

ELIZABETH F.
GAMBLE GARDEN
HISTORIC HOME & GARDEN

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

Carriage House, Gamble Garden

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by President Joan Zwiép

Quorum Established: Yes

Members Present: Joan Zwiép (President), Robin Allen, Pat Davis, Lena Dawson, Karen Douglas, Pat Gregory, Susann Mirabella, Judy Paris, Carmen Pekelsma, Colette Rudd, Donna Sheridan, Julie Shinn, Susan Sweeney, Nancy Wong, and Susan Woodman

Members Absent: none

Members Attending via Zoom: None

Staff: Norm Robinson, Interim Executive Director; Mica Pirie, Office Manager; Corey Andrikopoulos, Garden Director; Grace Stewart, Cheryl Renshaw, Cynthia Armour, Ella Ancheta, Lillian Pickering, Hayley Parr

Other Guests: Margie Harrington, Bonnie Flanagan Susan Benton, Sarah Clark, Linda Norton, Jane Stocklin, Marion Weiler, Donna Bohling, Pat Brown, Tod Gregory, Sharleen Fiddaman, Carol C. Friedman, Tod Gregory, Sue Krumbein, Doug Kalish, Carol Friedman, Mindy Kirkpatrick

Guest Speakers:

- Ella Ancheta spoke about the need for a larger greenhouse and other areas for the work they are doing in the garden – education, outreach, propagation.
- Doug Kalish spoke in favor of proceeding with the project, as it will occupy a relatively small area of the available space. He recommended that we consider applying for grant funds as well as individual donors; this is an investment in the future.
- Sue Krumbein spoke about why she became co-chair of the membership committee and the interest in member events, which have filled the Carriage House. A larger space for gathering is needed for similar events.
- Sarah Clark noted that a year ago the board approved the proposal to improve the hort offices and community room.
- Bonnie Flanagan asked 1) what data support the need for the building; 2) does Gamble Garden have a Conditional Use Permit/CUP (it currently has a use permit) and requests Gamble Garden due diligence regarding neighbors.
- Mica said that the number of people who want to use our rental spaces now are double our current capacity.
- Jane Stocklin is working on the fundraising for the project and totally supports the project.

Joan recommended others could put their questions and comments in writing.

Consent Agenda – Joan Zwiép

- Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2024 Board Meeting

Consent Agenda was APPROVED

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Staff Update – *Norm Robinson, Interim Executive Director*

Norm filled in the board about the Human Resources contract and representative, Ben Gaines. Ben has met with the full staff and will meet staff members individually by Zoom. He will also address whether our staff compensation is fair both internally and externally. Ben will work with Gamble Garden's new executive director once they are hired. He will also review our staff handbook and legal compliance with state and federal laws. He will be available as a coach to staff and will review our human resources policies. Other updates: the security cameras are installed but not yet working as a wireless internet system needs to be installed as well. The office is working on post-event follow-up for event attendees so that it is functional for all events. We are implementing a contract for instructors for classes.

Strategic Planning – *Donna Sheridan*

Donna presented the proposed Board goals for FY25, which were included in Attachment 2 of the meeting and are copied below.

FY25 BOARD GOALS (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025; proposed March 26, 2024)

1. Horticultural Complex & Community Room

Proceed with steps necessary to plan, approve and build a horticultural workshop, offices for the garden staff, a greenhouse, and a community room to support our mission.

2. Buildings and Grounds and Operations

Specify and set priority for projects needed to maintain our buildings and grounds and support our activities. Determine funding sources and implement as feasible.

3. Sustainability

Plan for long-term fiscal sustainability. Plan volunteer leadership sustainability.

4. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility

Encourage all committees to include IDEA-focused goals in FY2025 as appropriate—inclusion, diversity, equity, access, gender, age, population etc.

5. Program and Community Outreach

Support the expansion of education programs for children and adults. Continue to evaluate educational and community outreach activities. Explore additional opportunities to partner with the city and like-minded organizations.

MOTION: Donna Sheridan moved that the Board approve the proposed goals for FY 25 as presented in Attachment 2 of the meeting agenda.

MOTION APPROVED

Governance Report– *Susan Sweeney*

Susan Sweeney presented proposed revisions to two committee charters: (1) Program Committee and (2) Garden Advisors Committee as shown in Attachment 3 of the Board agenda. Colette Rudd spoke to the name change of the Program Committee (to Program Development Committee) and Margie Harrington, as Chair of the Garden Committee spoke about the revisions to the Garden Advisors Charter. Susan requested that other Gamble Committees review their charters and let her know if there are any updates.

MOTION: Susan Sweeney moved to approve revised charters for the Program Committee and Garden Advisors Committee as presented in Attachment 3 of the meeting agenda.

MOTION APPROVED

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Horticulture Complex Project Task Force (HCPT) Report – Karen Douglas

Karen presented a series of slides summarizing the proposed conceptual design for the Horticultural Complex project as a reminder of what was presented at the January 23, 2024 and February 27, 2024 board meetings. They included the site plan, donor renderings of the buildings, and the plan for donations from a capital campaign and the cost estimate.

The next steps include approval of a contract for Phase II, community meetings, and a capital campaign. The plan is to raise 50% of the cost of the project before it goes public. Karen noted that the board is required to approve any project/contract that costs \$10,000 or more. The Task Force will come back to the board once an estimate for the construction is available. The board would have to re-evaluate the project if sufficient funds could not be raised. A lease extension will be negotiated with the project plan. Fifty years is the legal limit for leases in Palo Alto.

Gamble Garden has sufficient funds available (and restricted to use for this project) to support the initial activities, and approval of expenditures will still need to follow our financial policy. The task force will consider asking foundations for support. There was discussion about the founding of Gamble Garden and the enthusiasm of the women of the Garden Club of Palo Alto, and the importance of community support. Others spoke in favor of the project and potential long term benefits.

MOTION: On behalf of the Horticulture Complex Project Task Force, Karen Douglas moved that the Board approve the conceptual design for the Horticultural Complex project as presented at the January 23, 2024 and February 27, 2024 board meetings.

MOTION APPROVED All board members who voted were in favor of the motion. Two members abstained from voting (Pat Davis and Nancy Wong).

Fund Development Report– Susann Mirabella

The Spring Tour committee is a month away all is going well.

President's Report – Joan Zwiép

Joan is working with the Search Committee and an executive search firm on the search for a new Executive Director. They are currently collecting resumes and hope to be interviewing candidates on April 17. They will schedule a meeting in April for board members to meet the new Executive Director.

Gamble Garden was notified that Sherry Moody has left a bequest to Gamble Garden. More information will be shared when it is available. She was a Gamble Garden board member and Garden Club of Palo Alto representative who resigned due to illness and passed away this year.

Board Member Announcement – Pat Davis

Pat Davis surprised Ella Ancheta at the Garden Volunteers lunch today with a brick that was decorated by Pat's husband. Pat has requested and received donations for the endowment in recognition of Ella's 20 years of service and she will be honored with a brick in the gazebo.

The Board meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Recorded by Colette Rudd, Interim Board Secretary on March 26, 2024