

MGAPC General Meeting Minutes - Tuesday January 24, 2023

Our Lady of Consolation Ministry Center - 1799 Hamburg Tpke, Wayne NJ 07470

7:00 PM Gathering and Sign In

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Sara McHugh at 7:04 pm to introduce 1st Vice-President, Bert Sebastian. New President, Joe D'Errico, was absent because he was under the weather.

Happy New Year! Bert reminded the group to sign in and lead us in the Pledge of allegiance.

Continuing Education: Bert Sebastian introduced guest speaker Marc Gussen, from The Closter Nature Center, to speak on Hydroponics.

A couple of lecture notes: Marc's past experience includes the Rutgers University Soil Testing Lab and the Mars soil station project/greenhouse.

Use nutrient solution - Marc recommend mixing "2 different boxes of fertilizers"

Oxygenate hydroponics water baths - example use fish tank bubbler/air pump/air stone.

Use rockwool or blue board rigid insulation to hold plant

Self pollinate with a paint brush, fan, or leaf blower.

And strawberries can be grown hydroponically but potatoes can not.

Recess: Short Recess with Marc Gussen.

8:20 PM Meeting minutes

A motion was made by Anne Kahwaty and seconded by Sara McHugh to accept the Minutes of the last meeting November 15, 2022 (11.15.22.) The motion was passed on a voice vote.

Reports:

Treasurer Report: by Peter Tomasi

- Two project payments have been made and the current balance as of the meeting date (1.24.23) is \$12,114.31 in checking and \$1000.46 in the savings account. Total \$13,114.77.
- Peter negotiated the return of the credit card machine and retained the Elavon service. We can now accept credit card payments using a laptop computer and Elavon's website.
- Annual Report has been filed with the State of NJ, as required, to retain verified corporation and nonprofit corp status in NJ.
- IRS 990 N form will be completed and filed later this month.
- Lakeland Bank provided a grant of \$750 in 2021. Peter has composed a letter to Lakeland requesting a donation of \$1,000 this year (2023.) He will follow up on this request. A question was asked by a member: Were there any conditions on how MGAPC could spend the money granted in 2021? The answer was: No, there were no conditions and by the way the money was put towards the shed at the High Tunnel.

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Membership Report: Jo-Ann Pituch reports everything is going okay. And she is waiting on a few people to pay their membership fees.

8:25 PM Project Leaders:

Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum - FOLA

Lourdes Osorio shared that walking tours start Thursdays at 9am

They are gearing up for the Plant Sale on the weekend before Mother's Day (the weekend of May 6th.) They are taking pre-orders for native plants.

In progress: Planning a host table for the Earth Day program with Katie.

New Jersey Botanical Garden - NJBG Skylands

Darlene Nowak expressed excitement for the Woodland walks and wildflower garden.

Clean up to begin mid-March and they generally meet on Wednesdays.

Spring flowers have already started blooming (!)

Green Times

Anne Reyna requested ideas and articles to be emailed to her at areyna888mg@outlook.com

Submission Deadlines listed in meeting agenda:

February 10, March 10, April 7, May 5, and June 9

Also noted in the meeting agenda: Send Master Gardener email communications to Kamala Anupindi at konukamala@gmail.com

NJBG Skylands

Ken Merz welcomes volunteers for approaching Earth Day Program

Spring wreath making on March 21, 2023 - wreaths will have grapevine backings.

They are awaiting estimates from engineers on the Carriage House renovation.

And Ken celebrated the "fabulous" holiday open house. It was "well attended" and they netted \$17,000.

RCE Highland Tunnel

Maureen Alexx spoke of the good progress raising seedlings and working on the shed.

They are giving some of what is grown to the food bank in Patterson, NJ.

She shared how helpful the staff at Preakness Valley Golf course has been this winter.

Please volunteer Thursdays 10am - noon

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Report with Program Associate II Cecilia Diaz

- Cecilia wished everyone a Happy New Year! And repeated the request for High Tunnel volunteers.
- The MGAPC helpline is now open and members are invited to take some of the new helpline business cards to post at local businesses and pass out to friends and neighbors.
- 2023 projects have been approved by Cecilia but the board meeting to review the budget had to be rescheduled.
- Quick mention of a new project led by Anne for a memorial garden in Little Falls that plans to meet in March and start in June 2023.
- She thanked Joe and Maureen for their work at the High Tunnel and reminded the group of the Morris Canal and Clifton Library Main Memorial projects.
- Cecilia described a Continuing Education opportunity: Monmouth County Coffee Sessions which is listed in the Green Times. It will be 1hr long and remote attendance.
- Quick reference to an Annual Community garden event March 4th (Saturday) which will be 6 credits.

After reports Cecilia shared that she will be leaving her position at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension to relocate to Puerto Rico to start a farm focusing on tourism and education! They will begin by raising goats to clear land and as the farm advances they will work with schools on a farm to schools program.

The first pass of interviews for the community health position has begun and Amy will fill in for Cecilia until the position has been filled.

Cecilia has been the Master Gardener Coordinator for 4 years. Pete & Sara shared warm regards, saying how wonderful it has been to work with her, and remembering that they all started at the MGAPC at the same time. The group gave her a standing ovation - Thank you Cecilia!

Next week/First week of February, the Annual Report will be released.
MGAPC has volunteered 8,000 hours

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Janet Rekesius and seconded by Jo-Ann Pituch. The motion passed on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.