggesting and has conducted thorough studies on all of this. Their work is on-going with researchers alert to changing conditions. One can buy such plants at their annual sale from suppliers in which they have confidence. A study such as the one proposed would, Denise said, be redundant. Robin commented that the Native Plant Center has only one sale per year and that there is a need to open up such sales to more and to educate gardeners in the community. Robin will ask Beth to speak with Denise.

2023 Zone III Meeting

Robin asked for clarification regarding what we should be doing in preparation for the 2023 Zone III meeting which we will be hosting along with Rusticus. Varner directed us to the "Yellow Book", the flower show manual published by the GCA. Nancy K said that Wendy Cushman was responsible for bench show classes and she will ask Wendy to communicate the themes. Anita said that she has selected her own themes for this year's late winter and spring shows, which have been sent to all of our membership via an email dated December 12. Her email provides detailed instructions for the photography part of the three in-house shows. Robin is expected to do the Hort part of the shows. For judges we plan to tap some of our members.

Membership

Janet Robinson announced that Cindy Dwyer has resigned as an Active member and will now be a Sustaining member of the Club as she has now joined the Jupiter Florida Garden Club as her primary club. This frees up a fifth place available for a new member. We are in the enviably position of finding membership in our club in high demand. A discussion ensued as to whether we might move more Active members to the Associate category to free up more Active membership places. The Associate membership designation is a prestigious level of membership available only to those who have made a major contribution to the Club. Another way of providing more slots would be to amend our By-Laws to allow for a greater number of "Active" members. Nancy K summed up by recommending that we identify potential Associate members from our roster of Active members as well as get from Tina a final tally of those who have not paid dues. Janet will be emailing our membership to ask anyone who is considering someone to propose for membership to advise her immediately.

National Affairs & Legislation

Diane Lewis commented on the up-coming February 23 - 26th NAL meeting for which Deirdre Glascott and Anita Stockbridge will be our representatives. Each year, she reminded us, position papers are revised and published; she recommended that we all read them. They are posted on the GCA website.

Diane said that the web page for the NAL on the GCA website is being revised. She has high hopes that the new person in charge will do a great job. Diane asked us to let her know if we have any problems in accessing or using the website. Nancy K asked Diane to send information to Nancy V to post on our website to raise awareness of this tremendous resource available to us through the GCA.

Date Change for January Executive Committee Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14 rather than as previously scheduled for Wednesday, January 15.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Linda J Merrill
Recording Secretary