

Central Gorge Master Gardener™ Association
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

OSU Extension Meeting Room

Held in Person and via Zoom on Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Attendees: Bill Winfield, Donna DesRochers, Eric Bosler, Jen Harty, Jen Munroe, Joanne Willis, John Stevens, Kaeley Dawson, Margo Dameier, Megan Wickersham, Sandi Rousseau, Shari Bosler, Tracy Willett **Guests:** Cynthia Skogsberg, Lois Kinsfogel

Jen H called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

Secretary's Minutes: (Donna) The minutes were approved without corrections.

Treasurer Report (Joanne) Report was approved without corrections.

OMGA (Eric) A report was submitted noting that the new OMGA Alternative Representative is Marcy Hasegawa. OMGA plans to take over statewide awards and the chapter awards will stand “as is” for each chapter’s choice on what they want to give out each year. An increase in grants and scholarships is planned in the future.

Coordinators Report (Megan) 18 new trainees have applied for 2026 noting that the maximum accepted is 25. The application deadline is November 30, 2025, and there should be no problem filling the slots.

3249 volunteer hours and 1800 education hours were logged this year. Volunteers hours are expected to reach 3800 as more hours have been added recently. Volunteer hours are less than last year due to the cancellation of the online plant sale this year.

Publicity (Margo) The group has begun using our new brand identity in social media. As postcards and posters are produced, our brand identity guidelines will be implemented here as well.

Outdoor Learning Center Project (Sandi) A history of the Learning Garden bioswales and compost area as well as goals of the new project was reviewed. In September the Executive Board approved funds for Matt Farmer of Natural Designs to design the project. His Powerpoint virtual tour was presented and will be shown to the membership at the Recognition Ceremony. Highlighted were the rock walls, seating, pathways and decking areas. An outside water spigot was suggested to supply potable water to the area.

There are currently 2 bids for the concrete and decking. One bid is for both. The board supported proceeding with the current bids despite lacking a third bid, due to lack of responsiveness from other contractors. Costs for the pathway were discussed.

Decomposed granite was too expensive and concrete for the pathway is a better option. One bid offered no charge for stamping the concrete.

MCARC and OSU Extension have expressed interest in using the area and have no objections to the project. The area can also be used for community meetings and small group events. Charging for community use of the facilities and accepting donations were brought up as options to cover the costs and maintenance. Additional suggestions included inviting Master Gardeners to donate and soliciting donations from the community via an article in the newspaper.

The financial health of the organization is good and CGMGA is one of the wealthier chapters due to retained earnings and past endowments. The plant sale also brings in money annually.

Sandi recapped previous capital investments, noting that they historically underspend the requested amount. The Japanese Heritage Garden raised around \$8,000 through private donations and grants. The Greenhouse expenditures come in under budget.

Grant funding from Gorge Community Foundation, which provides grants totaling \$500,000 annually, Lions Club, Hood River Cultural Trust, Visit Hood River Community Investment Grant, which offers matching funds for projects that improve the vitality of Hood River and attract tourism, and OSU Foundation are sources that could offset the project costs.

Sandi updated the timeline for the approval process. The ballots and a virtual tour presentation will be sent out after the Recognition Ceremony for review and questions. Voting will be due the following Friday, giving a week for review. The board approved the project allocation not to exceed \$55,000. All questions should be directed to Sandi.

Brief discussions followed about irrigation, the site's slope, shade from existing trees, stamped concrete more slippery than concrete, benches, seating with no backing, and temporary seating. A subcommittee to oversee contractors including Sandi and Eric is a good idea.

Also discussed was that one week was not enough time to review the project. An offer to set up a brief MailChimp survey was discussed but deemed unnecessary based upon the upcoming presentation to the membership, questions can be directed to Sandi during and after the presentation and frequent lack of response to surveys.

It was approved for Sandi to present the virtual tour and answer questions at the Recognition Ceremony this week.

FISH Food Bank Garden (Tracy) The last planting has been completed and volunteers are available to take care of the Food Bank compost waste.

Dirt Huggers Tour (Jen) The tour was very interesting and worth the time.

Memorial Tree Project (Shari) Paul Casal was given an image so he can estimate the cost to fabricate and powder coat the memorial tree and engravable pears. He gave an estimate of \$1,700 - \$2,500 for the project. He will be gone for the winter and will resume working on the project in March. Pears will also be made available to OSU Extension and 4-H. A number of pears have already been allocated for engraving. It was approved to move forward with the project with a \$2,500 budget. A thank you to all involved was noted.

Still Looking (Jen) The Outreach Committee is looking for instructors for classes. Once that is finalized a schedule can be put together. The vacancy for 2027 President Elect needs to be filled.

Recognition Ceremony (Jen) Decorations are planned, chapter awards set, and raffle prizes are ready for tomorrow night. Bring your table setting and it is ok to bring beer and wine.

Office Note Mary Corl was sent a thank you for her time as OMGA Alternative Representative. Thank you note cards will be made available in the plant clinic room and from Donna.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes taken by AI and edited by Donna DesRochers.

