

Official Minutes of the December 4, 2010 Meeting

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

The following officers were present:

President, Lonnie Matthew; 1st Vice President, Homer Babbitt; Treasurer, Chris Oefinger; Secretary, Diane Bush; Past President, Doug Quicksall.

Directors/Alternates from the following associations were present:

Bell, Bexar, Bluebonnet, Brazos, Collin, Comal, Dallas, Ector/Midland, Fort Bend, Galveston, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hood, Jefferson, Johnson, Leon, McLennan, Montague, Parker, Rusk, Somervell, Tarrant, Taylor, Travis, Victoria, Walker, Wichita, and Williamson counties.

Guest from the following associations also attended:

Bell, Dallas, Galveston, Hood, Tarrant, Travis, Victoria.

Call to Order:

President Lonnie Matthew called the meeting to order at 11:02 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 August 7, 2010 Meeting Minutes:

Copies of the unofficial minutes from the August 7th, 2010 meeting were available for review and were posted on the TMGA website. President Lonnie Matthew asked if there were any corrections, questions or changes to the minutes. Dick Coupe's last name was misspelled twice in the minutes. The error was noted and the minutes have now been corrected. Motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Chris Oefinger presented the Treasurer's report. The bank balance as of October 31st is \$25,051.84, with estimated additional expenses of about \$1,000 remaining for 2010. The proposed budget for 2011 will be presented for approval at the Director's meeting February 19th, 2011. President Matthew stated that the financial audit has been changed to cover the calendar year, so there will be no audit report today. The audit for 2010 will be presented at the next Director's meeting.

Conference Funding:

President Lonnie Matthew commented about the practice of TMGA providing funds to the hosting county for the Annual Conference. In the past, this has been an unbudgeted item and decided on a year to year basis. President Matthew presented the Executive Committee recommendation that we move this to a budgeted item of \$5,000 per year. Dick Coupe, Dallas County seconded the motion. Discussion followed about availability of funds to maintain the practice in the future. President Matthew stated that funds were sufficient to continue for two to

three years. If funds were insufficient beyond that, an increase in dues of \$1.00 may need to be considered. Motion carried.

2011 Conference:

Donna Hagar, Somervell County and co-chairman of the 2011 State Conference asked us to please help promote the next year's conference. She provided a DVD to share with the local associations and present at their January meetings if possible. 265 people have already signed up for the conference and some of the workshop and tours are starting to fill up. Donna encouraged us to register for this fun event. Their goal is to have 1000 participants.

Presentation by Dr. Doug Welsh:

Dr. Welsh commented about the Texas Master Gardener Program as well as some of the budgetary problems facing Texas AgriLife Extension. Following is a summary of his presentation and comments:

Master Gardener Program:

- Texas is the largest Master Gardener Program in the nation as well as the best in the nation. We have led the way with a lot of things at the nationwide level.
- The slogan to carry back with you is that we are AgriLife Extension. This is a message that we should embrace, because Master Gardeners are the front line of AgriLife Extension.

Budgetary Concerns:

- The state now has a 5% funding reduction. 2010-2011 Biennium resulted in a loss of 90+ positions (included 43 CEA's and 15 Specialist)
- The state 10% Funding Reduction Scenario 2012-2013 Biennium would result in loss of 120-150 positions. These are historically challenging times.

Conflict Concerns:

- Conflicts on-going in 5-6 county Master Gardening programs each year
- 99% of MG's are not involved and about 1% are involved
- In challenging times, conflicts stand out even more as a waste of time, and hurt our reputation

The causes vary due to:

- Personality conflict between MG's or CEA/MG(s)
- CEA or MG(s) not understanding the other's role
- The MG misunderstanding mission/role of Extension
- Individual(s) seeking power
- Master Gardener Association vs. Master Gardener Program

The Program Needs Your Help:

- Be an advocate and protector for the MG Program
- Assist in reducing conflict
- Carry the message: times are tough; we have work to do, no time for conflict, and have fun

- Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Website:

President Matthew said as of right now we do not have a webmaster. Outsourcing is not an option so please go back and ask if there is anyone who could take this position.

Membership Roster:

Homer Babbitt spoke regarding the membership roster. He presented a list of counties that have not turned in their membership rosters for 2010. He asked that Director's take the message back to their counties that we need your updated rosters for 2011. Please send your roster information to TMGA Secretary Diane Bush at dyanb@suddenlink.net. Donna Hagar volunteered to develop a program whereby counties could enter their roster information directly on a website form, so watch for an announcement on this process. The website will also have forms for paying your 2011 dues and completing the annual chartering process.

President Lonnie Matthew said that in the February Director's meeting there will be a Director's training presentation. If you have any questions about your position as a director, please email us. If you are a director, please pass along things that you have experienced, and please invite your new officers to our meetings so they will know what is going on. Next year we are planning on getting more action done.

Bylaw Changes

Proposed changes to the TMGA Bylaws were sent to all Directors on September 27th, 2010. President Matthew asked for a vote on the changes. Kathy Murray made the motion to approve and George Ammermann seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Election of 2011 Officers:

President Lonnie Matthew introduced the slate of officers nominated for 2011:

- Homer Babbitt, President
- Chris Oefinger, 1s Vice President
- Ginger Bason, 2nd Vice President
- Donna Hagar, Treasurer
- Diane Bush, Secretary

Gail Johnson, Gonzales County, moved that the nominees be approved by acclamation. The motion was seconded by Fran Amuny, Jefferson County. Motion carried.

Other Business:

Paul Meredith, Awards Chairman reminded everyone the deadline for submission is January 21 and dues must be received by the Treasurer by March 1, in order to be eligible to win an award. Application can be found at TMG.AWARDS@gmail.com. Also there will be a new awards category and it is for Website Education. The handbook and submission form are on the website.

Chris Oefinger reminded everyone to be sure to have rosters and your county dues in by March 1st. Also, we do not send out invoices as a reminder.

President Matthew thanked Past President, Doug Quicksall for his invaluable resources and for being a great voice of reasoning. She also thanked Homer Babbitt for his help this past year.

President Matthew passed on her gavel to next year's President, Homer Babbitt.

Homer reiterated where we are and where we've been. Education should be our number one goal. The Executive Committee has done a lot of ground work and we have built a solid foundation for the future, with by-law changes, responsibilities for the officers and directors, and committee chairs. Now that we have all the ground work laid, next year 2011, will be the year to implement what we need to do and we will rely largely on you.

Homer said that Doug Welsh gave us sobering news this morning. He also gave us a challenge and he likes a challenge. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. There is a lot of talent in this organization. Get the message and take it back. I would like to leave you with a couple of thoughts. We are not just gardeners, we are Master Gardeners. We are educators and that is the key difference between gardeners and Master Gardeners. Homer recognized Lonnie for her hard work during 2010, and Jayla Fry presented Lonnie with a plaque and thanked her.

Meeting adjourned at 2:19 PM

Respectfully submitted.

Diane Bush

TMGA Secretary