

OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2022

Members Present: Philip Bradbury, Alnisa Allgood, Laura Peterson, Julie Rupert, Julie Bernauer, Matt Cornwell, Susan Goodwin, Bethany Ordaz, Bill Patek, Juscha Robinson, Maurice Sheppard, Tim Sherry, Sandi Statz, Betty Chewing, Liz Dannenbaum, Moira Harrington, Laurel Neverdahl, Tanya Zastrow

Members Absent: Renee Boyce, Bill White, Eric Knepp

Advisors Present: Kevin Hess, Dan Matson, Mary Phillips, Barb Tensfeldt, Paul Williams

Staff Present: Jake Immel, Lisa Laschinger (Assistant Parks Superintendent), Liz Parker, Kai Skadah, Joe Vande Slunt

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

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Allgood and seconded by Ms. Rupert to approve the meeting minutes of October 25, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

IV. **REPORTS**

A. President's Report

- a. **Re-cap of the Visit from Wisconsin Secretaries** – Ms. Zastrow talked about the tour that she and Mr. Vande Slunt led at Olbrich for the Secretaries from the Department of Tourism, the Department of Administration, the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection, and Madison's Mayor. She explained that their visit was because of the Tourism Capital Grant that Olbrich received in early 2022. She noted that this grant would be funding important accessibility improvements at the Gardens, including: Pathways and landscape lighting in the Bolz Conservatory; Pathways and landscape lighting in the outdoor gardens; A shade structure for the new Tram Circle; A new, accessible, after-hours turnstile; New, accessible paving in the Wildflower Garden.
- b. **Thai Consulate Visit** – Ms. Zastrow summarized the visit to Chicago, where Olbrich and UW staff met with the Deputy Consul-General and the Vice Consul from the Royal Thai Consulate General, Chicago. She recounted their tours of the Royal Thai Consulate-General and of Chicago Botanic Garden. She announced that they were invited back to attend the "National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand" celebration on December 5.
- c. **2023 OBS Budget Preview** – Mr. Vande Slunt shared a preview of the 2023 OBS budget. He noted that on the 2023 City budget side, things looked relatively positive, and that the Room Tax funding had been restored, increasing revenue by \$325,000 (pending Common Council adoption.) On the OBS budget side, he explained the proposed increase in revenue and expenses. He reviewed a few of the 2023 budget priorities, including: possible new staff positions; cost of living increase for staff; anticipating a 5% increase in health insurance costs; and anticipating an increase in the OBS retirement plan match. He noted that the *2023 OBS Budget Development* presentation would be sent to the Board to review before the Dec. 20 meeting.
- d. **Poinsettia Delivery** – Mr. Vande Slunt asked for help from Board members to volunteer for the following tasks: looking for drivers that could help deliver poinsettias on the two delivery dates (Nov. 26 & Dec. 3); that help was needed wrapping the poinsettias in foil before delivery (Nov. 21

or 22); and that they are looking for two Board members to greet Olbrich members for the Holiday Train Show preview party (Dec. 2 from 3-6 pm).

- e. **Nominating Committee Update** – Past President Rupert reported that the Nominations Committee would be finalizing their recommendations by the end of November, primarily filling openings in Officer roles, and would report back to the Board at the December meeting. She added that there were up to two openings on the Board for Director roles for 2023 and asked the Board to reach out to her with any recommendations, noting that filling the two openings could be postponed if the right candidates were not found.
- f. **GLEAM Summary** – Ms. Zastrow reviewed the seventh annual GLEAM exhibit. She highlighted that Olbrich welcomed over 32,000 guests to view nine unique light installations that were created by both local and international artists. She noted that this year, over 90 volunteers supported the exhibit, including 17 volunteers from Exact Sciences. She added that the GLEAM team was currently working on reviewing artist proposals for the 2023 GLEAM exhibit.

B. Financial Report

- a. **September 2022 Financials** – Treasurer Laura Peterson reviewed the Financial Reports. She highlighted that year to date, revenue was 31% over budget and 42% over last year's actual.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Zastrow reported that the community engagement meetings and interviews, related to the Strategic Plan, were currently in progress. She welcomed any additional suggestions from the Board, and noted that the goal was to have the Strategic Plan finalized in January 2023. Ms. Zastrow also mentioned that the first review of the assessment of the Bolz Conservatory was complete, adding that the final report would be done in late January, or early February 2023. She thanked the Board members that helped to serve as the welcoming committee for staff and their families at the staff appreciation event at the Madison Children's Museum on Nov. 9.

- D. Development Report** – Mr. Vande Slunt announced that this GivingTuesday (Nov. 29), OBS would be aiming to raise \$15,000 in support of Olbrich's internship program, and that thanks to an anonymous donor, the first \$7,500 raised would be matched, dollar for dollar. He mentioned that the holiday gift membership promotion was underway, where Olbrich members could purchase a gift membership for new members at a 50% discount.

V. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements.

VII. ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm.