MEETING HELD September 12th, 2023

A meeting of the Jefferson County Master Gardeners, Inc. was held in the auditorium at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens on Tuesday, September 12th, 2023. Fifty-two (52) attendees were present. Vice President, Hana Berres and Secretary, Richard Smith were absent; President Amy Weis stood in for both; the meeting was recorded for minutes.

President Amy Weis gave two point-of-order announcements at 10 AM before officially starting the business meeting.

First, was that the board had unanimously voted at its September 11th Board Meeting, to change the order of the Members Meetings so that the education program would now precede the business. She explained that this was decided because almost all Members Meetings this year had run long, especially the business portion and that cut into the education portion causing the speakers to have to go over time. Another reason was that several members had come forward to make announcements at the meetings and it was felt we should allow time for this in the agenda going forward.

Following on from the first announcement was the second point of order. From now on if members had an announcement to make or any other business to motion for the board to consider, they would need to sign their name and the reason to an announcement list when they arrived or they may not be called on to announce.

Following these announcements, the Education Program began with Doug Unkenholz, President of the Alabama Bonsai Society speaking about Bonsai Gardening in which he presented several wonderful examples of Bonsai Plants and answered questions.

President Weis called to order the Business Meeting of the JCMGA, Inc. at 10:48 AM

First Order of Business: Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded the minutes of the August 8th Members Meeting were unanimously approved.

Second Order of Business: Announcements from Partners

ACES Announcements, Bethany O'Rear

- The 2024 Master Gardener Training Application will open November 1st and close November 30th after which there will be no late additions. The class will be hosted at Jones Valley Teaching Farm for the first time.
- There will be a new process for ordering replacement name badges in 2024. It will be online and new badges will be printed twice a year. A link will be provided if

requested. Contact Bethany, Amy Weis, or Kenneth Hall for the link.

- September 26th, in Huntsville, there will be a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Master Gardeners in the United States. It's $40; the registration form is on the AMGA website, if you can't find it contact Bethany.

- October 12th, Blount County MGA is hosting its Annual Fall Conference. Registration is $35, and ends September 26th; there are still a few spots left. The link is in the Roots & Shoots, on the AMGA website, and of course, Bethany can send it to you.

AMGA Announcements, Phyllis Clay

AMGA Board met on September 5th, here are the highlights:

- The First Master Gardener College Event was a success. The idea of the MG College is that this will be continued training in a range of capacities including some transferable skills not necessarily gardening-related. The first one was Leadership Training. They will be offered at several regional locations across the state and attendees at each location will be from multiple LMGAs so it's also a good opportunity to meet fellow MGs from other associations.

- The many institutional and organizational relationships of the Master Gardener program were discussed, including the relationship with the Land Grant Universities, i.e., Auburn, Tuskegee and A&M; the Alabama Cooperative Extension, the Alabama Master Gardeners and the Local Associations as well as the interns and veteran volunteers. A diagram was produced and Phyllis left a copy with Amy to make more copies to share.

- The Strategic Plan with the Mission, Vision, and Five-Year Goals were discussed. Phyllis reminded everyone that all of this information is on the acesagmg.site website.

- Phyllis reminded everyone that a MG could attend AMGA Meetings, Board or Advisory Council Meetings; and that AMGA Bylaws and other documents are available on the AMGA website.

- Regarding upcoming Master Gardener conferences the 2024 State MG Conference will be hosted by Baldwin County; the 2025 by Autaug a County; and in 2026 by Limestone and Morgan Counties.

- Regarding Grants, the feedback from the 2023 Grant process was that it was too difficult, so the Grants Committee has worked on that and promised it will be better in 2024.

- Regarding Speakers Bureau, there is concern that members do not want to sign up. A suggestion was made that perhaps the speakers should have a broader base of things they can do or present on.

- The Transformation Garden Naming Committee wants you to submit names for the

Transformation Garden Path. MGs have naming rights to the Transformation Garden in Auburn because we have donated over $250k.

Third Order of Business: JCMGA, Inc. Financial Report, Cynthia Funderburk.

Cindy read the Financial report for August Roots & Shoots. In our current checking account at the end of July, we had $15,111.10. We made $760 in deposits. We had $586.88 in expenditures, leaving a Checking Account Balance of $15,284.22. Our Operating Reserve is $27,560.27; our Money Market Grant Balance was $6,527.27; and our current liabilities are $10,756.48. We are in good standing.

Fourth Order of Business: Presidents Announcements:

Introducing Nominees for 2024 Board, Amy Weis

Amy began by reading the Bylaws on the procedure for the formation of the Nominating Committee; then identified the Nominating Committee including herself, as President, and her appointees, Darwin Bell, and Kathy Sherrer. Secondly, she read the procedure for nominations in the Bylaws, stating nominations shall only be made for positions to be filled, and that nominees must accept the nomination before they are announced. She then stated there are only two vacancies to be filled on the Board for 2024, and that the nominees had accepted.

The nominees are Carlton 'Skip' Craig and Janet Humphreys. Skip would be apprenticing with Cynthia 'Cindy' Funderburk (Treasurer) with the goal that he would become Treasurer in 2025.

Janet would like to serve as Secretary in 2024, as Richard would be advancing to Vice President. In addition to Cindy and Richard remaining on the Board, Hana Berres will advance as President, Amy Weis will complete her term as At-Large Director, and Katherine Harper as At-Large Director.

Amy briefly stated the procedure for voting as per the Bylaws but did not read them and reminded everyone they could read the Bylaws from the newsletter or website to familiarize themselves with the procedure before October 10th.

Community Service Committee Announcement, Laura Kezar

Our job as CSC is to connect MGs with diverse and varied interests to diverse and varied volunteer opportunities. Laura stated, "Our mission is to get out and drive education in our communities, so if there are things you would like for us to help you develop or if you have an idea about where you want to volunteer, then please get in touch with us." There are literally opportunities every single day. Please look at the Roots and Shoots newsletter for the Volunteer Opportunities list, but some opportunities are not listed so if you have a day that you want to spend some time, please contact one of us.

Laura announced that we are now partnering with a group of medical professionals working to improve heart health in our state. We are the number one in the USA for death from cardiovascular disease, and this is particularly so for our communities of color, so this partnership is all about growing heart-healthy food and sharing that with communities that need it most through their churches.

Amy made a follow-up announcement that she received yesterday regarding volunteer needs from Janet Abernathy at Aldridge Gardens. She has an urgent need tomorrow for help with propagation activities to get starts ready for their Spring Plant sale. Volunteers should come to the Education Building at Aldridge Gardens tomorrow from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. She also needs volunteers for Gatehouse Greeter and Gift Shop shifts. Please contact Amy if you want more information

Helpline Announcements, Susan McNamara

The MG Helpline is going really well across the state. We only have one shift per week now, and it's Friday afternoons from 1 PM to 4 PM. If you would like to help please let Susan know. There is a new schedule posted at acesagmg.site where you can sign up for shifts; you can work from home or Bethany has put in a new computer in the GPIC room at BBG.

Fundraising Announcements, Susan McNamara

We are now able to raise funds, so our first fundraiser approved by the board is a bulb sale. It will be all online, no overhead, instructions included, and we get 50% of what we sell. Bulbs will be shipped to you or as a gift to friends and family at a cost of $6.00. We will go live by the end of this week and continue until December 15th. There was a suggestion from a member to have an educational program about bulbs in the future. Another suggestion from a member is to set up signs at MG Table events to promote the bulb sale and get people to order on the spot with a laptop or tablet.

Hospitality Announcements, Katherine Ennis

Thank you for bringing items today, everything was really good. The annual cocktail party reunion that we are calling a Mix and Mingle this year will be on September 19th from 5 PM to 7 PM in the Ireland Room. We are asking you all to bring finger foods, and don't forget your serving utensils. You must RSVP, link is in the newsletter and on the website.

Program Committee Announcements, Amy Weis for Hana Berres

October Program will be one of our own Advanced MGs, Rick Cybulsky, talking about the Vestavia Corner Garden.

Member Announcements, as follows

Yawntreshia Coleman (2022 Graduate), former Newsletter Editor (June to August 2023), expressed a grievance with a decision made by the President and upheld by the Board regarding the vacation of the Assistant Newsletter position. She expressed that she was feeling triggered due to a recent traumatic event at her former job.

Gary Walker, former President (2020-2022), commented that even though they weren't aware of the event, they believed, based on his own personal experience, that the President and Board act professionally and in the best interest of the organization.

Katherine Harper, At-Large Board Member stated that she had been out of town at her mother's funeral and had not been able to attend the Board Meeting and so was not part of any decision, however, she was aware of it because she had spoken about it with the President in the week prior and had been copied on emails. She expressed that as MGs we should be putting positivity out in our community.

Jessyca McKnight, Former Assistant Newsletter Editor, stated that she did not know Yawntreshia was going to stand up and say anything today, and that she was not planning to [N.B. Jessyca did not sign up to make an announcement]. She then aired her grievance with the decision.

An unplanned announcement was made to acknowledge long-time members, Nora and Dale O'Connor's 54th Anniversary.

There being no further business, door prizes were awarded.

Motion to Adjourn was made and seconded at 11:27pm. A full recording of the Business Meeting is available by request to the Secretary, Richard Smith.

ATTEST BY:

Richard Smith

Secretary

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Chairman of the Board