

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Carriage House, Gamble Garden

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM by President Joan Zwiep

**Quorum Established:** Yes

**Members Present:** Joan Zwiep (President), Robin Allen, Pat Davis, Lena Dawson, Pat Gregory, Susann Mirabella, Judy Paris, Carmen Pekelsma, Colette Rudd, Donna Sheridan, Julie Shinn, Susan Sweeney, Nancy Wong, and Susan Woodman

**Members Absent:** Karen Douglas

**Members Attending via Zoom:** None

**Staff:** Mica Pirie, Executive Director; Corey Andrikopoulos, Amy O'Sullivan

**Other Guests:** Tod Gregory, Margie Harrington, Jane Stocklin, Charlotte Zeims

**Approval of Agenda** – *Joan Zwiep*

The agenda was approved.

**Consent Agenda** – *Joan Zwiep*

- Approved Minutes of March 26, 2024 Board Meeting (included with the meeting agenda)
- All Board members acknowledged receiving **Gamble Garden Draft Form 990 - 6.30.2023 (5.14.2024).pdf** via email (sent May 14, 2024) prior to its submittal to IRS. All agreed to its submittal which was done on May 15, 2024.

**Presentation: Overview of Marketing and Facility Programs** – *Charlotte Ziems, Chair of Marketing Committee*

Charlotte introduced the concept of marketing to the board. Her background is marketing for information technology companies. As Chair of the Marketing Committee, she worked with marketing committee members (Mica Pirie, Hayley, Amy O'Sullivan, Ana Pizaro, Tod Gregory, Karen Olsen, Kris Forbes and Norm Robinson) to analyze Gamble Garden's facility rental business. The positive findings were (a) the garden is the special attraction for rentals, and (b) our pricing is also considered more reasonable. However, we have not invested in technology to support fast WiFi and videoconferencing, we are not marketing specifically for rentals, and our pricing is too complicated. Wedding planners are more familiar for our facility rentals than businesses.

*Recommendations:* The three top recommendations from the committee were to (a) invest in technology, (b) simplify and segment the pricing; and (c) invest in marketing.

Charlotte distributed the Executive Summary of the committee's report "Gamble Garden Rentals Business". The entire 28-page report will be shared via email upon request. The board shared ideas on marketing Gamble Garden's rentals. Charlotte recommended making improvements before starting a marketing campaign.

## STAFF REPORTS

### **Executive Director** – *Mica Pirie*

Mica said her first three weeks have been incredible and the most inspiring of her time at Gamble Garden! She reported that the community loved Spring Tour and thanked the committee for their efforts to make it a success. She also reported that Martha Stewart visited the garden and bought our seeds and posted it on her Instagram feed. This visibility resulted in 30 new followers on Instagram.

**Staff changes:** Hayley Parr has been promoted up from Office Assistant to Office Manager, which is a full-time position. Amy O'Sullivan, our Finance Director, has moved to Sacramento and will now have a hybrid position, primarily working at home but she will also return to the office as needed. Hayley is interviewing candidates who are applying for the open office assistant position.

Mica gave an update on human resources and The Pendolino Group activities, including an in-person visit from Ben.

### **Garden Director** – *Corey Andrikopoulos*

Corey reported that the new pollinator garden is nearly completed. He is planning on working with a researcher to study the stingless bee found at Gamble Garden. Osmanthus will be replanted near the alley. The bench for Sheri Moody is in place. Roots and Shoots program is completed for this season. He hopes to hold more field trips in the fall and find sponsors to assist with transportation for students to the garden. The Woodside-Atherton Garden Club has approved a contribution to this effort.

### **Finance** – *Judy Paris*

**Finance Reports for April 2024** and the **April Treasurer's Report and Commentary** were sent with the meeting agenda to Board members for their review. Judy briefly summarized the April financial results and the year-to-date reserves. She then presented a review of the **FY25 Draft Budget** net revenue with assumptions that were shared in the memo on the Draft FY25 Operating Budget (dated May 21, 2024) from the Finance Committee and emailed to the board. In addition to the Draft Budget, the memo included budget assumptions, planned maintenance projects and other projects that are under consideration.

### **Horticulture Complex Project Task Force (HCPT) Report** – *Susann Mirabella*

The Horticultural Complex Task Force Memo, CAW Proposal for Phase II Services, and Project Schedule were emailed to Board members on Tuesday, May 21, 2024. Susann referred to a packet of information that was sent to the board, including a copy of the proposal from CAW. The duration and aspects of the work to be conducted were discussed.

- **MOTION:** On behalf of the Horticultural Complex Task Force, Susann Mirabella moved that the board authorize our Executive Director, Mica Pirie, to sign a contract with CAW Architects for the Phase II services listed under **Group A - Schematic Design and Entitlements Phases** in the proposal from CAW dated May 10, 2024, for an amount not to exceed \$175,000.

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Fund Development Report – Susann Mirabella**

The next **Anniversary Party** will be in September 2025 and now is the time to start planning the event. One component is the designation of the net income received from this event. The event will be tied to the capital campaign. The recommendation of the Fund Development committee was for the board to designate the net income from the 2025 Anniversary Party to the development of the Horticultural Complex.

- **MOTION:** On behalf of the Fund Development Committee, Susann Mirabella moved that the net income from the Anniversary Party in September 2025 be designated for the development of Gamble Garden's **Horticultural Complex**.

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Proposed inscription for Sheri Moody.** Sheri Moody, a long-time volunteer, board member and member of the **Elizabeth Gamble '02 Legacy Society** before her death in February 2024, honored Gamble Garden with large bequest to Gamble Garden. This proposal is to recognize Sheri for her generosity.

- **MOTION:** Susann Mirabella moved that the board approve the inscription "SHERI MOODY Beloved friend of Gamble Garden" for a bench in the garden, subject to receipt of funds from the estate of Sheri Moody.

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Spring Tour (April 2024)** The event was a success, both in its operation and financial results. Key revenue numbers were shared with the board. Net revenue was above budget.

**Winter Festival (Dec. 2024)** Susann has held the first meeting of the committee. The committee is still looking for volunteers, including a chairman.

**Board Development – Lena Dawson**

Staff and other guests were excused prior to Lena's Board Development Committee report. Lena read the names of the individuals nominated by the Board Development Committee to serve as directors of the Elizabeth F Gamble Garden for a two-year term from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026 as follows:

- **Current board members nominated for an additional term (terms served to date):** Robin Allen (2), Pat Gregory (3), Judy Paris (3), Carmen Pekelsma (1), Susan Woodman (2), and Karen Douglas (2)
- **Individuals nominated who are currently not on the board:** Donna Bohling, Sue Krumbein

The President of the Garden Club of Palo Alto has appointed two individuals as directors and Garden Club Liaisons: Pat Davis (continuing as a Garden Club liaison until June 30, 2025) and Susan McDonnell (to serve from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026).

ELIZABETH F.  
**GAMBLE GARDEN**  
HISTORIC HOME & GARDEN

Five individuals have been nominated by the Board Development Committee to serve as officers of the Elizabeth F Gamble Garden for the one-year period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025: Donna Bohling, President; Susann Mirabella, Vice President of Fund Development; Sue Krumbein, Vice President of Program Development; Colette Rudd, Secretary and Karen Douglas, Treasurer.

**Volunteer Development – Julie Shinn**

The Volunteer Development Committee will be holding a Volunteer Information meeting for potential volunteers on **September 5** at 4 PM and is planning to offer the information again in February. It was recommended to also offer a meeting on a Saturday such as Second Saturday. She also would like to have a Volunteers Orientation to Gamble Garden (meet the staff; discuss our mission, their role as a Gamble ambassador and give an overview of the many Gamble activities and initiatives). She would like to do this for every new volunteer and offer it 3-4 times a year.

**Dates of Upcoming Meetings**

- **Executive Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, June 11 at 1 PM
- **Next Scheduled Board Meeting:** Tuesday, June 25 at 4:00 PM

The Board meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Recorded by Colette Rudd, Interim Board Secretary on May 28, 2024

**June 25, 2024:** Correction at Board meeting on to add the full name of the **Elizabeth Gamble '02 Legacy Society**.