

**THE GARDNERS OF AMERICA
MEN'S GARDEN CLUBS OF AMERICA**

**MEMBERS
MEETING MINUTES
Rockford, Illinois
July 12, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by President Mack at 8:00 a.m.

The invocation was given by Bob Grossman.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by Chuck Brasher.

Roll call was taken by administrative assistant, AJ Freeman.

President Mack asked for the introduction of guests. None was present.

President Mack asked for any convention report. None was reported.

Presentation of the Agenda was reviewed by President Mack. He stated that there are four additions to the agenda. Under item 9, we are going a, b and c. Under a, it will be the E&I Report; b will be the Scholarship Report; c will be any mandatory committee reports. John Kessen will make a presentation after the Newsletter Committee prior to the closing comments. The PR Committee will be 12.a and John Kessen from Fort Wayne will be 12. b. The ballot report will be 11.a. No further changes to the agenda. Agenda was approved.

Treasurer's and Headquarter's report was called for by President Mack. Steve Bush stated that we have no cash flow problems for the next couple of years. As you may know the interest rates have risen over the past year; thus he has invested the monies in higher rate CDs, etc. Currently, we have \$30,000 in CDs, but \$10,000 of that matures this week.

Mr. Bush stated that \$865 was granted to the Albany Men's Garden Club from the Gardening from the Heart fund to go toward benches for the greenhouse at the Center for Disability Services. The Albany club has worked with this organization for over twenty years and it is a very worthwhile project. We have money available to benefit good causes. It was also noted that we still have a lot of GFTH t-shirts yet available for purchase for \$5 each. The plaque showing the names of people who have donated at least \$100 for the new roof fund is in the sales room. We have nearly \$6000 in the fund with \$1845 collected since the last directors' meeting. We appreciate all of the donations.

Tom Shanley, co-chairman of the Building & Grounds Committee, had a gentleman come out again this year for an estimate on the roof. This person thinks we have another two or three years' life on the current shake roof. Mr. Bush stated that the roof is not leaking yet so there is adequate time to collect more funds.

Since last year, this is the first time we have not lost any clubs. Steve Bush encouraged everyone to try to get people to join a club or possibly start a new club. The national headquarters and he are available for any assistance anyone needs.

Mr. Bush said as of last week we have nearly replenished all of the members we have lost. Every year there are deaths, etc. that cause the numbers to change. We should be ahead of where we were a year ago by this August. Mr. Bush personally thanked everyone who sponsored a new member.

Mr. Bush stated a new CPA firm was hired to replace the old firm. The old firm was no longer interested in doing business with us. The new CPA firm, Pollard & Co. of Johnston, IA, is more convenient and provides better service for less money. Pollard & Co. will be saving us about \$2300 over the next three years.

When Mr. Bush left the national headquarters to come to the convention, it was volunteer day. We have very dedicated workers. Co-chairs Tom Shanley and Don Newell are wonderful. Tom is there five days a week when he is in town. We are lucky to have them. We have no major projects planned for the coming year. Mr. Bush encouraged everyone to stop by the national headquarters and visit. Mr. Bush relayed that we had received a \$100 donation from someone that stopped by and is not even a member.

A question was asked of President Mack why the members do not get a financial report in their packets. President Mack stated the financial report would be put in everyone's packets next year. We have an outside review by a certified public accountant. It is not an audit. Mr. Bush stated we have what is called a "review". The difference between an audit and a review was explained and Mr. Bush pointed out that this organization does not need an audit. In Article 14 of the Bylaws it only calls for a review but there are some places in the Bylaws that need to be corrected to say review instead of audit. Mr. Bush stated that there is an ongoing effort being made to correct some things in the Blue Book and Bylaws. We have copies of this review report that we will be happy to send if requested. The treasurer's report was accepted.

The E&I Report was given by Maribelle Davis. For 2006 the E&I fund sent to national headquarters income of \$34,071. So far this year \$20,005.36 has been sent. In 2006 E&I received \$1860 from life dues. In 2006, \$1145 of memorials was received and this year only \$240 has been received so far. Mrs. Davis stated that \$25,000 is going to be taken out of mutual funds and invested in preferred stocks. The E&I report was approved.

President Mack stated that David Moody has been working on the outdated Bylaws and Maribelle Davis has volunteered to go through all the Bylaws and the Standing Rules to update them. Frank Mitch and his team have also been working on the Blue Book and the Red Book.

The Scholarship Committee Report was given by Tom Wilten. The committee had fifteen applicants this past year. Each candidate is graded in four different areas; scholarship, recommendations, essay or autobiography and their student activities and work. The total number of points a candidate can receive for each area is 100 points. Since there are six committee members reviewing the applications, each candidate can potentially score a total of 600 points. Mr. Wilten then read the names and points for the top five candidates. These candidates were approved for the scholarships.

There were no other committee reports.

President Mack stated that there are no items in Old Business.

The New Business was then introduced by President Mack. The ballot report was then given by the Credentials Committee chair, David Moody. Thirty three clubs out of sixty three sent back their ballots. Some of the larger clubs did not send them back. Mr. Moody stated that the ballots need to be sent to the address on the ballots. There were a total of 847 ballots received and 846 ballots that were counted. For the office of president we had 828 votes for Chuck Burt; for first vice-president Robert Grossman 822 votes; for second vice-president Jerome Frampton 820 votes; for third vice-president Lawrence Schaeffer 820 votes; and for treasurer, Steve Bush received 808 votes. All officers on the ballots were elected. Mr. Moody stated that on the Bylaws change, a total of 799 votes were cast which resulted in 759 "yes" votes and 40 "no" votes. He also mentioned that all the members at large were mailed a ballot. It was suggested at the Board of Directors' meeting to include a separate letter with these ballots explaining more about the details of the vote. Mr. Moody also stated that a suggestion was made that the ballots be sent to the president of the club not the treasurer. Mr. Moody reiterated that you should tear off the part of the ballot where your name is before you send them back. The Credentials Report was accepted and the ballots will be destroyed.

The National Newsletter Editorial Committee Report was given by Dominic Mencarni, chair of the Newsletter Editorial Committee. Mr. Mencarni thanked all the newsletter winners and encouraged all to continue with publishing their newsletters. Mr. Mencarni stated that he would be working on making the newsletter better for all the members. He said that he had visited with AJ Freeman and Ron Heggen and he thinks a good job is being done with the newsletter that is currently being published. Mr. Mencarni thanked AJ Freeman and Steve Bush also for getting the newsletter out to all the membership. The newsletter can be mailed hard copy or emailed to each member. The Opinion Corner has been added to the newsletter for the pros and the cons on different articles in the newsletter. Mr. Mencarni stated that he calls different people personally from all the clubs to solicit articles for the newsletter and encourages them to send their material to AJ Freeman.

The PR Committee Report was given by Henry Pittman. Mr. Pittman stated that our club does not get the kind of recognition that we should. He also stated that in the last year he has requested help in finding a national public relations firm that would take on TGOA/MCGA on a pro bono basis. To date, there have been no suggestions on someone that could do this. Mr. Pittman encouraged everyone to try to help us with this and help our organization be recognized.

Convention 2008, Fort Wayne, IN, June 12-14, 2008. Mr. John Kessen gave an update on the upcoming convention for next year. Mr. Kessen stated that children and grandchildren are invited. There will be children's activities for those who attend. We have been promised there will be a block of rooms on the first floor at the hotel for anyone needing this but please make your reservations early. Frank Mitch will be putting the information on the website. Peggy Moody will be having a seminar for recertification of our flower show judges on Thursday of the convention. Mr. Kessen said that anyone who attends the convention is welcome to attend the training meeting. Mr. Kessen stated that he would ask all committee chairs for any requests for any meetings. There will be a deadline of thirty days in advance in order to finalize a proper place for you to meet. Shirts will be available for purchase as part of the registration fee. Mr. Kessen was asked about the possibility of having a photography workshop at the convention. This will be

discussed and if enough interest, will be added to the Saturday schedule. Registration cards are available at this time.

President Mack stated that the Executive Committee approved a motion to set up a national projects committee. President Mack went over the sign up sheets for all the committees.

President Mack thanked the Rockford club for a great convention and all of their efforts.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.