

Red Butte Garden Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 11, 2024, 3:30 PM
Visitor Center Classroom

Present: David Classen, Kym Buttschardt, Curt Crowther, Lisa Andruess, Sandi Behnken, Brandi Bosworth, Chelsey Curtis, Greg Graham, Laura Snow, JoLynda Stillman, Vicki Varela, Kamrin Wilson.

Absent: Troy Aramburu, Steve Barth, Carolyn Buma, Gary Christensen, Shaleane Gee, Jeff Herring, Lindee Nance, Jamie Rubin.

Staff in Attendance: Derrek Hanson, Natalie Cope, Eddy Dawson, Maria Garcia, Kristin Gelegotis, Sarah Hanners, Kevin Jensen, Sarah Sandoval, Marita Tewes Tyrolt, Mindy Wilson.

I. Approval of the advisory Board Minutes from May 8, 2024.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes.

II. Review nominating committee candidates – Jolynda Stillman

Jolynda discussed the nomination process for three board members rotating off, with three qualified candidates approved by the executive committee: Siamak Khadjenoury, Nichol Bordeaux, and Scott Mietchen. The nominations will be reviewed and voted on in November, with the new members starting in February.

III. Advisory board Announcements

a. Committee Updates – Curt Crowther

- Sandy and Curt are co-chairs of the Red Butte Gala committee, with additional members including Lisa, Chelsea, Brandy, Troy, David, Kim, Molly, Camille Cornaby and Tom Ramsey.
- The committee has decided to have two dinners and a public event, with the public event on June 21, 2025 which is summer solstice, and dinners on April 19 and July 11, 2025.
- The next committee meeting will be at the Alta Club on September 26, hosted by Curt, with food and drinks for attendees.

b. 40th Anniversary Gala and Dinner Events Details – Curt and Natalie

- The public event will feature heavy hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and themed stations, with a theme of "Botanical Alchemy". There will be stations throughout the garden.
- Tentative ticket prices for members are \$150 and \$200 for non-members, including cocktails/mocktails and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

- For the dinners, tables start at \$2,500 and they go up to \$25,000. There are 15 tables available, and different benefits for various sponsorship levels. We will be finalizing this in January.
- The private dinners will be in the Orangerie.
- Ticket prices are tentative and may change based on vendor contributions.
- Curt asked for feedback on the annual gala, noting the success of the current model and the benefits of different sponsorship levels. The board's participation and committee ideas are crucial for making the event fun and memorable.

IV. Garden Event reports

a. Cottam Club and Event Engagement – Natalie Cope

- Natalie provided an update on the Cottam Club, mentioning four events held since starting the club: Wreath Making, our Spring Fling at Camille's house, a trip to Victoria, and our Wine and Cheese Event last week. There will be another wreathmaking event this winter. We are hoping to have 4 to 5 Cottam Club events per year.
- The Cottam Club will be also getting invites to attend our lecture series for free, and Cottam Club members at \$2500 or above will receive two tickets to the Public Gala in 2025.
- The lowest cost that you can get in the Cottam Club is \$1000.
- The Cottam Club currently has 27 members, with a goal of 300 members, and has generated \$69,070 in revenue. We have seen 10% growth in the program this year.
- The goal is to increase engagement at events and create a more social experience for members.
- David thanked Natalie, Angela, and Curt for their efforts in launching the Cotton Club and mentions the success of the first event.
- The Cottam Club is seen as a significant revenue stream and a way to engage members and their friends.
- The board discussed the potential for a Cottam Club committee to work on future events, similar to the Gala Committee.
- Kym Buttschardt concluded this part of the meeting, reporting on the trip to Butchart Gardens and other gardens in Victoria, BC with the Cottam Club.

b. Programs Update – Eddy Dawson

Overview APGA Education Symposium:

- He indicated that APGA is a group with 600 public gardens, mostly in North America.
- The APGA's mission is to champion and advocate for public gardens, providing professional development and advocating for funding from the government.
- The APGA serves 130 gardens with 2 million admissions and 2 million discounted admissions annually.

Economic Impact and Professional Development

- Eddy highlighted the economic impact of public gardens, providing nearly 9000 full-time positions, creating new jobs, and hosting symposiums and conferences.
- The APGA has 20 professional communities, each hosting events and symposiums every two years, which helps in professional development.
- Hosting a symposium or conference costs money, but it provides significant benefits, such as networking and professional development for staff.
- The APGA's collective impact survey shows that 43 responses were received, with 39 out of 43 rating the event as excellent.

Planning and Execution of the Symposium

- The planning committee for the symposium included the host representative, APGA employees, and professionals from other botanic gardens.
- The planning process took about a year, with meetings and evaluations of session proposals.
- The symposium included 26 sessions, 18 tours, and one big concert (Gipsy Kings), with a focus on professional development and networking.
- The garden hosted 58 gardens from various states, including Utah, New York, and California, and had representatives from international gardens.
- The garden also hosted guest speakers, including Dr. Amy McDonald, and coordinated 26 concurrent sessions and 18 tours.
- The event was well-received, with positive feedback from attendees and recognition from APGA leadership, with many expressing satisfaction with the education sessions and guided tours.

V. Executive Director Update

Derrek gave us a quick overview of the concert series:

- We had originally 30 concerts scheduled, one of them canceled an hour before the gates opened (Pat Benatar), but we were fortunate to be able to add one additional concert, Lukas Nelson.
- Historically in the last 5-7 years our sales percentage are in the 94%– 96% range, last year was 97%, an all-time high. This year, we are currently a little over 93%, but we still have 4 more concerts coming up.
- We have sold 83,876 tickets so far. Our full capacity per show is 3000, and the average tickets per show is 2796. We have officially sold-out 17 concerts.

VI. Finance Report

Kristin reviewed the endowment, financial performance and budget through Q4:

- The garden has endowments of nearly \$13 million, which is used to support operations and future projects.
- The financial performance for the fiscal year showed a surplus, despite increased operational spending, a decrease in ZAP funding, and the fact that we no longer qualify for the Division of Arts & Museums grant funding anymore.

- We received a \$300,000 capital gift for the service road construction and had increased contributed income from foundation contributions, concert contributions and legacy gifts.
- We faced challenges with ticket sales for certain concerts, but overall, the performance was strong. We showed increases in admission, education, and exhibit and event revenue
- We are exploring strategies to increase revenue and continue to seek sources of support for future projects and operations.

VII. Introduction to the New App Project – Sarah Sandoval

The garden is launching a new app called Bloomberg Connects, developed with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Led by Sarah, the Interpretation and Exhibits Manager. This free app aims to enhance visitor experience through features like location-based information, QR code scanning, and customizable content.

Key features include:

- Comprehensive garden information (descriptions, directions, hours)
- Audio tours and plant information
- Donor highlights and volunteer spotlights
- Multilingual support (40 languages)
- Seasonal content updates

The app is designed to lower barriers for users, provide more interpretation opportunities, and engage visitors throughout their garden experience. It will have a soft launch in September and a full launch in April, coinciding with the garden's 40th anniversary.

VIII. Staff Reports

There were no questions on the Staff Reports.

Adjournment to tour Access Road at 5:10 pm