

Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association  
Executive Board Meeting Minutes  
July 10, 2023  
Hybrid Meeting from the Burnet AgriLife Classroom and via Zoom

**Call to Order:**

Terri Winter called the meeting to order at 1:36pm.

**Attendance:** Terri Winter/President, Linda Stoneking/Vice-President, Carolyn Stephens/Past President, Terri Clark/Co-Secretary, Kerry Nyquist/Member at Large, Patti Young/Member at Large

Terri Winter started the meeting with discussion regarding the upcoming renewal of HLMGA's Zoom subscription. HLMGA initially began using Zoom for meetings during COVID as there was no other way to conduct the association's business. We are no longer in that same scenario, and the benefits for some members to be able to attend meetings via Zoom are outweighed by the frustrations experienced on a regular basis during the meetings. Using Zoom has frustrated our speakers, they have to stand completely in front of the laptop otherwise they can't be heard or seen by the people using Zoom. Most speakers move around and engage with the audience and it throws them off track to ask them to move back to the podium. One recent speaker let us know how frustrated and upset the interruptions made her. We don't want to lose our speakers and their presentations. People forget to turn their mics off, which is intrusive and rude to the speakers and attendees, both in person and those trying to listen on Zoom. More often than not, the meetings invariably seem to have an issue with something not working correctly which is distracting and also unprofessional. Feedback from those trying to watch/hear on Zoom is that it is frustrating and they often get little, or nothing out of the speaker presentations or the meetings.

The annual subscription fee is \$150.00.

After much discussion on the benefits Zoom has afforded to those unable to attend the meetings in person, the board ultimately decided that it is their recommendation that it would be in the best interest of HLMGA to NOT renew the subscription to Zoom. Zoom was implemented during COVID, and is no longer necessary for the association to conduct its business. All members joined the association knowing there are monthly meetings to attend. If a member cannot attend a meeting in person they can arrange for another member to take notes for them if the speaker presentation is a topic they are interested in, and the minutes of the business meeting are available on the website. There are many other opportunities to earn AT hours and Volunteer hours as well.

Motion was made, seconded and all were in favor to not renew Zoom subscription in September.

Terri W. will present this recommendation to the membership at July 11, 2023 general business meeting.

Terri W. shared that the membership committee has asked the board to decide an exact ending date of a leave of absence extension request. Christine Landry currently has a leave of absence that was due to her father's medical issues, he has since passed and she is requesting an extension on that leave. Motion was made, seconded and passed to allow her leave of absence extension until January 1, 2024.

The PET committee has received a request from Kelly Tarla to allow 4H to become an approved activity for HLMGA. This would be for 4H activities directly involving horticulture at the Junior High and High school level. The board feels the PET committee needs to make their recommendation to the board after the committee receives Kelly's response regarding a coordinator, and volunteers to help with these activities, etc. There were also concerns about how background checks would be handled for the school district's volunteer requirements, costs involved, etc.

Terri W. will get with PET and also Kelly to verify information on background checks and if HLMGA will incur any costs.

Terri W. gave an update on the 2024 Certification Class. The new Certification Class coordinator is Joan Altobelli, and her co-coordinator is Julie Sartor. The Certification Class committee includes Terri Clark, Lori Whitmire and Rebecca Hewitt.

The certification class application is being updated, with clear information regarding class refunds, hours, etc. A small certification class handbook is also being created.

Mentors cannot mentor unless they are certified.

Marylynn Norman has accepted the position of the Kings Garden coordinator. Hank Rominsky will work closely with her during this transition.

Celia Manlove, 2023 associate, has started working on Grant writing for HLMGA. She will get with David Waldo (The Garden) and Marylynn/Hank (Kings Garden) as well.

Kerry suggested she contact Highland Lakes Service League also as they have a grant program.

Carolyn brought up the fall Poinsettia fundraiser as she will need to let the growers know soon. HLMGA is allowed 2 fundraisers per year. Currently it has been the Lawn and Garden Show in the Spring, and the Poinsettia sales in the fall. The Poinsettia sale began during COVID as it could be conducted with limited exposure to others. It was decided to ask membership at the 7/11/23 general meeting if they would like to continue doing the Poinsettia sale or try something different.

Linda Stoneking has only received a few pictures for the new pictorial directory. Terri W. will remind everyone at the 7/11/23 general meeting to get their pictures to Linda by the September meeting.

The next Executive Board meeting will be October 9, 2023.

**Meeting adjourned** at 2:31pm.

Submitted by,  
Terri Clark, Co-Secretary