**Washington County Master Gardener Association**

**Strategic Planning Session**

**Monday, July 23, 2018**

**Attending:**

2018 Board Members: Susan Albright, Marilyn Berti, Marti Farris, Louise Gomez-Burgess, Tim Lanfri, Kathy Nokes, Leslie Ray, Sue Ryburn, Marilynn Turner, Kimberly Culbertson (past-president)

OSU Program: Marcia McIntyre, Weston Miller

WCMGA members: Robin Burnham, Joann Carruthers, Lori Davidson, Deborah Dineen, Helen Dorbolo, Nancy Howarth, Nadine Johnson, Sue Patterson, Larry Schick, Pat Simmons

**Facilitator:** Sandy Japely

**Unable to attend:**

Board Members: Jacki Lindquist, Dave Winchester, Shirley Wolcott

WCMGA Members: Thim Baker, Michael Donoghue

The strategic planning team reviewed the Chapter purpose, data related to the current allocation of financial resources and volunteer hours, WCMGA member survey results, and an analysis of the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as seen from the eyes of the board members. After reviewing the data, the team identified five key priority areas most critical to the future of the organization. The five priority items included:

1. Educating Master Gardeners to respond more effectively and more comfortably to garden inquiries from the public
2. Identifying what the public wants/needs from Master Gardeners and increasing public awareness of what MGs have to offer
3. Increasing intern/veteran MG engagement with the organization
4. Supporting OSU Program activities and initiatives
5. Exploring fundraising activities of interest to WCMGA members and the public and that raise sufficient revenue to maintain an effective organization

Several hundred ideas on how to address the key priority areas were brainstormed. Then five subgroups spent considerable time synthesizing the ideas into logical next steps for implementation action items. The results of those subgroups synthesis follows:

1. **Educating Master Gardeners to respond more effectively and more comfortably to garden inquiries from the public**

(Susan Albright, Sue Ryburn, Nancy Howarth, Nadine Johnson)

1. Create a list of 3-5 key topics that would comprise a continuing education curriculum
2. Identify the expert/curriculum developer(s) for each topic
3. Train the trainers to be effective teachers (adult learning, public speaking/Toastmasters, hands-on, webinar on train the trainers)
4. Other than phones, develop additional avenues for MGs to provide garden-related education to the public (e.g., educational content posted at our gardens)
5. Study buddy
6. Mentors (Intern with Vet)
   1. Phone clinic
   2. Specific topic (e.g., weed id, insects id, plant id)
7. As much as possible, utilize chapter speakers that present topics more directly aligned with MG curriculum and of interest to the public
8. OSU Webinars – group viewing followed by discussion
9. **Identifying what the public wants/needs from Master Gardeners and increasing public awareness of what MGs have to offer**

(Leslie Ray, Weston Miller, Deborah Dineen, Pat Simmons)

1. Cooperate with OSU MG Program and other chapters to identify wants/needs and longer-range planning
2. Identify customer groups - contact 10 “potential partner” organizations/agencies by Dec. 1, 2018, to identify their ideas re: what public needs
3. Use multiple info gathering techniques conduct needs analysis of customers to identify potential Master Gardener role and value -- by Feb 19
4. Assess findings for implication for specific WCMGA plans -- by May 19
5. Present findings and recommendations to WCMGA Board for June 19 meeting
6. By Jan 2020, develop strategies for outreach and community engagement. Include implications for other MG activities e.g. funding, communications, education, etc.

Assumptions:

* It’s bigger than WCMGA! Will team with counties and Metro program
* It’s an iterative process, will develop in short and long term (some beyond 2020)
* “customers”, “agencies”, etc., all = stakeholders

1. **Increasing intern/veteran MG engagement with the organization**

(Louise Gomez-Burgess, Lori Davidson, Marti Farris, Joann Caruthers, Larry Schick)

1. Make the organization/activities more family friendly -- offer 1/3 of all WCMGA activities as family friendly by informing, offering childcare, appropriate windows of time (that don’t conflict with school drop-off/pick-up) and have activities that engage parent/child by 2019 new intern training
2. Establish a 1-1 Mentoring Program during intern training
3. Social/community building activities during and post training
4. Help decrease anxiety for interns by answering volunteer hour questions (or other questions) earlier in training (noontime chats?)
5. Directly ask diverse populations about participating in MG program (what will make people want to stay involved
6. Online forum and Facebook page to increase engagement/foster community among MGs
7. Clearly articulate how our work connects to our core mission
8. **Supporting OSU Program activities and initiatives**

(Tim Lanfri, Marilyn Berti, Kathy Nokes, Marcia McIntyre)

1. Increase financial support of OSU MG Program - Increase by 5% per year over next 3 years. Contribution to Metro MG Program currently 30% of WCMGA budget. Proposed schedule:
   1. Year 1 – 35% Year 2 – 40% Year 3 – 45%

Necessitates strong fundraising

1. Increase WCMGA Program volunteer hours. Currently 40% with goal of 50% in 3 years. Attain through clear, supportive, communications. Educate all MGs of difference between ‘Program’ and ‘Partner’ activities
2. **Exploring fundraising activities of interest to WCMGA members and the public and that raise sufficient revenue to maintain an effective organization**

(Marilynn Turner, Robin Burnham, Helen Dorbolo, Kimberly Culbertson)

1. Current Corporate Givers: Intel

Goal: Double contribution in 3 years from $7K to $14K

Retirees – MGs and non-MGs

Intel involvement in Saturday work parties

1. Customer Directed Corporate Giving

Kroger – increase sign-ups and renewals

Add Amazon Smile

Provide sign up assistance at chapter meetings

1. Corporate Giving Expansion - explore who, how, when
2. Plant Sale – form a committee
3. Individual Giving – explore

Sustaining donation

Bricks in the garden

Stepping stone with handprint day (paw print)

Do not explore charging for MG services or classes