



Washington County Master Gardener™ Association Minutes of December 12, 2025 Board Meeting at Extension Office

Hope Preston, President, called the meeting to order at 10 am.

Attendance: Lisa Barnhart, Nicole Dwigans, Stephanie Engle, Andrea Flint, Deb Hansen, Mary Hewitt, Larina Hoffbeck, Steve Kister, Connie Kirby, Harriet Ottaviano, Hope Preston, Tera Ramsey, Terry Wagner.

REPORTS

Chapter Relations/ Terry Wagner

Terry reviewed the plans for the Members Social to be held on February 14th at the Beaverton City Library. Ron Spental will be honored with the 2026 “*Special Acts Making a Difference*” award at the Social. Terry will coordinate planning with Mary Hewitt, who will be Chapter Relations Director in 2026.

Terry reserved a table for lunch at the “Margarita Factory” for lunch after the meeting. All 2025 and 2026 Board members, and Amy Espinoza, Jenifer Halter and Srijana Shrestha from the Extension Staff attended.

Treasurer/ Connie Kirby

Connie presented the following proposed financial policy statement regarding reimbursement for travel expenses:

“Travel mileage expenses must receive prior approval and may be reimbursed when the total requested amount provides a cost savings or other significant benefit to the association. Reimbursement requests are eligible for travel of 50 miles or more (round trip).”

For example, a member may request mileage reimbursement for delivering materials if the vendor’s delivery charge is equal to or greater than the mileage cost calculated at the current IRS charitable mileage rate, \$0.14/mile.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD- Terry Wagner made a motion to adopt the above proposal and include it in the Chapter’s financial policy. Connie seconded the motion, which was approved by the board.

Programs/Larina Hoffbeck

The 2026 WCMGA Calendar of Public Events is complete and is being distributed.

Larina shared statistics highlighting the participation for several programs offered in 2025. The *Monthly Chapter Speakers Series* attendance exceeded 1000 viewers. Attendance at *In The Garden* classes held at the Learning and Education Gardens, brought in over 500 participants.

Larina noted that more volunteer help is needed to set up and take down for the IGS classes.

The discussion that followed included questions that Nikki raised about communicating with interns to explain the various types of volunteer activities available to interns and how they might become involved.

A group will meet to discuss these questions and plan a method to communicate with the 2026 interns. **Mary Hewitt will contact Hope Preston, Nikki Dwigans, Andrea Flint, Stephanie Engle and Amy Espinoza to set up a meeting in January.**

Communications/ Steve Kister

Steve is working with Nikki Dwigans, Communications Director, 2026-2028, to share information about publishing *Chapter Chat* beginning in January 2026. The Board thanked Steve for publishing *Chapter Chat* during the 2023-2025 term. Nikki set a December 26th deadline to contribute to the January 2026 *Chapter Chat*.

Fundraising- Lisa Barnhart

Lisa submitted an article in the December Chapter Chat that listed the specific needs for leadership for the GardenFest 2026 plant sale.

Andrea volunteered to work with wholesalers.

Lisa will also advertise for more volunteers at the February Social .

Bottle Drop report: \$1000 recently earned. \$1700 is the total earned for this year

Publicity/Harriet Ottaviano

The Oregonian made the following statement regarding publicity of home garden events:

“ In the spring we may consider developing an AI tool that would help us produce this (Homes and Gardens) calendar. If that happens, we'll regularly check your website for updates. Meanwhile, keep us posted if you all organize any larger events that we should know about for general interest calendars and take advantage of our paid advertising options.”

Mary Oakes will take on the position of Director of Publicity in January. Harriet will work with Mary during the transition.

Business/ Stephanie Engle

The annual equipment inventory is almost finished. Hope worked with Larry Schick to review unused A/V equipment. Since the A/V equipment is no longer used, Larry will sell what he can and donate the rest to a non-profit organization.

The records retention work group has met once and will meet again on December 16. After finalizing the structure for records retention, the work group will make sure that the required documents are in OneDrive. Stephanie asked if there was a date in time that the Board approved moving to keeping electronic records. No date was decided. The work group will continue to update the Board on its progress.

Vice President/ Tera Ramsey

- **Strategic planning:** Tera and Hope have been meeting with representatives of the tri county Master Gardener chapters, to share information about developing strategic plans.
- The WCMGA strategic planning committee is choosing survey questions to present to members. The committee is also determining which members will complete the survey.
- Each leader/board member within WCMGA may review the strategic plan with respect to their job responsibilities.
- The Video ads committee met. Each member accepted a goal.
- A future meeting with Leeann Lochner may instruct the committee on how OSU uses video ads.

OMGA/Deb Hansen

- A recent meeting discussed the possibility of reevaluating the term length of the OMGA strategic plan.
- A letter-writing campaign will be initiated regarding state funding of Extension. The Oregon state legislature proposes 7.1% cuts to OSU Statewide Public Service Programs. Hope will forward to Board members, the letter from the Co-Chairs of the Ways and Means Committee that addresses the letter- writing campaign.
- The *Seed to Supper* program is officially operating as a statewide MG program. A Zoom meeting will present the program. There will be new materials for the program.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- End of year reports- Hope has received the information needed to write State of The Chapter.
- Membership renewal status- As of the previous month, 40 members had renewed. Connie estimates that 70 to 80 members have renewed for 2026. The 2025 Directory lists 151 members.
- Jean Natter- Leann Lochner has information about Jean Natter's accomplishments and service. Jean's family has contributed to Garden Ecology Lab. Hope will forward the e mail from Leann and Brooke. In January the board will discuss contributing to the Garden Ecology Lab in Jean's memory.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am

Respectfully submitted by Mary Hewitt, WCMGA Recording Secretary

Approved by: Hope Preston, WCMGA Chapter President, December 18, 2025

