



**State Master Gardener Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 24, 2006, 11:00 a.m.
Howlett Hall, Room 139, OSU Campus, Columbus, Ohio**

In attendance: Sarah Baehr, Pam Bennett, Jim Chatfield, Troy Cooper, Schroeder Dodds, Steve Hudkins, Bill Jones, Tim Malinich, Mary Maloney, Barb Mills, Tim Rhodus, Charlotte Robe, Tammi Rogers, Fred Rufener, Rich Sherman, Dave Shetlar, Kathy Smith, and Amy Stone

I. Update on State Coordinator Position

Jim Chatfield reported that a proposal submitted to Keith Smith and Stave Baertsche has been accepted for 50% FTE appointment for a State MG Coordinator. Keith & Steve both agree that this is a very important and necessary position. They have also noted their appreciation of the commitment this committee has provided to the program. The position has been accepted by Pam Bennett and is effective "almost immediately." Pam feels she will be in place by June 1, after hiring a program assistant to supplement in Clark Co. She will have an office in Howlett Hall, but continue to be based out of Clark Co.

It is suggested that the committee, as well as the counties send a "thank-you" to Keith S. and Steve B. Pam will get the information and addresses out to the committee and to the counties. Congratulations to Pam were offered.

II. Update on Consumer Horticulture Program

Steve Hudkins has been asking what the Consumer Hort. Program needs to focus on and has overwhelming encouragement from Ag. Educators that they need help with horticultural questions coming into their offices. Cons. Hort. would like to start a publication to help with this. It will be easier said than done, as it will be a major time commitment. The format will be similar to BYGL, but will focus more on backyard gardening, household structural pests, etc. There is a need for individuals to volunteer to write articles as well as trying to find one person to edit the weekly publication. This is the main goal of the Cons. Hort. team right now.

III. Financial Update

Steve has been trying to get all the financial information for the MG program. The following was reported:

General MG account (can be used for operating expenses)	\$2769.41
Supply account	\$- 99.66 with \$867.00 encumbered

There is also a problem with Kinkos/FedEx billing the Dept. for MG manuals instead of the individual counties. The bill is \$7913.49. Pam will be working on getting this resolved and will try to get Kinkos/FedEx to bill the counties.

Pam discussed the idea of the committee working the PLANTS seminar on the Sunday before the OSU Nursery Short Course (if Steve Still is not going to be doing this program); proceeds would go to the committee for travel, lunches, parking passes, etc.

IV. Data Collection Time Again

Pam will check with Tim Rhodus to make sure the database is up-to-date. She will be sending out the annual request to counties to update their information. This will ensure the mailing list for the state conference is current and also track hours and impacts.

V. State Conference

Rich Sherman (Scioto) was present to report on the arrangements that he, Robin Stephenson and Diane Bambenek have made for the '06 conference.

The 2006 State Conference will be held September 22 & 23 in Chilicothe (Ross County). There will be an on-your-own tour on Friday afternoon at the Adena Mansion and Gardens and Mound City. Friday night's dinner and awards will be held at the Christopher Conference Center. The evening's

speaker will be Richard Warnock of Adena Gardens speaking on the history of Adena Gardens from 1800-present. Tammi will be working with Pam to coordinate the awards on Friday night. Lodging will be primarily at the Comfort Inn- conveniently located at the Conference Center. The Friday banquet and Saturday's catering have been all but finalized. Saturday's events will be held at the Ross County Fairgrounds.

First choice of keynote speaker is Dr. Michael Dirr. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be panning out. A couple other speakers have been contacted and one will be selected by the end of the week. There will be 12 break-out sessions available Saturday, approximately 45-minutes for each session. Speakers are being contacted and suggestions are being gathered. Steve Hudkins and Troy Cooper have offered to lead a breakout session on Saturday.

County displays and vendors were discussed. These and many more details will be worked out at the next Conference meeting Friday, April 28. The committee will be kept updated.

VI. Awards Program

Pam suggested keeping the state awards procedure the same for '06 and then revamping them with a sub-committee once the committee is restructured. More MG volunteer input will be needed and a committee will be developed to explore options and look at using judges from outside the MG program.

VII. Program Potential

Sarah B. discussed her involvement with a project with a group from the Orient Correctional Facility involved with the Central School, which teaches vocational programming to inmates. Pickaway Co. was asked to be involved with teaching the basics of the horticulture and the MG manual in order to educate inmates for possible jobs in the green industry after their release. The class consisted of 18 inmates and two teachers. It has been suggested that the program be offered state-wide, using county MG volunteers/ Educators, etc. Pam has met with the Superintendent of the Central School on this possibility and Jim C. has talked to the Director of ONLA with possibly partnering in this.

Bill Jones and Dave S. voiced their concern on having inmates being perceived as Master Gardeners. They recommended that they would not be called MGs and exact terminology and certificate requirements would have to be worked out.

Amy asked about cost recovery. The Ohio Board of Corrections is willing to contract with counties. Pam is waiting on the Dept. to get her a list of counties with correctional facilities. This program is in an exploratory stage right now. Pam would like each of us to take this information back to the counties and let her know the general consensus. This program would obviously have to be much more structured due to the nature of the participants and the regulations involved.

Dave S. suggested that the manual could be modified slightly for youth and a program with inmates. Tim M. has the manual in MS Word. Dave and Tim will put the manual on a blind site for the committee to view and to suggest changes.

VIII. Committee Restructuring

As the new State Coordinator, Pam asked the committee to give her suggestions about what we, as a committee, want from the Committee and her.

- Discussion about ratio of Educators/Coordinators/Volunteers. It was agreed that the number of Educators and Coordinators should stay the same, two each; from each of the three Regions and that the number of volunteer representatives would be weighted by counties with active programs. The coordinator's manual is also out-of-date and Steve suggested having mentors assigned to new coordinators. The coordinator's manual could be put on-line or, at least, a list of pertinent forms and links to information. Core competencies and developing a new final exam were also discussed.

Pam also asked everyone what we would like her to accomplish as State Coordinator. There are many, many ideas including consistency among county coordinators, restructuring this committee, marketing, etc.

Other: Tim R. reported that there will be a link available soon to listen to a recording of the BYGL conference call. Although you will not be able to ask questions, you will be able to listen to the questions being asked, the dialogue and thought processes going into the BYGL each week.

IX. Next Meeting Date

Friday, September 8, 2006 from 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. in Room 116 of Howlett Hall.

Respectfully submitted by Tammi Rogers