

N.E.W. Master Gardeners Board Meeting  
September 11, 2024 6:00 pm  
STEM Room 131 In Person

*Present:* Bruce LaSota, Megan Fierst, Eric Kropp, Kate Fix, Edie Brandt, Don Buntman, Bernie Jansen, Paula King, Terri Lewis, Jim Radey, Sherill Revolinski, Shirley Triest-Robertson, Melissa Wass, Annette Weissbach

*Absent:* Jennifer Classon, Nancy Whitfield

1. Bruce LaSota called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
2. The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and approved: Motion to approve was made by Melissa Wass and seconded by Bernie Jansen.
3. The Treasurer's Report dated September 5, 2024 was presented and reviewed by Eric Kropp. Income for the year at \$12,033.48 is very close to budget (\$12,700). NEWMGA has about \$15,000 in savings and \$17,000 in checking. The main expense that has not yet been submitted for 2024 is the fuel bill for the greenhouse. Eric K. will send out a group email to all the project leaders asking for their 2025 budget requests in preparation for establishing NEWMGA's 2025 budget. Dues will be discussed at the annual meeting in October and then a more detailed budget discussion will be held by the board in November, with the goal of approval to occur in November or early January 2025.
4. Seed Saver/Seed Library presentation was given by Melissa Wass. The Brown County Seed Library (BCSL) was started in 2022. It is a collaborative initiative between the Brown County Community Gardens Program, Brown County Library, Green Bay Botanical Garden, New Leaf Foods Inc., NEWMGA, UW-Green Bay and UW-Madison Extension Brown County. Their mission is to provide education, encouragement, resources and seeds to all community members to protect the current and future food supply. In doing so, they foster self-reliance and empower individuals to grow nutritious food and complimentary plants that support pollinators. There were 700 people in attendance at the launch of the BCSL March of 2023. By the end of August 2023 about 15,000 seed packets were given out. By the end of August this year about 37,500 seed packets had been distributed. They also reach out to the community with a monthly newsletter (most articles written by Master Gardeners), host an annual seed swap and seedling exchange, and facilitate a seed steward program. Portable seed libraries are available to check out for use at continuing education events. Seeds from the BCSL that were started in the greenhouse this past spring generated \$1620 income at the May plant sale. The BCSL has received a grant from Schreiber Foods for 2025 which will cover seeds, envelopes and printing. We have several NEWMGA members that are very involved in the BCSL. They are working on obtaining Doug Tallamy as a guest speaker here in the future.
5. Review of proposed By-Law Amendments was given by Kate Fix. Changes proposed were categorized as:
  - ★ **Simple updates**
    - Addendum I: Address, Facebook and Instagram
    - Addendum II: NEW participation levels

Addendum III: Membership includes new Associate Membership

Addendum IV: Standing Committees Duties and Responsibilities

Addendum V: History of NEWMGA

★ **New to the By-Laws**

Use addendums as material added to the By-Law document to clarify or supplement the By-Laws. It needs Board approval and is time documented.

★ **Goal**

To be able to seek approval and/or advice from the membership in a more timely fashion than our current By-Laws allow at only the Annual General Membership meeting. The proposed change would allow a special meeting to be called in person and online, following certain notification parameters.

Earlier this year it was agreed that NEWMGA wanted to go forward with an Associate Membership level, but because of the current ByLaws, nothing could be changed till the Annual Membership meeting in October.

A summary document and edited version,(some minor corrections to tonight's documents), will be sent out to the general membership ASAP.

6. Brown County Horticulture Agent report given by Bruce L. –Judy Knudsen contacted Bruce L. the end of August with a request of \$2000 towards the budget for a 50% time horticulture agent in Brown County. Judy K. has been assisting UW Extension with their budgeting process. The Executive Board gave tentative approval to the request since it was needed for the Extension meeting on August 22, 2024. UW Extension approved the position, but it also has to be approved and funded by the Brown County Board of Supervisors which will meet in October. Details of the horticulture agent position are not yet available and the length of our financial commitment to the position is uncertain. It was agreed that if the position is approved we should have a written list of expectations for that person. A motion was made by Shirley Treist-Robertson to approve paying \$2000 to support the fringe benefits of a 50% time Horticulture agent the first year they are hired. The motion was seconded by Paula King and passed unanimously.
7. Foundation and Ad Hoc Committee report given by Annette Weissbach
  - a. Foundation Report–the Scholarship Fund is up about \$3000 to \$86,595.48 and the Unrestricted fund has grown by about \$9000 to \$254,237.11.
  - b. Ad Hoc Committee report
    - Corrections to the By-Laws in regards to the description of the Endowment Committee were presented
    - Annette W. met with Kari Olsen of the GGBCF (Greater Green Bay Community Foundation) at the end of August to discuss parameters for scholarship applicants and how the scholarship amounts awarded could be increased. The Scholarships can be increased in 3 ways: 1. Transfer money from the unrestricted fund into the scholarship fund 2. Give the scholarship money to an educational institution and have them award it to a student that meets the criteria–this then becomes a financial matter. 3. Make monthly payments to the scholarship fund account (NEWMGA currently makes no financial contributions into the scholarship fund). There was discussion about what NEWMGA's goals of awarding the scholarships are/should be–should

they be guided by our mission statement or should other goals be set specifically for scholarships. Discussion also included other potential uses of the unrestricted fund, one of which would be to support the BCSL and Seed Stewardship program.

- The discussion resulted in 2 conclusions: 1. Our contract with GGBCF needs to be updated (it's 20 years old) and 2. Create a poster board for the October All Member meeting with our Mission statement at the top, info about the funds and ask for post-it note suggestions on what to do with the funds.

#### 8. Standing Committee News

- Project Committee report by Edie B., Eric K., and Annette W.--there is a meeting scheduled for 9/18/2024 to discuss end of year recap. Annette W. has created a concise form for project leads to document year end summaries, which should be returned in time for the committee meeting.
- Communications report by Megan Fierst--all board members have access to the Communication Guidelines for Publication created by the committee.
- Outreach --Bruce L reports that they are done for this year and working on next year. They are working on powerpoint presentations so that our members will have access to them by the end of the year
- Membership--currently there are 18 members on the board and 4-5 people will be coming off the board. Peggy Loritz is working on the enrollment form but will not have it out till after the annual meeting when dues are confirmed.

For the annual all member meeting in October, a main dish will be provided and the rest of the food will be potluck. Kate encouraged us to bring flower bouquets from our gardens and she'll have some "promotional items" to share!

#### 9. Proposed meeting dates for 2025

Board Meetings Wednesday evenings 6:00 pm STEM

- ❖ Jan. 15, 2025\*\*
- ❖ March 12, 2025\*\*
- ❖ May 7, 2025
- ❖ July 9, 2025
- ❖ Sept. 10, 2025
- ❖ Nov. 12, 2025

Executive Officer Meetings Wednesday evenings 6:00 pm STEM

- ❖ Jan. 8, 2025\*\*
- ❖ Feb. 26, 2025\*\*
- ❖ April 23, 2025
- ❖ June 25, 2025
- ❖ August 27, 2025
- ❖ October 29, 2025

Note: Highlighted \*\*dates will be virtual meetings

**Spring Meeting**--Saturday April 5, 2025 STEM Flex spaces 8-noon

**Plant Sale**--May 8-10, 2025 at the STEM

**Summer Social**--Wednesday June 18, 2025 5-8pm at the Green Bay Botanical Garden

**Annual Meeting**—Saturday October 11, 2025 STEM Flex spaces 8 am to noon

10. Other Items

- Future discussion of project open houses—there's been a lack of attendance. Bruce L. reports that the Mongin Garden will not hold a stand alone open house, they will combine it with another CE/workshop activity at the STEM next year. Please submit other suggestions to the Outreach Committee:)
- Should the Summer Social meeting at the Green Bay Botanical Garden be continued or changed?

11. A motion to adjourn was made by Melissa Wass, seconded by Bernie Jansen and passed unanimously at 8:40 pm.

Thank you to the Membership Committee for all the work they've done this summer!

**Next Board meeting** will be Wednesday **November 13, 2024** at 6pm in STEM Rm 131