

Official Minutes of the August 7, 2010 Meeting

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
TEXAS MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATIONS, INC.**

**The following officers were present:**

President, Lonnie Matthew; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Homer Babbitt; Treasurer, Chris Oefinger; Secretary, Diane Bush; Past President, Doug Quicksall

**Directors/Alternates from the following associations were present:**

Aransas/San Patricio, Bell, Bexar, Brazoria, Brazos, Collin, Comal, Dallas, Ector/Midland, Ellis, Fayette, Fort Bend, Galveston, Guadalupe, Harris, Hood, Jefferson, Johnson, McLennan, Montague, Parker, Rusk, Somervell, Smith, Tarrant, Travis, Victoria, Walker, Wichita, Williamson, and Wood counties.

**Guest from the following associations also attended:**

Aransas/San Patricio, Bell, Brazos, Dallas, Cherokee, Denton, Ellis, Galveston, Guadalupe, Johnson, Tarrant, Victoria.

**Call to Order:**

President Lonnie Matthew called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending. George J. Ammermann, Guadalupe County, then gave the invocation and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Review and Approval of April 8, 2010 Meeting Minutes:**

President Lonnie Matthew advised those in attendance that some copies of the unofficial minutes from the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 meeting were available for anyone who had not had an opportunity to review the minutes on the TMGA website. Secretary, Diane Bush, Angelina County, asked if there were any problems or questions or changes to the minutes. Two delegates from Ector/Midland County were left out of the unofficial minutes as Directors/Alternates and Guest as well. Also, McCulloch and Somervell County were misspelled and Jackie Murray first name was incorrect and should have been Kathy Murray. Chris Oefinger last name was incorrectly typed with an L. These have now all been corrected.

After discussing the minutes, President Lonnie Matthew brought up the problem that Diane has not received updated rosters from several counties. She displayed on the board the counties that have not submitted updated rosters. They are as follows: Anderson, Aransas/San Patricio, Austin, Blanco, Burnet, Cameron, Cooke, Erath, Fannin, Gregg, Harris, Henderson, Hidalgo, Hopkins, Hunt, Jackson, Kaufman, Liberty, Rusk, San Saba, Tarrant, Tom Green, and Victoria.

President Lonnie Matthew ask that the ones that have not been updated to please get with Diane and get these updated or email to Diane at [dyanb@suddenlink.net](mailto:dyanb@suddenlink.net)

### **Treasurer's Report – Chris Oefinger**

President Lonnie Matthew introduced Chris Oefinger. Chris presented copies of the financial report. Chris said that in the last 10 days, we have exceeded our expectation on dues. We are looking at \$11,080.00 and we actually collected \$12,024.00. We are a little over on our expenses but we are under in other areas so we are in pretty good shape. Our cash balance as of July 31<sup>st</sup> is \$27,926.34. He feels we have budgeted where we need to be.

President Lonnie Matthew asked for motion to approve the minutes as corrected and approve the treasurer's report. Donna Hagar, Somervell County made motion to approve and Kathy Murray, Hood County seconded the motion and all approved.

### **Resignation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Doris Rogers**

President Lonnie Matthew announced that our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President has resigned due to personal reasons. We have decided that since we have today's meeting and one more after today and that there is no provision in our By-Laws to have a special election, we are just going to continue as is without a 2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.

### **Duties of the Nominating Committee**

President Lonnie Matthew read the duties of the Nominating Committee. She said that the Nominating Committee is the hardest working committee that we have. They work all year long and many of you have been ask to serve on these positions and many of you tell them no, which means they have to go find somebody else. So what they do is announce the need for open positions at the April meeting; they submit articles to the newsletter editor; they obtain applications, or resume from individuals that they have identified; they obtain references; they meet with committee members to decide on the nominations and then they present the slate to all of you. You noticed that Fran Amuny, Jefferson County, and Ila Jean Carothers, McLennan County, worked the front desk talking with you about filling some of these elected positions as well as committees.

President Lonnie Matthew introduced Fran Amuny, Jefferson County to present the slate of officers that the committee has worked very hard to get for us.

Fran Amuny, Jefferson County presented Homer Babbitt as next year's President, Chris Oefinger as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Ginger Bason will be 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Treasurer will be Donna Hagar, and Secretary, Diane Bush. Fran went on to say that we will open up the floor at the December meeting.

President Lonnie Matthew said that today we are asking from the floor if there are any nominations at this time. There being none, President, Lonnie Matthew said that the Nominating Committee must have done a good job.

### **Report from Glen Rose 2011 Annual Meeting Co-Chair – Donna Hagar**

President Lonnie Matthew introduced Donna Hagar, Somervell County, to discuss the 2011 Annual Conference. Donna Hagar's partner working with her on this convention, Doug Richards who was not able to attend today's meeting due to health reasons. Donna said that the next year's convention will be held in Glen Rose and it is a joint conference with Hood and Somervell County. Donna gave us a brief overview of the conference. It will be a three day conference, starting Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> through Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. The first day, they will have sessions and tours and the evening reception will be at the Granbury Convention Center located on Lake Granbury and then on to the Granbury Square where there will be music and wine tasting. There will be tours on all three days, with various garden tours, wholesale nurseries and Master Gardening home tours. Information is already on their website. There are a couple of videos on the website that will tell you more about the conference. Educational sessions will be all three days. This is a good opportunity to get your educational hours. The Specialist JMG luncheon will be on Thursday. Awards dinner will be that night in the Rodeo Arena. We have Paul James, HGTV Gardener Guy as our keynote speaker. The dinner will be an authentic chuck wagon dinner. Donna went on to say that they have developed an on-line registration form and it will make it so much easier for the Master Gardener and they will be accepting on-line either by credit card or PayPal, so it will be instantaneous. If you don't want to pay by credit card, you can register on-line and send them a check. For those who do not have internet access, we encourage you to partner up with someone that does, or possibly through your extension office. The price for the entire conference is only \$155.00. For one day (Thursday), the price is \$135.00. The website for the conference is [www.2011tmgconference.org](http://www.2011tmgconference.org). You can input your email here and they will update us on anything new or if you have a question. Online registration should be available in October.

Donna discussed hotel accommodations for the conference. She said that they have five chain hotels that they have rooms blocked specifically for the Master Gardeners. The Best Western (directly across the street from the convention center), LaQuinta, Holiday Inn, Comfort Inn, and America's Best Value in Glen Rose. Also, there are Bed and Breakfasts and Granbury is just 15 minutes away and they have lots of hotels and they have rooms blocked there as well. When you are ready to make your reservation, be sure and tell them that you are a Master Gardener. All of this information is on the website along with their phone numbers.

### **Report from Newsletter Editor – Donna Hagar**

President Lonnie Matthew asked Donna Hagar to speak about the newsletter. Donna said that the newsletter is going strong. We still have many associations that have not updated

their rosters. Donna encouraged the Directors to go back to their counties and encourage whoever keeps track of the rosters to please forward rosters so that everyone can take advantage of the newsletter. Donna encouraged everyone to sign up for the newsletter. Newsletter email address is: [tmga.news@gmail.com](mailto:tmga.news@gmail.com). Donna will be working closely with MiChal Hall, our new website coordinator and making sure that everything is being taken care of between the newsletter and the website.

### **Presentation of New Website by MiChal Hall**

President Lonnie Matthew introduced MiChal Hall, Brazos County, our new website coordinator. President Lonnie Matthew encouraged the audience to ask questions and suggestions that we may have regarding the new webpage. MiChal asked the audience what we liked about the old website. Some of the answers were, they liked the calendar (posting county events), the specialist list (where you can obtain someone from another county), the rosters seem to be more beneficial, access to county agents. MiChal asked the group what they did not like about the new website. The response was; finding what you want, group organizations, how to pay dues, how to turn in rosters, specialist reimbursements, member's only section, i.e. forms. MiChal discussed what to expect on the new website. Initially she is trying to make this as an informational point, i.e.; Information on how to become a Master Gardener; what it is and how to sign up. It will be a central information point for all Master Gardeners. Intent is not to funnel county information. It will feed them to the county but not unless it applies to the entire state. We have a lot of information you can see associated by county. It will have all the links by county names and it will feed to the county website. The new website will have a search key function, contacts for members, and information that would be of interest to Master Gardeners. It will also contain By-Laws, agendas, information on 501C, and provide links at the county level. If there are any questions or suggestions regarding the new website you may contact Jayla Fry. The audience applauded her for taking on this task. The new website address is: [www.txmg.org](http://www.txmg.org). The new website is still in the refinement process.

### **New Business**

President Lonnie Matthew brought up one of the comments on the survey that George Ammermann conducted was the fact that for all practical purposes, we only have two Board of Director's meetings a year. The meeting at the state conference is usually abbreviated. We've discussed having an additional meeting sometime in February or March because April is our conference. Dick Coupe, Dallas County moved that we add another Board of Director's meeting to the yearly schedule and George Ammermann amended the motion that the meeting be held the first quarter of the year. The motion carried to add another meeting in the first quarter of the year.

### **SURVEY RESULTS**

President Lonnie Matthew said that the Survey Results revealed that the audience liked the attorney who came and spoke to us last year. President Lonnie Matthew asked the audience if we preferred a speaker to speak to us regarding association business rather than gardening or plant related. Susan Young, Travis County made motion to add

association business speakers to speak to us directly related to association business. Barbara Brown, Brazoria County seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Lonnie Matthew asked if there were items that we need to be aware of. Barbara Lutz, Bexar County said that since there were 27 counties late on their dues, she suggested to put in the By-Laws that the President or someone to notify them by mail or email regarding the dues. Chris Oefinger said that there was a reminder in this year's newsletter including details and when dues need to be paid. Chris also pointed out that he had contacted many of the organizations by phone to remind them that dues were due. He went on to say that we don't have all contact information. President Lonnie Matthew said that is why we need updated rosters so we will know who to contact.

### **BY-LAW CHANGES**

President Lonnie Matthew presented the following draft recommendations for By-Law changes. The final recommendations will be distributed to the Directors prior to the December meeting when the vote will be taken.

### **ARTICLE VIII – OFFICERS DUTIES**

The Officers of the Corporation and their duties shall be:

1. President (No change)
2. First Vice-President  
Remove:  
Develop a Long Range plan to include alternate funding for the Corporation.  
Add:
  - A. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President
  - B. No change
  - C. Strategic planning
  - D. Chair of the By-Laws Committee
3. Second Vice-President  
Remove:  
Be chairman of the By-Laws Committee  
Be advisor to the Program Committee  
Add:
  - A. No Change
  - B. Member of the Awards Committee
  - C. Co-chair of the Outreach Committee

4. Secretary  
Add:
  - E. Maintain record of members' contact information including email, and establish procedures for dissemination of rosters and general information to the membership. The Officers of the Corporation shall approve these procedures.
5. Treasurer  
Add:
  - J. Furnish a list of Associations "in good standing" to the Awards Committee and Nominating Committee.
  - K. Timely file IRS Form 990 annually
  - L. Co-chair Tax Advisory Committee

President Lonnie Matthews said that we have created a new committee. It will be called Tax Advisory Committee. We decided that Wayne Rhoden, Williamson County needed a back up. The Treasurer will back him up. They will be your resource to make sure that your 990's are filed because the IRS are beginning to crack down on non-profit organizations.

6. Past President  
Add:
  - A. Member of Nomination committee
  - B. Serve on ad hoc committees at President's discretion.
  - C. Advisor to President

Discussion regarding past President is not currently stated in By-laws as being an officer with voting privileges, therefore, stating duties is inappropriate. Lonnie stated this would obviously need to return to committee. Discussions tabled.

## **Article IX – Committees**

### **Section 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS**

Remove:

- A. The President will appoint all Committee Chairs.

Add:

- A. The President will appoint all Committee Chairs for a period of one year.

President Lonnie Matthew said that we will be developing a Policy and Procedures and it will not be a part of the By-Laws

### **SECTION 2. STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. Newsletter Committee
- B. Web Site Committee
- C. Nominating Committee
- D. Audit Committee – we are going to change this to Financial Review Committee
- E. Awards Committee

- F. Outreach Committee
- G. Tax Advisory (Add)

## **REPORT FROM MG COORDINATOR – JAYLA FRY**

Jayla Fry read a written prepared statement to the group. It read as follows:

“You are probably all aware that there is a critical time with budget cuts, and loss of staff. Some of you may have been directly affected by losing your Master Gardener Coordinator. Because of these changes, the need for support for volunteers is greater than ever, as always you are extremely important and it is important to understand what you do as a volunteer in your roles and responsibilities and the role and have respect in the direction for your county program coordinator. Our goal in chartering association is to maintain continuity between Master Gardeners and Master Gardener’s coordinators especially during this transition. There needs to be a greater need for patience, transparency and open communication. There is going to be new folks that come into the organization so this is always a time for turnover and transition with our staff and this may mean that you are going to be working with folks that have no clue about horticulture and they may have a little bit of time with volunteers but we need to be very open to that and to be willing to work with that and my message here today, now more than ever we need to be focused on the Master Gardening Program and to be an advocate for the extension. That’s the bottom line. You guys have done an incredible job and I thank you for your continued support of the Master Gardening Program.” Jayla Fry

President Lonnie Matthew responded to Jayla’s speech stating that when the board met on Friday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, one of the things that we discussed with Doug Welsh is branding the philosophy of AgriLife as a good example for us to think about. Maybe what needs to be discussed, because some of our groups around the state sometimes have difficulty distinguishing between program and the association. President Lonnie Matthew said that she thought about the discussion from Friday’s meeting, and that she is not so sure that it does not need to be on our letterhead for example, like the movie “We are Marshall”. If we wanted to say “We are Extension” because that is who we are, and President Lonnie Matthew admitted that there were many times when she would have liked someone to clarify for her of the difference. What are we doing that didn’t fall under the management guidelines. The fact is, we are the voice of the extension in many situations and we need to be constantly reinforced. President Lonnie Matthew said that she thinks that we get so involved in our association that we forget what our role is, which is the public voice, that helpful part of extension service. President Lonnie Matthew went on to say that we are probably all aware that our agents work their tails off, and she does not see how any of them have a family life because they spend so many hours doing extension business but it is awesome. So, while it is true they need us to reach their goals, we also need them to provide us a pathway to the education and utilize the resources. So it is really important for us to constantly reinforce the fact that “We are

Extension” and we will be discussing this even more in the near future. President Lonnie Matthew went on to say that we agreed at the executive committee to take a more proactive role in this regard and that we need to take advantage of the information that is provided in the TMGA newsletter and it should be emphasized more often. This is the Board of Director’s of the Texas Master Gardening Association and we are an elected representative in our local association on a statewide basis. You have to see the big picture and we have the big picture available to us. The best communication tool is not our newsletter or websites; but all of us going back to your groups where it should be a give and take and listening to your people. This is what you need to be doing is taking the messages back from here to home and encourage. We’ve got a large number of directors that aren’t here. We have a large number of associations that don’t know we exist and certainly don’t know what we are for, and you as Directors are the ambassador because you are the ones that are out there able to talk and share the messages. We are the image of what TMGA is and if you are not happy with something and you don’t talk to us about it, then what kind of message is that sending to everybody else?

Dick Coupe, Dallas County made motion to adjourn and Barbara Lutz, Bexar County second motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:22 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Bush