

**Minutes**  
**Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc.**  
**District IIB Steering Committee Meeting**  
**January 18, 2018**  
**Michigan Nature Association, Okemos**

Present: Lynn Keelan, Barb Ketchum, Sue Wittick, Peggy Bryson  
Guests: Kathi Dominguez, Linda Mogyoros

The meeting commenced at approximately 9:40 a.m.

Lynn reported that she has contacted the presidents of half the District IIB clubs and all expressed a desire for a meeting of club presidents. Kathi shared her experience in conducting presidents meetings during her tenure and explained that they are different from leadership meetings. She described them as just a few hours at a fun venue with a short educational component and with opportunities to socialize. She budgeted \$500 for a presidents meeting. She also noted that she found it important to touch base with presidents on a regular basis.

We talked about the purposes of gathering the presidents and whether to invite them to bring other leaders from their clubs. The purposes included learning what the presidents and their clubs need from the District, learning what their biggest challenges are, and beginning to restore trust in the sustainability of the District. The group estimated that District presidents and club leaders would number about 40 attendees and discussed possible venues for such a meeting (Bergdorff Winery, Van Atta conference room, Grand Oak Herb Farm). Fundraising was suggested as the focus with attendees asked to share their club fundraising projects.

The group decided that it is desirable to meet with Presidents as soon as possible to get their input on building direction for the District. It was suggested that smaller regional gatherings would make it easier for presidents to attend in the winter. A larger presidents meeting can be scheduled during the summer when travel is less hazardous, the snowbirds are back in Michigan, and new club officers are in place. The group decided to invite presidents for coffee at four meetings in February and March. The regional groups identified were 1) Brighton, Hartland, Howell and Webberville; 2) Greater Lansing, Mason, Meridian and Williamston; 3) Eaton Rapids, Green Thumb, Marshall and Sherwood; 4) DeWitt, Grand Ledge, Laingsburg and Looking Glass. Some may need to attend a meeting other than one in their area.

Invitations will be issued by phone for meetings to run from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. Tentative dates of "Beehive Buzz": February 8, 15, 20, March 1. Kathi said she would be available to attend the February 8 and 15 meetings. Locations of meetings: Group 1, February 8, Firewood Grill, Howell; Group 2, Cracker Barrel, Okemos; Group 3, Schuler's, Marshall; Group 4, Champps, Eastwood Town Centre, Lansing. We will need to have name badges, make introductions and have some sort of ice-breaker such as "Where do you meet?" Sue will check her book of icebreakers for something appropriate. Each attendee will be responsible for their own check. We will want to get their input on at least the following questions:

1. How can we help you?
2. What are you struggling with? (over a time-frame of the next few months)
3. If there is a presidents meeting, what would you like it to accomplish?

We talked about possible takeaways including IIB notecards, seed packet, bookmark with committee contact info and District meeting dates.

Lynn presented a print that she is donating for the silent auction at the April 18 District meeting. Sue volunteered to cut a mat for it and she and Peggy will look for a frame.

Peggy presented a compilation of District revenues and expenses for the last 2 ½ fiscal years that she thought would be helpful in developing a budget for fiscal 2018-19. The budget is due not later than February 15. One big change from prior years is that there will be no income from Showspan and the District will not be paying flower show-related expenses. The checking account shows \$19.20 reserved for Penny Pines. These funds remained after disbursing to Penny Pines \$68 of monies collected at a past District meeting. Because Penny Pines donations must be made in multiples of \$68, it was decided by the group to send these funds to one of the District clubs for transmission to Penny Pines. Lynn will let Peggy know which club supports Penny Pines. Peggy committed to preparing a draft budget for committee consideration taking into account the budget for the fall 2018 District meeting and office supply needs.

Barb shared her preliminary budget for the April meeting and reported that Showspan will be paying for the nine tables that will be needed for the flower show (5) and exhibits (4). The group wondered whether Showspan would be willing to sponsor any other part of the meeting. Sue said she would follow up. The group then discussed whether other large merchants might sponsor a part of the meeting. Peggy will check with Home Depot. Barb noted that meal cost at Eagle Eye has risen to over \$30 per person and that the registration fee for the spring meeting will need to be higher than for recent past meetings to accommodate it.

Gretchen Voyle is confirmed as a speaker at the April meeting. The other potential speaker's fee is higher than expected. Carol Grainger is following up and a different speaker will be identified if necessary. Vendors will have 12' x 12' spaces. They include Grand Oak Herb Farm (seasonings and teas), Nellie's Lavender Estate (toiletries), Perennial Connection (plants), Michigan Wildflower Association (seeds), Bunker Hill Bee Farm, Terra PermaClay Creations, Simplified Country (vintage decor), Meridian Garden Club.

Most clubs have committed to provide silent auction items. There have been no volunteers to solicit program advertising or to manage hostesses and vendors on the meeting day. Linda described the Meridian club's yearbook ad solicitation. It was decided to drop the idea of soliciting ads for this event program. Barb reports that Mason members will fill in to manage hostesses and vendors and will create the table centerpieces.

The group approved a request by DeWitt Millennium Garden Club to host the fall, instead of the spring, 2019 District meeting. Lynn will call DeWitt to confirm. It had cited the absence of members who winter in the south during the months leading up to the meeting as an impediment to planning and executing the meeting. The Brighton club had raised the same concern about planning the 2018 spring meeting. The group noted that many clubs likely experience the same member exodus in the winter and that

some clubs are too small to take on the planning of the District meetings, raising the question of whether the District should forgo spring meetings entirely. Lynn said that the presidents she contacted were divided on the subject of going to just one District meeting annually. Sue noted that other activities could be planned for the spring if the District were to change to conducting just the fall meeting each year. She suggested group bus trips to interesting venues, organizing trips to nurseries for project classes or conducting project and educational workshops.

The group discussed the need for the District to identify other ways to raise funds. That would help support District meetings and also purchase of equipment, like a printer, that could reduce club printing costs or provide other benefits to clubs and their members. Sue presented a list of potential fundraising activities and volunteered to head a fundraising committee if club members would volunteer to assist on the committee.

After approving a new District logo, the group talked about potential sale of District logo items, including a pin similar in size to the Black Swallowtail pin being sold by MGC. We concluded that production turnaround time would preclude offering those in conjunction with registration for the April meeting, but determined to explore this for the fall meeting. Sue Wittick committed to designing the pin and Jean Goetz agreed to coordinate the pin order.

Sue reported on the logo t-shirts being offered to Meridian Garden Club members through a Haslett shop. The IIB Steering Committee discussed offering similar shirts to club members along with the registration materials for the April meeting. Peggy committed to check product pricing and turnaround times.

Other fundraising ideas included buying plants wholesale for clubs to re-sell, a District craft sale, making garden signs/plant markers for clubs, selling ads in the District newsletter, selling ads in District meeting program, getting sponsors for District meetings, printing brochures and other materials for clubs (if we purchase a printer), doing fundraising nights with restaurants.

Sue's list also included thoughts on potential events, workshops, and interest groups (like IIB Designers) for photographers, crafters, and quilters. Barb noted that a Mason club member who has obtained a raffle license and conducted raffles might be persuaded to do a presentation on the subject.

Lynn shared that some presidents she spoke with said the newsletter was too long and overlapped with the state newsletter and that they were not getting to the sub-menus on the website. There was discussion of whether the District newsletter should emphasize local club activities or encompass the umbrella organizations. Sue suggested that instead of sending the newsletter to club presidents by e-mail, she notify them when the newsletter becomes available via the District website. Lynn requested addition of a monthly calendar to the newsletter and an article about the potential new interest groups. Peggy said she had increased the font size of the website menu items, added a site map to the menu, and added a sentence to the home page text explaining how to access the site content.

Barb will contact Lynn about developing a detailed agenda for the April meeting. Lynn will contact Sue about updating the IIB display. Lynn agreed to make a floral arrangement for the IIB exhibit in yellow and purple.

Linda presented her ideas for a new quilted IIB banner. After discussion, it was decided that the new banner will be smaller than the existing banner for ease of display at flower shows. It will not be completed in time for the April meeting.

The next meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. at the Firewood Grill in Howell.

The meeting concluded at approximately 1:40 p.m.

#### Action items

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Lynn     | Contact the rest of the IIB club presidents<br>Issue the invitations to coffee with the committee<br>Confirm with DeWitt the hosting of the fall 2019 District meeting<br>Work with Barb on the detailed April meeting agenda<br>Talk with Sue about updating the IIB display<br>Make a floral arrangement to accompany the IIB display at the April meeting |
| Sue      | Design a IIB pin<br>Chair new fundraising committee<br>Mat Lynn's silent auction print   |
| Barb     | Finalize the April meeting budget<br>Work with Lynn to develop a detailed April meeting agenda   |
| Peggy    | Develop draft budget for FY 2018-19<br>Check with Home Depot about sponsoring a part of April meeting<br>Check price and turnaround time for logo tees<br>Look for a frame for Lynn's silent auction print   |
| Kathi D. | Participate in Beehive Buzz sessions<br>Assist in planning the summer presidents meeting   |
| Linda    | Convene a group to produce a new District IIB banner<br>Chair a new IIB quilters interest group  |
| Jean G.  | Manage the interface with logo pin retailer  |