

**OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**February 28, 2023**

**Members Present:** Alnisa Allgood, Susan Goodwin, , Maurice Sheppard, Laura Peterson, Julie Bernauer, Bethany Ordaz, Bill Patek, Juscha Robinson, Julie Rupert, Sandi Statz, Betty Chewing, Liz Dannenbaum, Tanya Zastrow

**Members Absent:** Philip Bradbury, Renee Boyce, Matt Cornwell, Moira Harrington, Eric Knepp, Laurel Neverdahl

**Advisors Present:** Fred Anderson, Jt Covelli, Mary Phillips, Paul Williams

**Staff Present:** Colten Blackburn, Jake Immel, Amanda Kuhl, Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Katy Nodolf, Liz Parker, Kai Skadahl

I. **The meeting called to order at 4:00 pm.**

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Treasurer Peterson and seconded by Vice President Goodwin to approve the meeting minutes of January 17, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

IV. **REPORTS**

**A. President's Report**

- a. **American Public Garden Association (APGA) Board Experience – Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Webinar** – Ms. Zastrow gave an update on the *Garden Board Member Experience 2023: Cultivating Abundance* series that she is virtually attending, along with President Alnisa Allgood, Vice President Susan Goodwin and Treasurer Laura Peterson. They summarized a few points from the webinar, including improving new Board member onboarding, what the relationship between the Executive Director and the Board Chair should look like, and how the Board could become more deeply connected in their service to the community. They suggested that they discuss a shift in thinking about the Board's role, at an upcoming Board retreat.

On a related topic, there was discussion about the necessity and frequency of staff Board reports. Ms. Zastrow suggested a few options for the Board to consider: Fewer board reports – possibly quarterly; Three bullet points from each department where Ms. Zastrow would curate the content; Have a section for Board involvement opportunities. No decisions were made at the meeting and this would be discussed further at an upcoming meeting.

- b. **Strategic Plan Discussion** – Ms. Zastrow reported that there weren't any more planned edits or changes to the plan draft that was emailed on 02/25/23, except to finalize the appendix and to update the capital improvement projects with the recently received assessment. She added that once the final updates were made, Rick Daley would make his last edits and would give us the final plan. She added that the final plan would be voted on at the March meeting.

There was conversation about using a tracking document to visually lay out the progress being made on the goals. The Board also discussed the financial goals in the plan and if they were reflecting Olbrich's current level of growth. It was suggested that the board discuss this topic further at an upcoming Board Retreat.

Ms. Zastrow reminded the Board that if they had any additional feedback related to the strategic plan reports created by the consultants, to please share them with her.

- c. **Capital Improvement Budget** – Ms. Zastrow reported that IMEG Corp completed the mechanical, structural, and electrical assessments. She noted that the goals of these investigations were to address any deficiencies or issues with the buildings and outside structures, and identify items that the City could plan for in their upcoming budgets. She explained that there were some major electrical, mechanical, and structural issues that needed to be addressed. Ms. Laschinger clarified that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was a planning and financial document that details investments to provide lasting improvements in the City’s infrastructure, assets, and services, and includes a five-year future outlook. She added that the Capital Improvement Budget appropriates funding for capital projects and programs for the first year of the CIP. She noted that the 2024 Capital Budget planning had begun and Olbrich Gardens had items identified for capital improvement needs.
- d. **Orchid Escape Visit (at the end of the meeting)** – Ms. Zastrow reminded the Board that they could stay after the meeting for a tour of the *Orchid Escape* exhibit in the Bolz Conservatory with Conservatory Curator Colten Blackburn.

#### B. Financial Report

- a. **December 2022 Financials** – Treasurer Laura Peterson reviewed the Financial Reports. She highlighted that December was a very strong month, which further contributed to an outstanding year. She noted that this was similar to last year’s performance.
- b. **Bequests Motion to move funds to OBSF**  
 MOTION, to move one bequest recently received from the OBS Legacy Gifts account at Lake Ridge Bank to the OBS Foundation: a bequest of \$29,559.53 from the Estate of Marianne D. Hose, to be used for general purposes. This is the second and final distribution from Marianne’s estate.  
A motion was made by President Allgood and seconded by Ms. Statz to approve the transfer of the bequest from the OBS Legacy Gifts account at Lake Ridge Bank to the OBS Foundation. Motion carried unanimously.

#### C. Director’s Report

Ms. Zastrow introduced Amanda Kuhl, the Provisional Volunteer Coordinator. She explained that Amanda would help Olbrich maintain, recruit, onboard, and manage the volunteer program until the volunteer manager roll was permanently filled in late summer. Ms. Zastrow announced that Jeff Epping had been selected as the recipient of the 2023 American Public Gardens Association Award of Merit! She stated that the Horticulture team, in addition to many of Jeff’s professional colleagues, submitted nomination letters in support of Jeff’s career and contributions. Ms. Zastrow shared that Jerry Frautschi and Pleasant Rowland visited the Frautschi Family Learning Center and new greenhouses for the first time since their completion, noting that they were very complimentary of the results.

**D. Development Report** – Mr. Vande Slunt was not in attendance to give a report.

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

#### VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements.

#### VII. ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.