

**OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY  
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting Minutes  
May 18, 2021**

**Members Present:** Philip Bradbury, Alnisa Allgood, Renee Boyce, Mary Phillips, Julie Rupert, Julie Bernauer, Susan Goodwin, Bethany Ordaz, Laura Peterson, Juscha Robinson, Maurice Sheppard, Tim Sherry, Sandi Statz, Moira Harrington, Brad Hinkfuss, Roberta Sladky

**Members Absent:** Bill White, Betty Chewning, Liz Dannenbaum, Eric Knepp, Laurel Neverdahl

**Advisors Present:** Fred Anderson, Jack Bolz, Jt Covelli, Kevin Hess, Barb Tensfeldt

**Staff Present:** Jake Immel, Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Katy Nodolf, Kim North, Rylee Schuchardt, Kai Skadahl, Elizabeth Spry, Joe Vande Slunt

**I. The meeting called to order at 4:02 pm.**

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Goodwin and seconded by Ms. Allgood to approve the meeting minutes of April 20, 2021. Correction to the April 20, 2021 Minutes – Kevin Hess was present and should be listed in ‘Advisors Present.’ Motion carried unanimously with correction.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**IV. REPORTS**

**A. President’s Report**

- a. **OBS Recruitment Committee Update: participation in the recruitment of the next Garden Director.** – President Bradbury reported that The Equitable Hire Tool review process was completed and the job had not yet been posted. Assistant Parks Superintendent Lisa Laschinger updated that approval was received to hire a new Garden Director and the job should be posted next week. She added that once posted, it would be at least 3 months before the position would be filled.
- b. **OBS Transition Organizational chart overview.** – Ms. Sladky reviewed the 2021 Transition Plan Organizational Chart that was included in the May Board packet. She described that three lead staff members would guide daily operations until a new Director arrives: Jeff Epping will continue managing Horticulture and will also oversee Conservatory and Maintenance departments and be engaged with all City hiring that will take place in the interim; Marty Petillo will continue managing the volunteer program and will oversee City Admin, visitor services and all things front of house; Joe Vande Slunt will be the lead for all things OBS. She added that these staff leads will work together on bigger picture questions and issues that arise, and all staff will continue working together.
- c. Mr. Vande Slunt gave an update on all open positions and recently filled positions both City and OBS funded. He noted that OBS Board Recruitment Committee is assisting in the hiring process for the Director position.

Mr. Vande Slunt announced that Assistant Gift Shop Manager Jeanne Kessenich is retiring in May. Staff reviewed the Gift Shop structure and growing needs in the front of house. Staff recommended to the OBS Executive Committee that the Gift Shop close for the month of June which was approved. Staff will rehire and retool the Gift Shop to serve customers and other visitor needs.

There was discussion about estimated net Gift Shop loss of about \$18K, and public notification of the closure.

**d. Resolution for Joe Vande Slunt to accept funds on behalf of OBS**

President Bradbury pointed out that this was a common practice for nonprofits and that donors may ask for this document which would be signed by the Board Secretary. The OBS Executive Board recommended approval of the following resolution:

Whereas, Joe Vande Slunt, OBS Director of Development, acts as the Director of Development of Olbrich Botanical Society, and,

Whereas the Director of Development is authorized by the Board of Directors of Olbrich Botanical Society to act as a fiscal agent for the organization, and,

Whereas Mr. Vande Slunt may receive funds on behalf of the organization, and,

Whereas Mr. Vande Slunt may provide banking details to have donor funds transferred directly to Olbrich Botanical Society's bank account,

Therefore be it resolved that donor gifts, legacy gifts, and other gifts may be received by Mr. Vande Slunt on behalf of the Olbrich Botanical Society Board of Directors.

A motion was made by Ms. Statz and seconded by Ms. Allgood to approve the resolution. The Motion carried unanimously.

**e. Resolution honoring retiring OBS Gift Shop Assistant Manager Jeanne Kessenich**

Ms. Sladky applauded Ms. Kessenich for her hard work on behalf of the organization and that she was well-deserving of this resolution.

Whereas, Jeanne Kessenich worked in the Olbrich Botanical Society Growing Gifts Shop for eighteen years, and,

Whereas, Jeanne Kessenich helped Growing Gifts become one of Madison's premiere gift shops, and,

Whereas, Jeanne Kessenich helped sustain OBS through the pandemic by building an online Growing Gifts shopping experience, and,

Whereas, Jeanne Kessenich assisted thousands of happy customers and built goodwill for the Gardens, and

Whereas, Jeanne Kessenich has decided to retire May 20, 2021,

Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Directors of Olbrich Botanical Society wishes to honor and thank Jeanne Kessenich for her dedication and effectiveness to support the work of Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

A motion was made by Ms. Rupert and seconded by Ms. Allgood to approve the resolution. The Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Financial Report**

**March 2021 Financials** – Rylee Schuchardt reviewed the March Financial Reports. She commented that the virtual plant sale was a success, \$22,469 was the plant sale revenue budget and actual was

just over \$24K. When reviewing the OBS 2021 Projected Cash Flow Statement, Ms. Schuchardt noted that the remaining projected balance for the end of year was still over \$300K.

### C. Director's Report

Ms. Sladky highlighted that attendance for the month of April exceeded the previous 5 year average. She noted that summer concerts will begin June 15. A question was asked if Olbrich would be putting together a pandemic report, as a record of what was done and what adaptations were made. It was decided that would be a good record to have.

### C. Development Report –

Mr. Vande Slunt reviewed the Development report. He highlighted that the Tribute Trellis expansion was complete and has doubled in size. He announced that OBS just received a grant for \$2K from Social Media Breakfast Madison that will be used to help with the new virtual map.

#### **Resolution for the Endowment for Arts Programming**

Mr. Vande Slunt summarized the proposed "Bridging Nature and Art: Performance and Visual Art in the Gardens" endowment that was first introduced at the April board meeting. He added that in a non-pandemic year, the operating budget supports expenses between \$10K -\$15K for community based arts & music programming.

Whereas, Olbrich Botanical Society has been approached by donors who will make a transformative gift for concerts and arts programming, and,

Whereas, the gift will fund programming beginning in 2022, and,

Whereas the gift will also fund an endowment for concerts and other arts programming, and

Whereas, Joe Vande Slunt and Roberta Sladky have met with the donors to develop a proposal,

Therefore be it resolved that the Olbrich Botanical Society Board of Directors recommends that staff continue to cultivate the donors who plan to make a pledge and first gift in 2022.

A motion was made by Ms. Peterson and seconded by Ms. Goodwin to approve the resolution. The Motion carried unanimously.

**E. Marketing & Public Relations Report** – Ms. Nodolf reviewed the Marketing and PR Report. She that drone photography is being used for the new map project. She shared that PBS' "Let's Grow Stuff" will be at Olbrich next week where Horticulturist Erin Presley will be featured, along with the Madison Audubon Society. .

### VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business

### VII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

OBS Board Member Bethany Ordaz, from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County (BBBS), talked about The Hunt for the Golden Pin, a city-wide scavenger hunt fundraising event for BBBS. She added that the previous weekend, 21 teams came to Olbrich and found the Golden Pin!

### VIII. **ADJOURNED**

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.