

GCH Board Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2022
Meeting held at the home of Claire Burnett

Call to order at 12:10 PM by Claire Burnett

Present: Claire Burnett, Pat Salner, Mary Ann Haar, Susan Izard, Susan Rathgeber, Sally Richter, Katie Nixon, Marcia Hall, Donna Stout, Kelly Jarvis, Kristen Renehan, Marnie Greenwood, Margaret Szerejko

A motion to accept the 10/18/2022 Board Meeting minutes was made, seconded and approved

President's Remarks - Claire Burnett

1. **GCA Collaboration** : we have endorsed GCA 's recently launched initiative to establish a National Native Plant Month in all 50 states by April 2023, collaborating with Zone Leadership in each state. Native plants are important to our environment for building sustainable ecosystems. Native plants have evolved over thousands of years alongside native wildlife. To create healthy ecosystems, it is crucial to protect our air, water, and soil, and to plant many more native plants that support pollinators and native wildlife
2. **GCH Feb 4, 2023 Meeting location** has changed to: Sarah Porter Memorial, 37 Main St, Farmington. This change is posted on our website.
3. **Arline Whitaker Memorial Tree Planting**: to date we have collected \$750 for Arline's tree. I have met with Cate Grady-Benson, Executive Director of the Farmington Land Trust to select a site for the White Oak at the Wilcox-Bushley Homestead, future site of the FLT headquarters and education center. The planting will likely be in late spring due to unforeseen structural issues with the building. Our plaque will likely be affixed to a piece of brownstone from the original site.
4. **Website Suggestions**: What are your general thoughts on the website? I will be looking for specific content and photos A.S.A.P. Donna and I will be meeting with the Communications committee after the Thanksgiving holiday to make a plan for revisions.
5. **Account at Pride's Corner Farm**: We now have a tax-exempt account at Pride's Corner Farm in Cromwell. Katie Nixon, Carrie Hammond and I are the approved purchasers at this point. If you need plants (trees, shrubs,

perennials) for projects contact one of us about it. Their online catalog can be viewed at <https://www.pridescorner.com/Our-Plants>.

6. **Trumpet Vine** submissions should be in by this weekend for inclusion in the Dec. issue.
7. It would be helpful to have a press contact for publicizing our events and projects in the local newspaper. We should be sure our website address is listed on all our communications with the public. Mary Ann Haar graciously volunteered to design a GCH business card with our website address.
8. Sadly, Frederick Mullen, husband of our newest member, Eleanor Mullen, lost his battle with cancer and died on November 10. His obituary will be published this week and an announcement will be made to the club at that time.

Treasurer's Report - Kelly Jarvis

GCA Zone Meeting	\$ 0.00
Main Checking Account	\$ 33,042.07
Carry Over Fund	\$ 6,175.50
Perennial Fund	\$ 21,959.37
Rainy Day Fund	\$ 4,180.98
Community Fund	\$ 65,013.77
Education Fund	\$ 6,321.89

An Amazon charge was recently made to our Zone II meeting account using our GCH card, for the amount of \$146.30. Unless we can find an explanation, this suggests our card has been hacked and the charge is fraudulent. Kelly will look into this further and we may have to have a new card issued.

Committee Reports:

Floral Design - Mary Ann Haar

- Mary Ann demonstrated the new wireless portable microphone that has been purchased (\$80.00) for the GCH.

- The 'Designing without Oasis' workshop will be held on Monday Nov 21st. 26 people have registered to attend. It should be a fun and educational event
- The Botanical Arts Sweepstakes originally planned for the CVGC/GCH joint meeting in January and the related Zoom learning workshop planned for last week have both been cancelled due to lack of participation. Instead, the Committee has decided to host a sweepstakes in floral design at the Joint Meeting .

Conservation - Marnie Greenwood

- Our previously proposed project to address the problem of urban heat islands in Hartford by planting trees in an affected area has met some hurdles.
- We have instead decided to focus on responsible waste management and how we, as individuals and as a community, can make responsible and educated choices in the interest of our climate and our environment. More to come.

Membership - Pat Salner

- The membership section of the GCA website is a great resource and has good ideas relevant to recruiting, proposing and retaining members. Please take a look at the attached GCA Zone II powerpoint on Membership. We are working on getting it uploaded to our GCH website under the members page.
- We are reviewing the By-Laws pertaining to membership (III,IV) and revisiting our application process, such as considering the idea that a proposed member should submit their own written statement. The policy manual, items 10 and 11, needs updating and we invite comments. Hopefully, by Jan 17 board meeting we will have a report incorporating the best ideas for building a strong and vibrant GCH.
- We are reviewing requirements /obligations for Associate Member category. Currently there is a maximum of 20 spots, and there is no guideline as to when, in the course of the year, one can change membership status.
- We discussed membership financial obligations, recognizing that for some it can be a challenge to cover all costs of being an active member. Members should be made aware of the member support fund for those who may need assistance.
- Recruitment - we will invite the CT Horticultural Society, CT Herb Society , CT Master Gardeners to announce our public meetings (February 7 and April 4)

in their bulletins, and Carrie Hammond will reach out to the Wellesley College Club to join us for the Feb 7 meeting (the speaker is a current Wellesley student).

Another possible connection is placing an announcement in the e-newsletter of CTNOFA (CT Northeast Organic Farming Assoc). This would require a fee of \$25.00 for nonmembers. (In the future, GCH may want to consider membership in/support of this organization)

Katie Nixon will reach out to Friends of Keney Park to inform them of these 2 public meetings.

- Finally the membership committee would like to offer membership in the GCH to men as well as women, so please talk GCH to all who are part of the "gardenhood"

Awards - Mally Cox Chapman (reported in absentia)

As hosts of the 2024 GCA Annual Meeting, Awards has an extra layer of responsibility this year and next. Award proposals and letters of intent are due in February. We need to imagine awards that are relevant to us, and will take a lot of time to propose. Possibilities include:

- Jack Hale for a Zone Award in Civic Improvement
- Riverfront Recapture for a Zone Award in Conservation
- Elizabeth Park ,for its standing as one of the nation's great parks and its current transformation into an arboretum.

We are seeking your input and suggestions.

Photography - Susan Rathgeber reporting for Mara Sfara

The committee will be hosting a Bloomography event in April 2023. A subcommittee will be meeting later this week to set a theme. We will be requesting that all members send us one photo to go along with the theme.

Communications - Donna Stout

- The committee is working to gain more exposure for the GCH in the GCA Bulletin, the eNews, on our own website, and in the local press. Write ups in progress:
 1. Spring 2022 GCH trip to Central Park/ GCA headquarters, submitted to the Bulletin Committee in Sept 2022.

2. The history and development of Riverfront Recapture and GCH's opportunity to connect with and learn about this organization on our visit in Sept 2022. Write-up in process by Nora Howard and Mally Cox-Chapman
 3. Our participation in the Keney Park workers education program and the positive evaluations it received from the staff. Katie Nixon is preparing an article for the GCA Spring Bulletin, due by Jan 15.
 4. The GCH/ Friends of Keney Park November 2022 public meeting about the Olmsted Legacy in Connecticut. Sally Weisman, who organized the meeting, will submit a write up to the Bulletin by the Jan 15 deadline.
- There has been a change in the program for the April 4, 2023 meeting. The new speaker is Karyl Evans, Emmy award winning documentary film maker, who will speak about her new documentary of Mabel Osgood Wright (1859-1934) a pioneer in the American Conservation Movement, and founder of the CT Audubon Society. This update will be posted on the GCH website.
 - Donna gave an overview of the upcoming 2024 GCA Annual Meeting: **"Beyond the Green"** CT Convention Center, Hartford, April 24-29, 2024.
Cochairs: Nancy Kalal (New Canaan), Betty Snellings (Ridgefield)
Donna Stout and Marian Kellner are cochairs of the Zone Dinners.
600 attendees are expected. Many volunteers will be needed. Kathy Conger (Stonington) is chair of volunteers and will be contacting us. More to come.
The Awards chair Sarah Moreno will be holding a Zoom meeting for Zone II club presidents and Awards Committee chairs today (Nov 15) to brainstorm prospects for the various awards.

Visiting Gardens - Susan Rathgeber

- The Mystic Garden Club is holding a Greens Sale on Dec 2 and 3 at the Mystic Museum of Art, open to the public, as a fundraiser. It may be interesting to check this out.

- The Committee is planning a trip for May 9, 2023 to visit 2 gardens: Sleepy Cat Farm in Greenwich CT, and Lee Garden in New Canaan, CT. Mark your calendars , space is limited.

Civic Projects - Katie Nixon

Discussion was postponed in the interest of time.

Please review the Civic Projects Report that was emailed to board members on Nov 14, for discussion at the next board meeting

Horticulture

GCH Greens Workshop on Dec 13 - the charges per item, published In the Nov Trumpet Vine announcement, may need to be adjusted to cover costs. A cost per item analysis is needed, and if necessary, adjustments will be made. The revised charges will be published in the Dec. Trumpet Vine.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Szerejko
Recording Secretary