



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

March 5, 2009

8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

***Toledo Botanical Garden
Stables Room***

**- 2009 -
Board of Directors**

Dick Bostdorff
2010

Jeff Creque
2011

Bill Dearing
2010

Bob Dennis
2010

Beth Fausey
2011

Diane Hill
2009

Theresa Hoen
2011

Tony Keil
2009

Walt Krueger
2011

Kirk Mizerek
2010

Neil Reid
2011

Tom Wardell
2009

Kathy Wenz
2009

**Terms Expire End of
Year Indicated**

Meeting called order at 8:05 am

Attendance (14)

Walt Krueger, Neil Reid, Joe Perlaky, Beth Fausey, Dick Bostdorff, Tom Wardell, Serenity Carr, Kirk Mizerek, Paula Ross, Theresa Hoen, Diane Hill, Jeff Creque, Tony Keil & Wade Smith.

Committee Reports:

• Business-

Kirk met with MI growers at their monthly Detroit Flower Growers Board meeting. He asked our members if they would have any opposition to him serving on the MI Board. They had no objections. The MI growers buy their gas on a 5 year plan. Palmer Energy can supply gas for \$1.50 less then what is available to them currently. In Ohio, Columbia Gas is in the process of reclassifying their customer structure. It would put our medium size MVGA users at risk by excluding them from transport discounts. Mark Frye from Palmer Energy will be attending the statewide hearings along with the Farm Bureau. Mark has been asked to speak at the next grower meeting in April regarding this matter.

Walt stated the Business committee is evaluating a proposal brought forth by the native plant growers. The program will be phased in this year to allow time to develop the supply chain and identify retail promotional items such as displays, banners, flyers etc.

• Recycling Update - Paula stated there is little financial incentive for a recycler to participate in a full service recycling program at this time. Reimbursements for plastics have decreased substantially in the last 6 months while the cost of fuel has dramatically increased. Using the county may be an option but there may be a cost associated. Beth suggested the possibility of recycling pots and consumer products for customers. Dick concurred. When he attended a Home & Gardening session there was an interest in homeowners finding pots. Growers might want to start a reuse campaign in which they can donate or sell pots to customers or other non-profit organizations. More on this later.

• Finance & Energy -

- Diane reported that the beginning balance in the MVGA checking account was \$3845.65. There was one payment to Palmer Energy and an insurance payment of \$1200. The ending balance is \$7903.89

- Kirk mentioned that MI associate memberships are \$100. Kirk made a motion for MVGA to pay the \$100 and become an associate member. Walt seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 - Audits/grants- Joe reported that Somik Ghose is finishing the grant audits and will be offering recommendations.
 - The wind turbine presentations were rescheduled and held on February 25th. There were 10 growers in attendance between the 2 meetings. Approximately half of these growers have an interest in applying for the energy grant which if awarded would assist them in the purchase and installation of a turbine on their site.
 - Northcoast Power and Wind is scheduling visits to each site for evaluation. They also assist in the grant assessment and state reporting requirements. Now is an excellent time to consider wind, geothermal, or PV installations.
 - The USDA's REAP grant program disqualifies the majority of Lucas County growers from applying including some growers in contiguous counties. It's likely this will change in 2010.
 - Dick, Walt, and Joe met with Kellermeier Plumbing & Heating Inc. regarding geothermal installation opportunities in the greenhouse industry. Geothermal is a very cost effective way to heat a greenhouse when possible.
 - Joe stated the natural gas pooling model may not be possible to be duplicated in a group medical insurance program. The insurance company and their carriers still need to evaluate each company and employees individually which defeats the purpose of collaboration. There is also no legal mechanism to provide MVGA reimbursement for organizing such a pooling group.
 - Worker's Compensation applications were due in February.
- Marketing Committee:
 - Tom Wardell presented budget totals for EcoTrack, Blade, Buckeye Cable and the Greek Hill.
 - MVGA will be participating in Eco-Track during the months of April-May, October (mums) and Nov. 15th- Dec. 15th (poinsettias). The total cost will be \$17,833. This year's theme will be "Staycation" targeted for people who will stay at home for their vacation. Viewers will be encouraged to buy local.
 - Website- The website will continue to be updated. Dick suggests a monthly reminder to growers to update their websites.
 - Coupon- MVGA coupons will include space to generate contact information. This allows for easier tracking and to increase each grower's data base.
 - Beth will be assembling a focus group of Master Gardeners and general public volunteers to gain insight about changes in our website and other retail concerns. Paula may organize a garden club forum.
 - MVGA may offer a Web 2.0 education program in the Fall.
 - Newspaper- The Toledo Blade Flight Plan. This advertising opportunity will feature a 1/2 page ad in the Blade. It is hoped enough grower involvement can allow the ad to be run 2 or 3 times. The large ad includes a \$5 off a \$25+ purchase along with text describing a "Stacation" theme. MVGA will assist each participating grower with 25% of their share of advertising costs. There are 14, 2x2 business card size slots available for growers. They are available on a first come first serve base. The growers can elect to upgrade to a larger 2x4 ad if they wish. Each grower spot costs approximately \$357 for a 5 day rotation per week including a Neighbors section placement.
 - Cable- Extra spots may be purchased by individual growers at the same rate as MVGA. We ask that each grower include the MVGA logo in their ad. The cost for the 10 week program is approximately \$3,600.
 - This year's Greek Hill planting costs are ~ \$1,100. The bid was won by Brodbeck Greenhouse.
 - The Home and Garden Remodeling Show will be at the Seagate Center this Friday-Sunday. MVGA will share space with the Master Gardeners. Our banner will be displayed and coupons handed out.
 - MVGA advertising expenses through this spring leaves ~ \$2,500 left in the Marketing budget.
 - Dick Bostdorff made a motion to continue supporting Tom and his work on the marketing budget and recommendations. Tony Keil seconded this motion. Motion passed.

- Education Committee:
 - Beth stated the Education Committee met 2 weeks ago. Their agenda is set for March and April. They will be mailing out a survey that will assess grower interest. The Education Committee will meet again in April after evaluating feedback from the survey. There will be a subdividing of committees by topic. There will also be a workshop for grower employees.
 - Education programs will be developed to engage students at an early age by informing them about the greenhouse industry.
 - There will be a conference being held at UT this spring in which MVGA will participate on a panel discussion focusing on EPA regulations.
 - The ONLA Short-Course Greenhouse Track Committee would like MVGA back to discuss collaborations.
 - There will be a focus group of people assembled that usually do not buy flowers to assess how our marketing efforts can be better be evaluated.

- Government/Public Relations Update-
 - Dick reported on Legislative Days.
 - Neil stated that the Urban Affairs Center has been removed from the 2009-2010 state budget effective July 1ST. Neil will be participating on a statewide conference call with other Urban Affairs Center Directors to find a solution to this issue.
 - OSU Extension staff will be reduced by one-fourth on July 1st from 240 to 180 employees.
 - Paula stated that growers need to contact their Congressional representatives to voice their opposition to these cuts.

- Dick recommends that budget proposals from each committee be prepared for our next meeting reflecting next year's grant needs. He also suggests a spending limit of \$500 before committees need approval for their expenditures.

- Neil stated that Greenhouse Management and Production magazine would like for him to write another article on MVGA.

- Presentation – Native Plants
 - Wade Smith of The Daylily Farm reported the Native Plant Group has discussed with both retail and supply chain issues. The group anticipates a "soft" rollout this year.
 - Beth stated that there is an opportunity to apply for grants for planning the native plant program rollout. She is talking to Josh Miller at TBG regarding this potential application.
 - About half dozen retail growers are interested in selling native plants at their locations.
 - There will be a native group presentation at the regular grower meeting on next Thursday.
 - The name of the native group will be the *Maumee Valley Natives*. Decisions regarding their logo, flower, and slogan will be discussed at our regular meeting next week.
 - Walt Krueger made a motion to monitor the progress of Native Plants, and spend no money for now. He encourages MVGA members to work with the native plant group and attend their meetings. The motion was seconded by Beth Fausey. An amendment was made to the motion for MVGA to assist in an advisory role. Wade Smith will be the designated representative. Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:45 am

Minutes submitted by Serenity Carr