***Reminder…..next meeting is Wednesday , July 23,2014 at the Otsego Conservation District Gardens…come to work and/or socialize any time after 5p.m.***

Alpine Master Gardener Association

Minutes of the June 25, 2014 Meeting

Otsego Conservation District Gardens

After a garden work bee, President Kent Strawderman brought the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

Officers present: President Kent Strawderman; Vice-President Jeanne Freymuth; Treasurer Dee Burau. Excused: Secretary Betty Hartmann

Treasurer’s report – Treasurer Dee Burau

* + Balance as of June 24, 2014: $5,350.37. Report will be emailed to members.
  + OWLS/Patriot Place funds have been distributed
  + $1500 to OCCOA for garden maintenance person.
  + AMGA members – 41; Updated Roster is available.

President and Treasurer Positions will be open year end. Please be thinking of volunteering for the Nomination Committee and/or a position on the Board.

August 27th meeting is tentatively set to be a Patricia Osburn’s garden in Johannesburg.

A chairperson is needed for our Winter/Spring 2015 conference. Please contact a Board member if you are interested. You will have help, but we need someone to chair. A chair needs to be named by July 31st to get the basics set up; speaker(s), date, venue, topic(s), full day/half day.

Treats for tonight’s meeting were be provided by Patricia Osburn and Carol Lienerth. Volunteers are needed for July’s meeting-contact Marilyn Kaczanowski at 231-546-3186.

Cathy Campbell reported on the ‘wrap up’ of our involvement with the Patriot Place. As indicated in the Treasurer’s report, any OWLS’s funds held in our bank account have been distributed to the Patriot Place.

Jeanne Freymuth announced a $600 Grant from the OWLS to sponsor instructors for community education classes to be held next winter at the University Center on popular topics related to ‘growing your own food’.

As the Master Gardener coordinators for MSUE/Otsego, Rudi Edel stated that he and Sandi heard from several AMGA members over the past few months, each talking about the Master Gardener program and also AMGA meetings and structure. The common comments from members were lack of fun; too structured and rule oriented; a desire to have more hands-on educational opportunities; a major focus on fund raisers instead of gardening education; and a noticeable decrease in AMGA membership.

After reflecting on the structure they observe and the comments made, Rudi suggested we discuss at this meeting a possible AMGA meeting structure that could address these issues. Somehow, make the gatherings fun and exciting, not so much business. The AMGA group gets bogged down in business. Let the business be handled by the Board. That is how government works - representatively.  If we don't like the decisions and actions of those we elect, they get recalled or just walk in the next election.

Rudi suggested the following:

(1) Business meetings with the general membership will only be held a couple times a year at the Board’s discretion, to include the annual meeting as per the by-laws. All other AMGA business would be handled and implemented by our elected Board. If necessary, additional business meetings could be held at the call of the president or a majority vote of officers or majority vote of the total membership.

(2) Continue to hold monthly AMGA gatherings but NO business is conducted at these remaining meetings.  These gatherings will be hands-on class of some sort, tours, speakers, work bees and the like.

In other words, monthly meetings are educational and fun ONLY with no business being conducted except for a couple times per year or at the Board’s discretion. Monthly meetings can include a pot luck supper.

There was considerable discussion by the members present. Since the proposal was viewed positively, Rudi Edel made a motion to adopt the proposal as outlined above in points 1 and 2 and make it effective immediately. The motion was seconded by Marilyn Kaczanowski. President Strawderman asked for further discussion. The motion was unanimously passed and effective immediately.

The July meeting will still be held as a work bee at the Community Gardens as previously scheduled. The August meeting tentatively will be a tour of Patricia Osburn’s garden as noted above.

Respectively Submitted,

Jeanne Freymuth-Vice President

(In Secretary Betty Hartmann’s absence)