



## **MGABC Annual General Meeting**

via Videoconference

Sunday, September 27, 2020

**Final DRAFT Minutes**

**Update: October 5, 2020**

### **Present:**

Mike Juleff, President, Victoria

Karen Bennett, Past President, Vancouver Island

Lynne Christmas, Treasurer, Vancouver

Rachael Fleming, Okanagan Chapter Representative

Carol Salton, Prince George Chapter Representative

Jill Wright, Vancouver Chapter Representative

Chris Southwick, Vancouver Island Chapter Representative

Nancy Willihnganz, Victoria Chapter Representative

Linda Derkach, Acting Secretary, Vancouver Island

There were 152 members present at the start of the Annual Meeting and 121 at the end of the meeting.

**Regrets:** Audrey Baier, Thompson/Shuswap Chapter Representative (computer issues, not able to link into the call)

### **Welcome**

Prior to the Business Meeting of MGABC, Mike welcomed 152 members to our first videoconference. He explained the process of how the call would go and some of the features of Zoom.

### **Educational Presentation**

We thoroughly enjoyed a presentation by Dr. Linda Gilkeson entitled *Growing Veggies: Tips, Techniques and Trouble Shooting*. As always, her presentation was filled with valuable information for those wanting to know more about growing veggies through the fall and winter, as well as how and when to get started in the spring.

## **MGABC Annual General Meeting**

Mike recognized Barry Roberts, a past President of MGABC who passed away in August. Barry worked very hard for MGABC during the formation of the provincial entity. He was an informative and entertaining speaker, and an expert on hydrangeas. He made significant contributions to the organization and spoke on the plants that he loved at many garden clubs on the mainland and Vancouver Island.

### **1. President's Report**

It is certainly my pleasure to welcome everyone to this, the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Master Gardeners Association of British Columbia.

I have had the privilege to be the President of the Association this past year. A year which has certainly had an effect on our personal lives and also on how we carry out our responsibilities as Master Gardeners.

As I mentioned at the start of today's program; this is the largest number of Master Gardeners to attend our AGM, I can recall an occasion when we had to work hard to achieve a quorum of 25 for the meeting!

So what is the MGABC?

If I may; I would like to take this opportunity to answer that question. The MGABC is an affiliation of local Chapters of Master Gardeners, working together to support the delivery of quality education to their members, and to provide environmentally responsible advice to the public.

The Provincial Council of MGABC has a governance role providing a coordinating function for the affiliated chapters, and setting standards for education and membership.

The Provincial Council consists of officers and chapter representatives, all of whom are directors under the *Societies Act of BC*. The President, President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary are elected by the members at the annual general meeting. The chapter representatives are elected or appointed by the affiliated chapters.

MGABC is a registered charity recognized by the Canada Revenue Agency, and as such can receive donations and issue numbered receipts for tax purposes for donations intended for the operations of the council or for the affiliated chapters.

MGABC also purchases third party liability insurance against injury to a member of the public, or damage to property caused by a member of MGABC during approved activities as a Master Gardener.

The Council is also responsible for the maintenance of the MGABC website.

Most importantly the MGABC provides an opportunity for Master Gardeners to share ideas; their successes and sometimes failures from which we all learn.

In a nutshell: “The MGABC is the Chapters; the Chapters are MGABC”.

I would now like to move on to recognising some of the activities that the Council and Chapters have been involved with this year.

First of all I am very pleased that the Council recently approved the new Emeritus/ Alumni Membership category. This will enable us to recognise the efforts of long-standing members as well as have the ongoing benefit of their knowledge; a most important aspect of this policy is that it will allow for the continuation of long time friendships.

Earlier this year I was very happy to be able to participate in a teleconference call initiated by Vancouver Chapter members Aline Burlone and Susan Crawford to discuss the current materials used for the Basic Training Course. All chapters were represented and many experiences were shared. As a result of the meeting it was agreed that each chapter would share information regarding the additional material used during the course. It was also hoped that this initiative will be ongoing. I expect that this will be so.

The Council made the decision last year to reduce the number of in-person meetings it holds to one per year in order to achieve a balanced budget. We were more than successful in meeting this goal, in part due to Covid-19 which meant we haven't met face to face at all this year. Also, due to Covid-19, we have greatly reduced AGM expenses which has enabled us to end the fiscal year with a surplus.

An ongoing discussion at the Council meetings has been with regard to the website. We know that it will be necessary to upgrade the system within the next two years and that there will be costs that will need to be covered. We also recognise that the content and layout of the website needs to be upgraded and improved. We have begun to identify the upgrades that would be beneficial to all Chapters. Margaret Wyeth from VMGA, Cameron Smith from VIMGA and Marina Zarillo from Okanagan have each provided insight into potential changes. We will need to take into account that the website requirements vary between Chapters due to size and also resources available. Where we go from here and how we achieve the improvements will be a priority for the Council this coming year.

As I stated at the beginning of my report Covid-19 has had a great effect on our personal lives and our responsibilities. Some of these effects have been negative; for

example, no clinics, no face to face meetings, reduced education opportunities. But there have been many positive effects. We have found ways to still provide information to the public and also to our membership. We have made our way into the world of ZOOM, at times kicking and screaming, but in the end realising that this may be one of the new ways of doing business, and also realising that we are very capable of developing methods of providing information to each other and the public in a manner that is safe for ourselves and others. We have also been comparing how each Chapter has been dealing with the Volunteer requirements during the pandemic. It will be crucial that any activity that we organise or participate in is done in a manner that meets the requirements of the Medical Health officials.

It must be noted that there are two vacant positions on the Provincial Council. These are for Secretary and for President Elect. Please consider offering your skills for either of these positions.

I would like to express my thanks to the Vancouver Island Chapter for hosting the AGM. The team of Chris Southwick, Liz Cullen, Linda Derkach and Karen Bennett had the extra challenge of switching mid-stream from a full live weekend of activities to a half day Zoom videoconference due to Covid-19.

I must also thank the Victoria Chapter for providing access to their Zoom account in order for us to present today's program. Special thanks to Janette Patterson and Lorna Stewart for their guidance and patience with a group of rookie "Zoomers".

Finally, to Karen Bennett, Past President, Lynne Christmas, Treasurer, Anne Marie Bell, Secretary - who recently moved to Manitoba - and Linda Derkach for stepping in as Acting Secretary. Chapter Representatives Jill Wright, Vancouver. Rachael Fleming, Okanagan. Chris Southwick, Vancouver Island. Nancy Willihnganz, Victoria. Carol Salton, Prince George. Audrey Baier, Thompson/Shuswap - my thanks to each of you for your diligence, ideas, solutions and especially your support.

My thanks also to all Master Gardeners in British Columbia for all you do to make this such a successful and credible association.

## **2. Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting**

Motion #1:

Moved by Chris Southwick and seconded by Joanne Canning that the minutes of September 22, 2019 be accepted as circulated. Carried

## **3. Financial Report**

Treasurer Lynne Christmas gave some background information on the financial accounting and reporting for MGABC and the chapters. Each member Chapter handles

its own finances and the Provincial body covers items that affect us all, such as the website, liability insurance, and the cost of holding the annual general meeting by a chapter each year. Due to the unusual circumstances this year, MGABC shows a surplus and we will retain in the bank as a buffer for future expenses.

**Motion #2:**

Moved by Lynne Christmas and seconded by Rachael Fleming that the financial statements to June 30, 2020 be approved as circulated.

**Carried**

**4. Chapter Reports**

*Detailed Chapter Reports were previously circulated to all members and will be posted on the MGABC Website. Following are some additional comments from the Chapter Representatives.*

**Okanagan – Rachael Fleming**

Rachel acknowledged a most important aspect of their organization is the volunteers in the Basic Training Program. She thanked the organizing committee and the mentors that reach out to the students.

**Prince George – Carol Salton**

Carol recognized two members who passed away this year. The chapter met last Sunday physically distanced on a large property and enjoyed talks on *Gardening into the Fall*. Their Basic Training Course has instructors but no suitable venue at the moment. It is divided into three sections with 12 students only. Rachel was pleased to announce that their dahlias are still in bloom – which means no frost in Prince George yet.

**Thompson/Shuswap – Audrey Baier**

Audrey was unable to get on the call due to a computer problem. Her revised report will be included in the consolidated reports out to all members.

**Vancouver – Jill Wright**

Jill announced that – after her many years service as Chair – Julie Paul is the new Chair for the Vancouver Chapter. Vancouver has 408 members which includes the new class of students. This year, Vancouver members will be required to do 20 hours of a combination of outreach and education. Some new projects have taken place. The students hosted a tour in a local park. The BTP will go online in January 2021 with an in-person workshop in small groups. The Vancouver Spring Affair is under development and will be held online in March 2021.

### **Vancouver Island – Chris Southwick**

VIMGA has 80 members. The Spring Education day on March 14 enjoyed a presentation on *Coastal Plant Phenology in the Mt. Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve* which is just one of two such reserves in BC, the other being on the west coast at Tofino/Ucluelet. Phenology is the study of how plants change with the climate, a compelling subject in these times of global warming. VIMGA has a close association with Vancouver Island University and Milner Gardens in Qualicum Beach. The Garden Advice Line at Milner Gardens continued virtually this season. We have an outstanding group of new students with exceptional skills.

### **Victoria – Nancy Willihnganz**

In-person activities have been restricted in Victoria but we have embraced virtual opportunities. There are no new students at this time. The Basic Training Program will be offered online and in person. Victoria has a Youth Program and Mentoring Program. Training Courses will be offered via Zoom in October and November. The October offering will be two half days on October 17 and 18 on *Little Things that Run the World* with Claudia Copley of the Royal BC Museum. This class will be opened up to all chapters on September 30.

*Mixing it up in the Urban Garden* takes place January 30, 2021 via Zoom. Entitled *Roots, Shoots and Leaves*, there are five keynote speakers. Registration is open now.

### **5. Golden Trowel Award**

Elaine Scott of Victoria Master Gardeners is the Golden Trowel recipient for this year. Mike read out a summary of Elaine's many amazing contributions to the Victoria chapter as well as regionally on southern Vancouver Island.

### **6. Nominating Committee Report – Karen Bennett**

Karen reminded us that the positions of President Elect and Secretary are vacant. Anyone interested in learning about these positions should contact Mike or Karen. The Chapter Representative positions on the MGABC Provincial Council are appointed or elected by each chapter.

### **Motion #3:**

Moved by Karen Bennett and seconded by Joanne Canning that the Slate of Officers for 2020 – 2021 be approved as previously circulated. **Carried**

## **7. Door Prizes**

Winners are as follows:

- Two Early Bird Registrations for *Mixing it Up* – Janette Patterson, Victoria and Kathy Crockett, Vancouver
- Registration for the *Vancouver Spring Affair* – Kelly Smith, Vancouver
- Annual Family Membership in Milner Gardens, Qualicum Beach – Teresa Atkinson, Thompson/Shuswap

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 pm

Recorded by Linda Derkach  
Acting Secretary, MGABC