

RGC Board Meeting

Aug. 15, 2019

Lancaster Community Library

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by President Mary Hutya at 1:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present:

Mary Hutya, President
Deborah Burgess, 1st Vice President
Carol Clark, 2nd Vice President
Bonnie Schaschek, Treasurer
Catherine Brincefield, Recording Secretary
Francie Huggins, Historian
Deborah Brooks, Chairman, Membership
Helen Johnson, Parliamentarian
Margie Redlin, Corresponding Secretary
Guests: Jenny Boyenga

Members Absent:

Judy Burlbaugh, Chairman, Horticulture
Cathie Elliott, Chairman, Judges and Artistic Design
Joan Eremenko, Chaplain
Mary Ann McKay, Chairman, Youth Cmte.
Susan Edmonds, Chairman, Hostess Comm.

President's Report: Minutes of the prior meeting were presented. **Motion** was made and seconded to accept the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Communications: Carol Clark, website manager, asked that all documents and in particular, the minutes be submitted to her in PDF format for the website.

Membership: A member raised a question concerning Junior Membership and whether a current junior member should be removed as a member due to a lack of paid dues and a lack of attending meetings. It was clarified to the board that the "Youth Member" is an honorary membership, and doesn't have to pay dues. Attendance was prohibitive because the young person was attending school during the times of regular meetings for the club. It was pointed out by a member that most clubs accept members as young as 9 y. o., and that having young members encourages them to become adult members of a garden club. A membership classification for Youth Member should be discussed in a future meeting of the board. The president stated she will tell the membership about the Youth Member discussion. The matter was tabled for a later discussion.

Finance: Chair Bonnie Schaschek stated the club will offer display cards for sale. A box of 100 cards will cost \$5 in order to mirror the practices of the NGC.

Ways and Means: In the absence of a Chairperson, Margie Redlin made the report. The Irvington Car Boot Sale was discussed. The club will set up a display on August 31st to participate in the sale. So far volunteers are Margie Redlin, Marsha Robison, Debbie Burgess, Mary Hutya, Helen Johnson and Jenny Boyenga. Although it was originally planned to offer plants and baked goods for sale, Irvington Town officials told the Club they believe that the Farmer's Market in town would be a better venue for the Club to sell plants and baked goods. Debbie Burgess wants to sell arrangements with dried okra plant, and individual stems of dried okra. The board's opinion was that dried plant material was acceptable. As a non-profit, the club will not have to pay for a booth space

By-Laws

Club By-Laws were written when membership was much larger than it currently is. It was decided a review of the By-Laws to ensure their requirements are in line with current member numbers was advisable. Further, it was felt since reduced member numbers are affecting committee participation and other activities, the possibility of combining some activities and streamlining the By-Laws to reflect today's realities was desirable.

A. Article VI regarding Meetings and Quorum

The question was asked, should the voting quorum for club meetings be changed to a percentage of the total number of active and associate members? Currently the by-laws state "a quorum shall be 23 active and associate members . . ." The club's decline in membership makes it difficult to have that many voting members at each meeting. Former President Schaschek reminded the Board that NGC rules require 2/3 of all members to vote in order to change By-Laws.

The suggestion was made and accepted that any change in the quorum requirement for membership votes should also apply to board meeting votes. It was suggested that either 2/3^{rds} of members or 51% of the members be adopted as the quorum requirement.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to change the By-Laws to set the quorum requirement for general meetings at 51% of active and associate members attending the meetings. Further, it was moved the same percentage of 51% of Board members be established as the quorum requirement to pass motions at Board meetings. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Article III--Membership

A discussion was held as to whether some of the club's By-Law requirements were affecting the club's ability to recruit and retain members. Generally, it was felt this was the case. Times have changed since the by-laws were written and it was the opinion of the

group that some changes would be in the best interest of the club to make the by-laws more “member friendly.”

1. Active Members

Bullet point 2-- Club Participation

Motion: It was moved and seconded to change the wording of Bullet Point 2 from “actively participate. . .” to “participate in the activities of the Club”.
Motion passed unanimously.

Bullet point 3—Re Meeting Attendance

Bullet point 3 currently reads: attend meetings unless there is a valid reason

Motion: It was moved and seconded to change the wording to remove “unless there is a valid reason”. Motion passed unanimously.

Bullet point 5—Re Exhibit Horticulture

Bullet point 5 currently reads: exhibit horticulture and/or design at a minimum of two meetings a year.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to change the wording to “Try to exhibit horticulture and/or artistic design at a minimum of 2 meetings per year”. Motion passed unanimously.

Bullet Point 11--Re Number of Active Members

Based on recent membership losses, NGC is now a “small” club based on our membership size. We have been competing with “medium” size clubs who have more resources than we do for grants and awards. Lowering our membership cap to more accurately reflect our member numbers allows us to compete against other small clubs increasing our chances of winning.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to change the maximum number of active members from 89 to 69. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Section 2—Eligibility and Acceptance Letter of Recommendation

Some potential members, don’t know any club members and have no Sponsor. This makes it difficult for the new member to have a Letter of Recommendation.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to remove the Letter of Recommendation requirement for new members. Motion passed unanimously.

Member in Good Standing

The group discussed the definition of “member in good standing” phrase used in By-laws. It was decided this discussion will require more time than was available to reach an agreement. Board will review the definition of this at a later date.

C. Article VIII Committees and Duties

Blue Star Memorial & Free Health Clinic Gardens

Motion: It was moved and seconded to combine the Blue Star Memorial and Free Health Clinic Gardens into one committee called “Community Gardens Committee”. Motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Committee

This committee has been inactive for some time. Currently, no one has signed up to serve on it. It was thought that if something arises this committee might handle, the Horticulture & Food Gardens Committee can handle it.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to eliminate the Conservation Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

Flower Power Committee

This committee has been inactive since changes at the hospital eliminated the primary purpose of the committee. Additionally, the Board cut this committee out of the budget two years ago.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to eliminate the Flower Power Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

Community Activities

This group is listed on the committee member signup sheet and is shown as having charge of the Festival of the Trees. It is not, however, an official committee. Cathie Elliott and Debbie Burgess have participated in this activity on the Club’s behalf for 4 years. Since this is not an official committee no decision was taken on eliminating it as a standing committee.

Audit Committee

Audit Committee was discussed by Bonnie Schaschek, Treasurer and Finance Chair. No audit has been performed in 6 years. Prior to Bonnie’s tenure as President, the Club used an outside service to perform an audit. The Board never received the results of the audit so the club is behind on audits by approximately 8 years. Bonnie has the Treasurer’s documents from prior Treasurer, Robin Perks, and all the Club’s financial records are on QuickBooks. Checks and deposits are automated. The Club moved all banking functions to Virginia Community Bank (formerly Bank of Lancaster) when Union Bank merged and became Atlantic Union Bank. Our audits only audit the Treasurer’s actions with accounts. The Club does not have a checking account requiring dual signatures. The last time an audit was performed it was due to some problems.

Steps were taken and procedures put in place to prevent future problems. They have not reoccurred since the procedures were put into place.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to remove the Audit Committee from the list of standing committee in the By-laws. Motion passed unanimously.

Awards Committee

Motion It was moved and seconded to change the Awards Committee wording to “The Awards Committee shall select internal club awards as well as eligible awards from District, State, Regional, and . . .” Motion passed unanimously.

Sunshine Committee

Motion: It was moved and seconded to remove the Sunshine Committee from the list of standing committees because the function is handled through the ~~Corresponding~~ Secretary. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Calendar Year

A discussion of the Club switching its calendar year to the same one as District, State, and National, noted that the calendar change does not dictate our meeting dates. Currently the Club holds no meetings in July and August. However we could change that to no meetings in January and February. There was a concern that holding meetings in January and February negatively impacts the exhibit of horticulture and artistic designs. The issue was tabled for later discussion.

D. Program Ideas:

Jenny Boyenga has volunteered to hold workshops at her home for members so they can do more “hands on” designing. Jenny confirmed that she would teach workshop and/or design classes during regular meetings as well. It was suggested that Jenny teach a design style that then would be stipulated a month or two later by the Club as a design style for judging. This would allow the members to either learn a new style or refresh their skills with Jenny’s workshop. The public would be invited to attend workshops. On the days of workshops members will be informed they should bring their own lunch and the club will not provide the typical lunch as at a regular meeting.

The Board discussed a report submitted by Cathie Elliott with her thoughts about ways to gain new members.

1. **Club Brochure**—The Board likes the current brochure style and wants to keep it and have it updated. The suggestion was made to have something to hand out by August 31st for the Boot Sale in Irvington. The timing for the brochure to be updated by then is limited. The communications committee will attempt to have something that can be given to the public at the sale.

2. **Meet and Greet**, and Greeters at the Club—Francie Huggins volunteered to be a greeter for new people coming in unaccompanied to meetings. Having stick-on name tags was recommended for new club prospects. Encouraging members to wear their name tags at meetings was recommended. Holding an event to recruit new members could be accomplished with the workshops taught by Jenny. Meet and Greets were also suggested to be held at the Library or Good Luck Cellars.
3. **Contest**--Having a contest to see who can recruit the most new members was talked about. It was noted existing members should be recruiting without needing a contest. Discussion focused on should we recognize which members brought in new members during the year. No decision reached.
4. **Articles in Rapp Record**—Responding to a suggestion to run more articles in the newspaper, it was noted that the newspaper chooses what it wants to run. We cannot control that unless we put in a paid advertisement.
5. **Making arrangements to put around town**—The Board was enthusiastic about this idea, especially because we have quite a few coffee cups that will be able to be used for the arrangements thereby no one has to provide a container.
6. **Field trips and garden tours**—The question was asked if more field trips would help membership recruitment? It was observed that the club members have shown a lack of enthusiasm for these events. Not enough members have signed up to warrant renting a bus.

Adjournment It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm

Minutes submitted respectfully by Catherine Brincefield, Recording Secretary.