



American Peony Society

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2023 | 6:30 p.m. CST

Call to Order / Roll Call

Voting Members in Attendance: *Craig Aiken, Cory Tischman, David Michener, Jill Stevens, Kent Tretheway, Linette Sorrentino, Lois Girton, Lynn Gessling, Mary Muellner, Nate Bremer, Nick Maycher, Scott Parker, Steve Smith, Piet Wierstra*

Non-Voting Members in Attendance: *David Sorrentino*

Absent Members: *Brandie Orchard, Kris Jurik, Leena Liljestrand, Sheryl Lawson*

A regularly scheduled meeting of the American Peony Society (APS) was held on February 9, 2023 via teleconference (Zoom). It began at 6:30pm CST and was presided over by Nate Bremer as President, with Cory Tischman as Recording Secretary.

Reading & Approval of Minutes

Cory Tischman submitted the meeting minutes from the BOD meeting on December 6, 2022. The minutes were submitted to be ratified with a motion made by David Michener, seconded by Nate Bremer, which carried unanimously.

Officers' Reports

President's Report – Nate Bremer

- See Report

Treasurer's Report – Lynn Gessling

- See Report
 - Lynn noted that when she was attempting to set up her name on the APS account, it was set up “wrong” as a donation account. Lynn added that switching over the other financial accounts, and has finally been finalized. She noted having some issue with Quickbooks, and noted the statement of functional expenses are distorted and was unable to substantiate the \$861,212.20 retained earnings and will have to do a manual report. Lynn still does not have access to the Kansas City account and Kris Jurik has been instrumental in the transition. Nate Bremer made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Seconded by Piet Wierstra. Motion carried by unanimous vote of BOD.

Committees and Special Projects Reports

Auction Report – Jill Stevens, Lois Girton, & Mary Muellner

- No Report

Award of Landscape Merit (ALM) Committee Report – Cory Tischman & Jill Stevens

- See Report

Awards Committee Report – Steve Smith

- **See Report**

Book & Publications Report – Mike Miller

- No Report

Bulletins & Editorial Committee Report - Kim and Nate Bremer

- No Report

Commercial Members Committee Report - Piet Wierstra

- No Report

Convention Steering Committee Report – Linette Sorrentino

- No Report
 - There are currently over 50 people signed up for the convention.

Exhibition Committee Report - David & Linette Sorrentino

- No Report
 - Added classes in the 400 exhibition group for Saunders, Daphnis, and Gratwick cultivars.

International Outreach Program Committee Report - Leena Liljestrand & Nick Maycher

- No Report

Membership Report – Linette Sorrentino

- No Report
 - Over 450 renewals and new members since January 1st. Will be sending a second lapsed notice next week for members. We are getting a lot of new members in New York and are currently the highest member count at 57. There is interest in starting a society out in New York.

Mentorship Committee Report – Kent Tretheway

- No Report

Nomenclature Committee Report – Jordan Kabat

- No Report

Nominations Committee Report – Cory Tischman

- No Report

Scientific & Horticultural Studies Committee Report - David Michener

- No Report

Seed Distribution Program Report – Scott Parker

- No Report

Social Media Committee Report -

- No Report

Speakers & Programs Committee Report - Lois Girton

- No Report

Website Committee Report - Nate Bremer

- No Report

Correspondence

- See Report

Unfinished Business

- To-Do List
 - Found a replacement for the membership chair, and Liz Best, agreed to do so and will be getting trained.
 - Unsure if Brandie Orchard completed 'Thank You' letters and will follow up before next meeting.
- New York Convention (May 31 to June 4, 2023)
 - Supplying donations to Linwood Gardens and Hamilton College Arboretum for \$2000 each. Linette Sorrentino noted putting the \$2000 under convention fees vs a donation, and Piet suggested having both places give APS an invoice for entrance fees. Lois felt uncertain about having an invoice and voiced support for a letter instead, and Nate
- Bylaws Update
 - Nate Bremer noted he will be sending out more updates with the bylaws changes and eventually get support from the BOD and then open up discussion with the members. Nate noted there will also need to be a policy and procedures manual to address bylaws and other functions for the society.
- Donation to University of Michigan for Genomic Research
 - David Sorrentino noted the MN Peony Society BOD met to have a discussion about the donation but no amount was determined, and David noted they will have another meeting to determine the donation amount and get back to Nate Bremer.

New Business

- Seed Sales on Website
 - Websfitters gave an estimate to automate seed inventory on the website and allow members to buy packets of seeds right away and reduce work for Scott Parker (Seed Program) and Lynn Gessling (Treasurer), and possible errors.
- William Seidl Memorial Woody Peony Award (WSMWPA)
 - Steve Smith noted there has been talk to create an award for woody peonies and Nate Bremer came up with a document based on the Gold Medal award criteria. There was discussion around creating other awards for intersectionals, hybrids, lactifloras, etc. but Steve Smith expressed concern about the Gold Medal award becoming "diluted." Lois Girton noted possibly holding off on creating new awards and felt we are "haphazard" in the award process and categories and there could be steps in giving awards. Nate Bremer

noted there could be further discussion for the Awards Committee at a later time before a decision is made with the BOD.

- Purchase of a Projector
 - Lois Girton noted it would be cost effective for the APS to buy its own projector as the cost of using it for other facilities would cost more, it would cost \$250/day.

- Changing APS's 501(c)5 status to 501(c)3
 - BOD was interested in changing status to 501(c)3 and Nate Bremer noted that will likely

Discussions

- Membership issues due to war in Ukraine
 - see Motions

- Nominations for BOD
 - Cory Tischman noted there is one open spot for BOD and three potential renewals with Nate Bremer, Kris Jurik, and Linette Sorrentino.

- Implementation of Commercial Growers Code of Ethics
 - Nate Bremer noted there was a meeting in 2017 that there was an agreement for a Commercial Growers Code of Ethics and already voted in by the BOD at the time. Discussed sending it out to commercial members with an introductory letter and gather signatures. David Michener suggested getting something into the bulletin so members know what it means to be a commercial member.

Motions

Motion: I, Lois Girton, make a motion to for the APS to donate \$2000 to Hamilton College Arboretum and Linwood Garden each in lieu of paying a fee for using their facilities, and an amendment made by Nate Bremer to make the funds coming from the convention budget. Motion seconded by: Nate Bremer. Motion carried by unanimous vote of BOD.

Motion: I, Lois Girton, make a motion for the APS accept the Webfitters estimate for the automated seed sales enhancements on the APS website. Motion seconded by: Nate Bremer. Motion carried by unanimous vote of BOD.

Motion: I, Piet Wierstra, make a motion for the APS to allow up to \$900 for a projector. Motion seconded by: Steve Smith. Motion carried by unanimous vote of BOD.

Motion: I, Nate Bremer, make a motion for the APS to allow Russian and Ukrainian members who are unable to renew their memberships, be allowed to continue with online memberships. Motion seconded by: Piet Wierstra. Motion carried by unanimous vote of BOD.

Adjournment

Nate Bremer moved that the meeting be adjourned and this was agreed upon at 8:05pm CST.

Next Meeting: May 11, 2023 via Zoom at 6:30pm CDT

Minutes Submitted by: Cory Tischman