Garden Club of Ramsey County
Board Meeting Minutes
September 2, 2025
Meeting held at Mississippi Market
1500 7th Street West, St. Paul, Mn.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Co-President Marji Toensing.

Members Present:

Jodie Carlson, Co-President
Marji Toensing, Co-President
Mary Wolff, Vice President
Laurel Watt, Co-Treasurer
Brenda Severson, Secretary
Sue Stein, Immediate Past President
Sharon Satnik, Education Co-Chair
Denise Joyce, Director
Julie Hally, Director
Leslie Mercer, Plant Sale Chair
Sue Klevan, Hospitality Chair
Nicole Groenke, Member Communication
Beth Ritchie, Membership

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the May 6, 2025 meeting reviewed. No corrections. Approved by General consent.

NOMINATIONS – Sue Stein

Awards Committee Chair – Jodie will ask Marge Isom, the present Chair for recommendations. Jodie will be responsible for finding someone to fill this chair. If she is unable to do so, she will assume the Chair position by default.

Hospitality Chair – See attachment *Proposal for changes to Hospitality.*

This changed format will also provide an opportunity for less active club members to participate without a long-term commitment.

Sue ~~Kleven~~ Klevan will remain chair for this upcoming year.

Sue ~~Kleven~~ Klevan will present the Hospitality changes to the club membership at the September meeting.

Sue ~~Kleven~~ Klevan will send around a signup sheet for the entire year at the September meeting.

Garden Party Chair – Nancy Berry will continue as co-chair for next year.

At the September meeting a request for another member to co-chair with Nancy will be put forth.

General Director – Julie Hally will continue on for 2026.

Directory – Karen Van Norman will not be continuing in this position. She has offered a proposal for an online directory. See attachment.

Discussion:

- Nicole brought up security concerns regarding members addresses being on the website. Many agreed they did not want their addresses available to the public.
- A printed directory is a handy reference for phone numbers and addresses.
- It was agreed that there are items in the directory that could be omitted and made available online, such as the bylaws.
- Marji has helped Karen put the directory together and reports it is very time consuming to gather membership and speaker information.
- Laurel questions what other clubs do for directories. Also suggests if we do a stream lined printed version, perhaps a larger version could be printed every so many years.

Plan:

1. At the September meeting Laurel will explain the proposed directory change. She will ask if any members have the skill set, interest and/ or software to do the directory.
2. Plan on doing a scaled down version of the Directory for 2026.
3. Committee consisting of Laurel Watt, Brenda Severson, Sue Stein and Sharon Satnik will meet to review the present directory and identify what items could be online viewing only and removed from the directory. This information will be presented at the December Board meeting.
4. Any Board member who knows someone in another garden club will check what they do for their directory and have this information available for the December Board meeting.

PLANT SALE PROPOSAL – Sue Klevan

Sue presented a proposal for the 2025 plant sale. See attachment.
Leslie Mercer, Sue Klevan, Denise Joyce, Laurel Watt and Brenda Severson organized the sale this year and will continue for next year. They have been meeting to review and make plans for next year. Sue Klevan will be the 2026 Plant Sale Chair.
Motion by Brenda to accept the proposal as written and to follow the UMN Extension guidelines for plant sales. 2nd by Jodie Carlson. All in favor, motion passes.

Plan:
There will be education for our club members on the proper technique to prepare plants for the sale.
Sue Stein will ask a member of the Dakota County Master Gardeners Club to demonstrate the proper way to dig and wash the plant roots. Their club has continued to sell plants from their gardens following the guidelines for jumping worms.
Information about jumping worms will be available at the sale.
There will be signs at the sale informing the public what safety measures have been taken when digging plants for the sale.
Much more information will be coming.

AUDIT

See attached 2024 audit completed by Kurt Klussendorf.
Audit reviewed.
Motion by Leslie Mercer to accept the audit as written. 2nd by Denise Joyce. All approved.
Motion passes.
Marji will place a copy of the audit on each table at the September meeting for all members to review.

EXPENSES

Recent expenses reviewed. All have been paid.
$335 in 2025 budget for these expenses. It's $120.73 over budget.

- Zoom renewed for one year, $140.55
  Website platform renewed for one year, $131.88.
  Web domain renewed for one year, $25.
  Batteries for PA equipment, $35.

  When the budget is decided, price increases are not known.
  Plan: Will increase budget next year.

- Founders event budgeted for $250 and came in under budget.
  Pictures of the event will be presented to Barb Meyer and Jerry and Lee Shannon at the September Club meeting.
  Mary Wolff will call Shannon's and arrange transportation for them if needed.

- Mississippi Market meeting room rental for Board meeting, $25 plus cost of refreshments.
  Plan: At the December Board meeting will discuss adding site rental into the budget.

PLANT SALE RECAP- Leslie Mercer and Laurel Watt
Laurel presented a financial recap for the sale. See attachment.
We made less than last year but we did meet our budgeted incomed.

- We bought more plants this year.
- Will not offer plants from Wagners next year. Orders are down and there is a hefty delivery fee. If extra plants ordered for the sale do not sell prior to the end of sale discount, we lose money.
- A lot of plants were bought by club members, especially when they went half price.
- There was no way to track specific plant sales, especially when prices went half price.
- Seedlings started by Club members and offered at the sale are the money earners.
  Need to get more members to grow plants.
- A little over 300 tomatoes at the sale, a little over 100 left. Will scale down number next year and be strategic about varieties.
- Offering perennials from members gardens will also be no expense to the club.

Plan:
- Laurel would like to demonstrate to the club that very little equipment is needed to start plants.

CHANGING MEETING SCHEDULE
Jodie reported some Club members have asked if the social hour could be moved to 6:30pm followed by Business at 7pm and Speaker at 7:30pm. This would allow those unable to get there by 6:30pm to still get in on the business meeting.
Keeping the Business meeting at 6:30, then Social and Speaker breaks up how long a person has to sit. If the Business meeting goes over and into the social time it doesn't impact the Speaker at 7:30pm.

The meeting schedule will remain unchanged.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Beth Ritchie and Sue Stein
Two main questions were posed.
1. How best to track new members.
   - Presently once a new member joins the information is sent to multiple people to be recorded for different reasons. An online information entry system that could be linked to all parties would stream line this system.
2. Does the Board want a membership goal? Laurel suggested the goal should be to nurture new members.
   - Introduce them at meeting.
   - Beth suggested a gift bag. This will be budgeted for next year.
   - Look for members with a butterfly on their nametag, this denotes they are new to the club.
   - When a new member indicates interest in becoming more involved, notify Beth or Sue.
   - Solicit new members - hand out bookmarks to friends and neighbors with an interest in gardening.
   - Future idea: a lawn sign indicating membership in GCRC. Include contact information, web site, etc.

2ND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT – Will be deferred to the December meeting due to Martha Rhodes absence.

READ ONLY ACCESS TO EDUCATION SPREADSHEET – Sharon Satnik

Sharon explained this is an online form containing all the information about scheduled speakers for the Club meetings. This form is owned by a former Education chair and Sharon had to be granted access to it. Sharon would like this form to be available to Board members for when questions about speakers comes up.

She also asks that prior to someone becoming Chair of Education they be trained in all duties required for this position.

Plan:

1. At the next Club meeting recruit for committee members who will then step into Chair position later.
2. Nicole will work with Sharon on how to upload and share this Google document. They will then create a read-only link for the Board.

JAN HOHN REQUEST FOR DONATION

This agenda item will be tabled. Jan not present to fully explain her request.

Motion by Jodie Carlson to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Julie Hally. All in favor. Motion passes.
Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Severson, Secretary