

GCH Board Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2022
Meeting held at the home of Donna Stout

Call to order at 12:00 PM by Claire Burnett

Present: Claire Burnett, Katie Nixon, Marian Kellner, Mally Cox-Chapman, Brie Quinby, Christine Doty, Julie Shushtari, Donna Stout, Mary Ann Haar, Nora Howard, Susie Barney, Mem Morissey, Marcia Hall, Jan Hickcox, Susan Rathgeber, Margaret Szerejko.

Thanks to Donna Stout for graciously hosting this meeting

A motion to accept the September 20, 2022 Board meeting minutes was made, seconded and approved.

President's Remarks - Claire Burnett

- Plans for the January 10, 2023 GCH/CVGC Joint Meeting are coming along. It will be held at the Hartford Golf Club and CVGC will set the menu and the ticket price. Ticket price will likely be in the range of \$40-45 dollars, including one drink. There is a document on the GCH website (found under CLUB MATTERS) which is titled "Tips For Hostessing". This includes a description of the shared duties of the clubs and hostesses for the Joint Meeting. In addition to the program speaker, Dr. Susan Masino, the Botanical Arts Sweepstakes will be held at this meeting.
- The Nov 1, 2022 Program is a public meeting with the Friends of Keney Park and the Keney Park Sustainability Project. We would like to include these people in our social gathering prior to the speaking program, so we should hold our business meeting before the social gathering. There is a limited time frame, so, hopefully we'll keep GCH business meeting short. Proposed new schedule: GCH Business meeting, 11:30; Social, 12:00; Program Speaker, 12:30.
- There are some interesting articles in the most recent GCA Bulletin, including one about the Tree Equity Score. (Susan Rathgeber beat them to the punch with her discussion of the Tree Equity Score at our recent Zone II Meeting!). Unfortunately, our Zone II Meeting was not included in this edition. GCH was on time with submitting the information to the appropriate person, but from there, it did not get relayed for publication in a timely manner. It will be included in the next edition. Other GCH items to consider for submission to the GCA Bulletin for

publication include our Central Park Trip, and our educational efforts with the Keney Park workers.

Treasurer's Report - Claire Burnett reporting for Kelly Jarvis

There has been no change to the numbers reported at the Oct.11 General Meeting

GCA Zone II Meeting - \$0.00

Main Checking Account - \$36,626.80

Carry Over Fund - \$6,175.50

Perennial Fund - \$21,959.37

Rainy Day Fund- \$4,180.98

Community Fund - \$65,011.56

Education Fund - \$6,321.84

Committee Reports:

Floral Design - Mary Ann Haar

The GCH is now connected to the **CT Flower Collective**. This is a collaborative grower's market offering farm grown specialty cut flowers to the floral industry. Rooted Farmers is the CTFC online Point of Sale and pre-ordering system. This is where retail florists place their weekly orders. Rooted Farmers is a separate entity from CTFC and provides the software to operate a robust pre-order system. GCH holds an account with CTFC. To make this possible, we have a credit card on file with Rooted Farmers, as this is how orders are entered and tracked. Looking to the future, I anticipate that we will do more business with them over time and we would eventually enter many of our club's orders using the agreement with their on-line ordering system and maybe even use their delivery service. Right now however, I am encouraging our membership to buy in person on Market Days using their own credit card. Currently, our

account has my credit card attached to it. I can work details out with Kelly when we want to add our club's card attached to the account.

We want to be GOOD stewards of the slow flower movement. I have some concern that we might unwillingly make more work for the managers and volunteers who work at the CTFC. I am not in favor of giving members 'carte blanche' to use our agreement to place on-line orders and schedule deliveries at random and unchecked. This is why I recommend that our membership shop in person and that includes on Market Days set aside for 'buyer' (wholesale) members only, Mon- Wed. There is a Market Day for walk ins on Saturdays from 9 -11.

We don't want good intentions to possibly backfire and perhaps even threaten our privilege as a 'buyer' in the collective. As you know, a very large bulk of their 'buyer' community are retail florists and/or event planners; not Garden Club members! I believe it is prudent that we transition as a club in stages. We need to be thoughtful and strategic in our interactions so we can best support this consortium as our calendar of events does not closely align with the growing season in CT!

Over the several years buying at Hartford Floral Supply, the biggest disconnect with ordering flowers/greens/supplies comes up when a GCH member tries to place orders and doesn't know when to place orders, what varieties are available, how many stems in bunches/boxes. This becomes burdensome to the sales staff and sometimes Garden Clubs have a sour reputation with whole sellers which I am conscious not to repeat.

The bottom line is, we hope to make our dealings with CTFC easy and yet respectful to the volunteers who work there and who help us obtain the best fresh materials sourced here in CT. Personally, I hope for a sustainable long term relationship of better and fresher materials for all of the GCH's needs going forward!

A Trumpet Vine article is forthcoming, discussing our relationship with the CTFC . This hopefully will be placed on our website as well.

If you haven't already done so, please sign up for the Floral Design Workshop to be held on Nov 21st.

Programs - Marian Kellner

- Our first committee meeting was held at the end of September and we have a second meeting coming up on October 20.
- The October 11 program with Frances Palmer was extremely well received and we made a profit for the club from the sale of the books and puzzles, which will cover the cost of the speaker.

- The committee is entertaining the idea of purchasing a microphone for the use of the club. This would be very useful for speaking venues with poor acoustics or large crowds. Mary Ann Haar will look into which type of microphone is best suited for our needs.
- We are looking for a new location for the February meeting ("A Conversation with Aaliyah Beckford"). Claire proposed St James Church in West Hartford.

Communications - Donna Stout

Being a little discouraged by the lack of opportunity to get any articles in the GCA Bulletin by the GCH, the committee will focus on writing some "Newsworthy" and deserving articles to be included.

- We did just submit an article about our June trip to New York with a visit to Headquarters, an amazing talk about the history of Central Park, and a tour of the park by the Central Park Conservancy Historian, Sarah Cedar Miller.
- Next we would like to submit the history and development of Riverfront Recapture along the Connecticut River, describing our club's opportunity to connect with it in September with a stroll of the trails on the river. To be written by Nora Howard and Mally Cox-Chapman/
- Katie Nixon received a wonderful evaluation of our work in Keney Park from Scott Heth, describing how our education program there has made such a difference in the understanding and work of the staff. Using Scott's evaluations, Katie will write an article highlighting how our work and programs have had such impact on our urban parks.
- Sally Weisman has organized an open, public meeting with Chris Wigren from Preservation Connecticut, and Friends of Keney Park to share documentation and images of Olmsted landscape projects throughout the state, in observance of the Frederick Law Olmsted Bicentennial. Sally will do a write up on this terrific project .

These three are all deserving of being included in the GCA Bulletin, so we will move forward to try to get our club and Zone II to be noticed for all that we do.

Garden History and Design - Chris Doty and Nora Howard

- New news - Agnes Peele has graciously agreed to allow her property to be documented. Documentation has already begun, with an initial walk about and photography session. Agnes has provided the committee with lots of

information regarding the history of the property and the design of the gardens. Mary Ann Haar has agreed to do the site drawings.

- Follow up news -The Jared and Clare Edwards Garden documentation project was completed in April/May of this year and has been submitted to the Archives of American Gardens, Smithsonian. It has gone through the Smithsonian channels and (has been accepted?)

Awards - Mally Cox-Chapman

The committee is entertaining suggestions for any local nonprofit organization that might be considered for a 2024 Zone or National award. Possibilities include (Riverfront Recapture, Keney Park, or our Zone II meeting?) Note that historically, GCA Zone II has been underrepresented for GCA Zone awards.

Horticulture - Jan Hickcox

There has been some debate over the naming of the Holiday or Greens Workshop. The name changes had been made in an attempt to be more inclusive.

Other Business

- There are a number of interested candidates in the pipeline for potential GCH membership
 - **GCH website** - Claire Burnett. Claire and her husband Bob will be in charge of developing and building our website. We need an archive of photographs so please submit anything you deem appropriate. Look at your committee pages, we need content. We will look into a photo archiving system (such as SmugMug) We are considering an ad hoc committee to investigate ways to archive.
- Katie Nixon reminded everyone that Planting Day at Keney Park is tomorrow Oct 19

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Szerejko

Recording Secretary