

OMGA Strategic Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: October 11, 2010, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Location: Numerous locations in Oregon connected via Polycom

Attendees: Gail Langellotto, Tam Martin, Nellie Oehler, Chuck Petersen, Dave Rugg, Sherry Sheng, Jack Wright

Housekeeping

- We determined Gail Langellotto will facilitate this meeting and Sherry Sheng will take minutes.
- We approved minutes of the last meeting with one correction.

Agenda

We agreed on the following agenda

- Discuss and finalize mission statement.
- Discuss and finalize action plan.
- Discuss how to roll out the plan and involve members.

Mission Statement

We discussed previously proposed versions and adopted the following:

"We are volunteers committed to sustainable gardening through:

Partnering with the OSU Master Gardener Program to promote sustainable gardening practices;

Advocating for funding to deliver the Master Gardener Program across Oregon; and

Fostering continuing education for all Master Gardeners.

Fun sustains our energy in carrying out these commitments. "

(Note: This statement reflects extensive discussions. The committee made lists then prioritized to highlight three primary audiences (OSU MG Program, policy makers who affect OSU MG Program funding, and fellow MG's). Through the same process, the committee identified three terms (sustainable home gardening, advocacy, and learning) that best describe what we are about. We constructed the mission statement by pairing each primary audience with a term while adding important concepts such as 'partnership' and 'sustaining the organization' to complete the statement.)

Strategy – Building Public Understanding of the Master Gardener Program and its Benefits

Discussions included under which strategy would proposed actions fit (some may fit under Strengthen OMGA), methods to target the public (via the media, brochure for direct distribution to clients), Extension faculty annual report may provide relevant statistics for news release or brochure), OMGA could develop a message that highlights chapter achievements, etc. The committee agreed to focus on these actions: Develop a message (a paragraph, a brochure, or in some other form) to highlight MG Program and its benefits and consistently use it in public communications; Develop a media toolkit and cultivate media contacts; Network with similar organizations (non-profits or gardening groups); Implement honorary & associate memberships, Train members on public information and speaking to the media.

Strategy – Building Political Support for the Master Gardener Program

Discussions focused on what might be in an advocacy toolkit (“Master Gardeners and the Creation of Extension Service District” by Gail and John Punches, step-by-step instructions on preparing and delivering public testimonies) and how can the toolkit be most helpful (include ways to assess “threat” as it relates to risk assessment to determine the commensurate level of advocacy, how to alert local chapters of upcoming funding measures).

The committee agreed to include, under this strategy, a preamble Jack read (which emphasizes partnering with other Extension Service volunteer groups). PREAMBLE WILL BE HERE. It also agreed to include, as actions or in the toolkit, the threat assessment from Dave Rugg and step-by-step “How to advocate” guide Nellie is to provide. Gail will work within Extension to improve communications about plans for funding measure. All agreed the goal is to produce something useful by local chapters.

Strategy – Providing Continuing Education Opportunities for all Master Gardeners

Discussions touched on using chapter newsletters and websites to share information about training programs, the use of social media (Facebook and Twitter) to appeal to Generations X & Y, and how recertification requirements and training fit within this strategy.

The committee agreed to clarify that OMGA encourages MG’s participate in recertification training. Also wherever Gardener’s Pen is listed, chapter newsletters and social media should be added.

Strategy – Strengthen the OMGA

Discussions focused on the need to keep OMGA’s database current in order to maintain timely communications with members; ‘low-hanging fruits’ type actions for immediate results; the type of training (conference on advocacy, on financial management) that will add to the skill sets of volunteer leaders.

The committee agreed to add ‘Supporting local chapter in retaining members’ as an action. Also it agreed on moving appropriate action items here from the ‘Building Public Understanding’ strategy.

Next Steps

- Minutes – By end of this week, provide comments to Sherry.
- Strategy – Within 1-2 weeks, rewrite each strategy to reflect today’s discussions and decisions. Send these revisions to Gail.
- Strategic Plan – Gail will compile these revisions into the template Tam shared, draft an overview, and insert the mission statement (and background). She will set up an interactive way for team members to access the document so that each member will be able to edit, revise, etc.
- OMGA Meeting November 6, 2010 – Focus of the discussion will be on mission and strategies and on inviting comments from members.
- After November 6 – The committee will need to prioritize actions, develop a timeline for implementation, and identify resources needed for implementation. It will decide when to meet next after the November 6 meeting.