Jefferson County Master Gardeners Association, Inc.

Members Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026/Auditorium / Birmingham Botanical Gardens / 2612 Lane Park Road, Birmingham, AL 35223

The Meeting was called to order at 10:06 AM by President Katherine Ennis.

First Order of Business- Approval of Minutes – Katherine Ennis

- The President called for the meeting to order and requested a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2026 meeting. Beverly Vonder Pool made the motion, and Judith Rives seconded. A vote was called, and the minutes were approved.

Second Order of Business - President's Announcements – Katherine Ennis

- Katherine announced that there would be no Treasury Report
- Registration for the State Conference in Huntsville has been closed early due to the number of registrants. The conference was capped at 400 attendees. There is a waiting list. If you are interested in attending, please see the State Conference Materials to find the conference brochure.
- A Conference Committee Meeting for the 2027 Master Gardeners Conference will be held immediately following the completion of today's monthly meeting.

Third Order of Business - ACES - Bethany O'Rear

· The current intern class has 37 interns. The interns have been invited to attend the monthly meetings. Bethany asked the group to go out of their way to make the interns feel welcome when they attend. They will be wearing a yellow name tag.

· 2026 is the Year of Invasive Plants in Alabama. Workshops will be held to teach people how to identify invasive plants. For Alabama, the focus will be on the elimination of 12 plants. Master Gardeners can count the hours spent removing the 12 invasive plants from their own property ONLY during this year and ONLY the plants that are the focus of the initiative. Hours should be reported as Support Other Extension Activities. People who report hours will be put into a drawing for prizes.

· This year, Tiger Giving Day is March 25, 2026. This year, Tiger Giving Day will support Pollinator Partners of Alabama. There will be concentrated day-long training sessions held in at least 7 regions around the state. This effort is in response to the participation in the Great Southeast Pollinator Census. Over 82% of the counties in Alabama participated last year, and this effort is to encourage more participation and knowledge sharing regarding pollinators. The class in this area will be held at the end of June at Petals from the Past. These sessions will be to "train the trainer" and are open to the general public as well as Master Gardeners. Anyone who is interested in becoming a certified pollinator partner can do so by completing the training on conservation,

responsible pesticide usage (IPM), and economic impact. These partners will then be encouraged to take the message back to their communities. This is another way to educate our communities about the importance of pollinators. Each attendee will be given several prizes. This can only be done through giving, so contributing to Tiger Giving Day is encouraged. Please share the information on your social media page. The state goal is $10,000.

- Grow More Give More has been around since 2020 and is being relaunched in 2026. As a part of that relaunch, the Extension has decided, in honor of the 250th birthday of our nation, they have instituted the 250-pound challenge. Every county is encouraged to have gardeners donate at least 250 pounds of produce between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and for 100% participation of all counties.

Katherine Ennis introduced Jamie Nobles from Jefferson County Greenways, who is here to talk about Eastside Park, which is currently under development.

In 2023, Ruffner Mountain, Turkey Creek Nature Preserve, and Red Mountain Park joined forces to become the Jefferson County Greenways to protect the region's green spaces. The East Side Park, which is located on the east side of Ruffner Mountain, is being revitalized to facilitate access to plants for people of all abilities. The park will be planted with 100% native plants and will be planted in 5 different Eco zones representing the different ecosystems around the state.

If you have native plants and are willing to share, please do so. The park will have approximately 60k plants, and currently, Jamie's team has about 10k plants. There are flyers available to provide information about plants being planted in this space.

Fourth Order of Business - Committee Reports

- Misha Unruh of the Community Service Committee is seeking volunteers for the tabling events, which provide Community Education. These tabling events are held at plant sales, farmers' markets, etc. The Committee is also seeking individuals who would be interested in participating on this committee and have great knowledge of vegetables or a willingness to serve. Volunteers are also needed for the tabling event at the Spring Plant Sale. Please contact Misha Unruh if you are interested in participating.
- Grace Kline is looking for a Head Master Gardener. If you are interested, please contact Misha Unruh.
- Dorothy Leonard of the Mid-Holt Committee is holding a Camp SoSo for kids in June and needs food/snack donations. Also, if you have a special skill, such as making healthy smoothies, Master Gardeners are asked to host a short 30-minute seminar during the camp (July 9 – 18).

Katherine announced that if you are interested in information on reporting hours, Linda Massey and Amy Weis have volunteered to help.

Sandy McCarthy of the Community Grants Committee is seeking applications for grants. The grant application period is open and closes on April 1st. If you are interested in applying for grant funds, the application must be received by April 1st. There is $1000 in grant money to be given away, and it will be divided amongst the qualifying and approved applicants. An email has been sent out regarding the grant funds available. After April 1, the grants are closed and will not open again until next year.

Susan McNamara of the Helpline and Fundraising Committee is seeking volunteers for the Thursday and Friday afternoon shifts for the HelpLine. Also, Flower Power Fundraising is currently underway and ends in May. Bulbs are available for spring planting. The information is online; search for "Flower Power Fundraiser".

The Business Meeting was adjourned at 10:28 AM

Katherine called for a motion and a second to end the business meeting. Amy Weis made the motion, and Wendy Demark seconded the motion

The Educational Program began at 10:30 AM

Beverly Vonder Pool introduced Tayler Boozer Hatchett. Taylor owns Boozer Farms, located in Thorsby (Chilton County), with her father.

Before she was a farmer, out of college, Taylor took a position with the Alabama Cooperative Extension as a Home Grounds Agent. After moving on from this position, Taylor took a position as a QA tester with a Medical Manufacturing Device Equipment.

In 2011, the tornadoes moved through the state, doing extensive damage. She joined the men's group from her church, known as the Chainsaw Team. While she could not run a chainsaw at the time, she assisted in removing debris. Taylor rode to volunteer with a neighbor, Mr. Mims, who owned a sod farm. She had grown up around Mr. Mims and considered him a grandfather figure. During their car rides, Taylor told him she wanted to retire one day and farm. Soon after, Mr. Mims asked her to take over the sod farm. She decided to do so and went part-time at the Medical Device Company. During this time, she worked part-time at the Medical Device Company and part-time on the sod farm. When her company required her to return to the office full-time, Taylor provided 2 weeks' notice and began farming full-time in 2012. Today, Taylor has an additional 25 acres of land solely dedicated to fruit and vegetable farming, as well as the sod farm.

Boozer Farms uses fruits (seconds) from their own farm as well as a neighboring farm, and in their commercial kitchen, creates fruit popsicles that are then sold to the Alabama School System.

From a marketing perspective, Boozer Farms opens “shares,” and members sign up for weekly farm boxes for that growing season. The members pick up weekly farm boxes from 16 pickup locations around Birmingham. In addition to traditional Southern vegetables, Boozer Farms grows non-Southern vegetables such as bok choy and tomatillos, as well as unusual varieties of Southern vegetables such as eggplant and squash.

The Educational portion of the meeting was concluded at 11:01 am.

ATTEST BY:

Jennye McCreary

Jennye McCreary, Secretary

Katherine E. Ennis

Katherine Ennis, President