

Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council General Meeting

March 9, 2018

Minutes

The meeting was brought to order by President Bernadette Hamera at 9:33 am

Monica Freed (Poinciana Garden Club) read an inspirational message. Laura Jibben led the gathering in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recording Secretary, Sylvia Swartz, said the Minutes of the January meeting were posted on the bulletin board and read the Motions made by the Board since the January meeting.

Corresponding Secretary Sylvia Lightbody reported correspondence received and sent since the January meeting.

Assistant Treasurer Charlene Anderson said the financial reports were posted on the bulletin board together with the proposed budget for 2018-2019.

President Bernadette Hamera reported on the passing of Betty Sanders, who was active with the Garden Council for many years, having concluded her service by acting as an Advisor to the Board for the last two years. She was President of the Council 1989-1991. She was also very active in the City of Fort Myers. Betty's garden club will be donating a plant to the garden in her memory.

First Vice President Judy Francino reported that the number of visitors on Tuesdays to the gardens continues to be good and thanked the various garden clubs who provide docents for the visits. She thanked Elizabeth Keeler, Garden Manager, and Nick Gallant, gardener, for their continued hard work in maintaining the garden and Monica Freed for maintaining the roses. Repairs have been made to the irrigation system, particularly in the Hibiscus area. Garden Manager Elizabeth Keeler has developed a form for use when garden clubs want to donate plants to the garden and noted that the support staff need to be available on site when any new planting is done so that neither irrigation lines nor underground power lines are damaged. Funds are needed for refurbishing the Gazebo area and for equipment like a leaf blower and a compost area. The garden also needs new shrubs in front of the walkway. Interested donors should contact Elizabeth Keeler, Garden Manager or Judy Francino.

FFGC District IX Director Laura Jibben said she has emailed Presidents in the District regarding an article she is writing for the *Florida Gardener*. She will also be giving a report at the FFGC Convention April 22-24 in St. Augustine. The District IX Spring meeting is May 2 in Punta Gorda and she reminded clubs to bring an item for the silent auction.

Vicki Williamson announced that a Landscape Design School is being organized and a brochure and registration form is being designed. Vicki circulated a committee sign-up sheet. The first class will be October 26-27 and there is a total of four classes – October this year, April 2019, October 2019 and April 2020. Vicki also reminded members of the upcoming Convention Flower Show and said that she would transport and place the design for anyone wanting to enter a design but unable to attend the Show.

Mitzi Marckesano reminded members that it's time to submit nominations for the Berne Davis Honorary Service Award. The awards luncheon will be at Fiddlesticks Country Club on Friday, April 13. Registrations should be mailed to Registrar Charlene Anderson by the end of March.

President's Report:

- Poinciana Garden Club is donating a bench in memory of one of their members.
- President Hamera met with Richard Moulton, City of Fort Myers, regarding the new road plans including a traffic circle at the end of Virginia, which have changed a little but are not yet finally approved.
- President Hamera, First VP Francino and Garden Manager Keeler have been working on improving the garden lighting, which is currently in a dangerous condition. One quote has been received and another is expected.

- Our banking arrangements have been simplified, with our banking relationships being reduced from three to two. The account at Edison bank has been retained because it is used to pay utilities and all the direct debits are in place.
- The Board has approved the budget and there is a copy on the bulletin board.
- The sales tax exemption has been renewed. Copies of the certificate can be obtained from President Hamera or the office.
- Thanks were extended to Vicki Williamson and Terry Pinck for the recent series of floral design classes, which were well attended. Many asked if the classes would be repeated next year.

At this point, the presenter for the day, Paula Novander, Master Gardener and Garden Club of Cape Coral member was introduced and she gave a very interesting presentation on Colors in a Native Garden.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

President's Report – continued

President Hamera

- reminded the meeting that clubs should be identifying nominees for the 2018 Bern Davis Service Award. The annual award luncheon will be in April.
- thanked the members of the Royal Palm Garden Club who provided today's refreshments. She also thanked the Hibiscus Society and the Rare Fruit Tree Society for the work they did in the garden following Hurricane Irma. The Hibiscus Society replaced the hibiscus plants and the Rare Fruit Tree Society righted/replanted all the toppled trees.
- Said that the lot outside the garden which had been in use by FEMA following Hurricane Irma, had been re-sodded. In about 4 years' time, it will be paved with pervious pavers.
- spoke with Mike Flanders who said that the current McGregor Blvd. project is just about finished and the new phase of installing a roundabout will begin shortly. Virginia Ave. will become Edison Ave. FMLCGC has been asked to help with the planning of the landscape. The current design indicates that we will not lose as much of our property as first thought. In addition, we will get the small area of land by the rear gate incorporated into our parcel that cannot be used as part of the parking area. Our lease and the Edison-Ford Estate lease will be amended. Ground will be broken in the next month or two. In 2019, work will begin on relocating the Edison-Ford Estate main entrance to Larchmont and closing the McGregor Blvd. entrance.
- reported that Chris Pendleton, Edison-Ford Estate President and CEO, has now retired and the search for her successor is underway. Her replacement will be introduced to the Council and its members at a future meeting.
- noted the NewsPress article on the FMLCG published yesterday

A question was asked about how successful the FMLCGC information table was at the recent Edison Festival/Market and whether it would be repeated. Debbie Hughes said that no Festival is planned for February. The next one will be November 17 and 18.

Announcements:

January 26 and 27 – Wedding Dresses through the Ages, Alva United Methodist Church, to benefit the Alva Museum.

January 27, 9 to 1 pm., Tropical Fruit Club tree sale, Riverside Park, Bonita Springs

February 8 – Judges Council Flower Show *Back to Basics*, Garden Council HQ 1 to 3 pm.

February 12 – Gulf Coast Garden Club Flower Show 1 to 3 pm at the Unity Church, Imperial Pkwy., Bonita Springs

February 13, Estero Island Garden Club – Pre Valentine's Fund Raiser – see details in the Courier. Tickets available

March 10 – Garden Club of Cape Coral March in the Park, Jaycee Park, Cape Coral, 9 am to 3 pm

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 am.