

EMG Southeast Chapter Meeting Minutes, January 7, 2024

In attendance: Little Tree, Sarah Edelman, Julia Boger-Hawkins, Marion Gerardi, Danielle Lacroix, Janet Spencer, and Deb Heleba.

Little Tree called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Introduction of Talking Stick

Little Tree introduced the Talking Stick (showed a physical talking stick) and shared the concept of the talking stick from ki's culture. Here, when one has the talking stick, they are the only one talking and everyone is listening. Everyone else is listening – being present. Travels clockwise in circle. Speak or pass on. Walks on until everyone is of one mind. Tradition of talking stick...

Treasurer's Report

Sarah, the new Chapter treasurer, said there is no report at this time. Deb explained that Peg Solon ended her tenure as treasurer at the end of 2023 and is passing that role over to Sarah Edelman. Sarah will contact Peg to learn more about transitioning the Mascoma Bank account signatories.

Reading of the Minutes of the 12/17 Meeting

Little Tree encouraged everyone to read the minutes. Sarah will post and send out meeting minutes.

Introductions

All participants introduced themselves, shared whether they were an EMG or intern, their interest in the SE Chapter, and additional information relevant to gardening and volunteering for the program.

Request for Chapter Secretary

Little Tree solicited interest from the group to fill the open position of secretary. The role entails taking meeting minutes as the group meets once per month and distributing the minutes to the group.

Janet said she would be happy to fill the secretary role. Little Tree nominated Janet. Sarah seconded. All in favor – motion carried. Janet is now secretary.

Chapter Meetings

There was discussion about how to meet. Little Tree said he envisioned that monthly Chapter meetings will occur virtually through Zoom during the winter months and the goal is to meet in person during the gardening season.

The Chapter has used UVM's Zoom account for the December and January meetings and there was interest from the Chapter to get its own nonprofit Zoom account for one year. There was discussion about the potential use of other free platforms like Discord channel. Little Tree

suggested sticking with Zoom for now – ki offered that the Chapter could use ki's existing account which would cost about \$110 per year. Sarah suggested that the Chapter start a new account using the Chapter gmail account so that it is widely accessible to Chapter members. The group agreed and Sarah and Little Tree will work on getting a new Zoom account once the bank account is taken care of. For the February meeting – scheduled for Feb 4 at 6 pm – the Chapter will use UVM's Zoom account.

Upcoming Chapter Activities

Little Tree said that for future meetings, the plan is to have time on the agenda for Project Leaders to share information about their Projects (maybe 2 per meeting) with discussion following – this may help volunteers become more familiar with volunteer possibilities.

There was a question about projects in Windham County. Sarah shared the link of the current approved projects: <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener/volunteer-projects-across-vermont>. During the gardening season, the plan is to visit EMG projects as a group.

The group discussed whether or not to offer a Plant Sale this year. The sale does generate funds but it is a lot of work and there is a risk of further spreading jumping worm. After additional discussion, Little Tree suggested that the Chapter not have a plant sale in 2024. Sarah agreed. Deb shared some information on what other Chapters do. The Northwest Chapter has not offered a plant sale in two years but they do hold a gathering for volunteers where they do a book swap and plant (cutting) swap. The Rutland Chapter continues to offer their plant sale but they rinse the roots of each plant and pot into them into purchased potting mix and new pots. Little Tree suggested that the Chapter could sell veggie starts. Marion offered the suggestion that instead of a spring plant sale, perhaps the Chapter could offer a mum sale in the fall. Marion also shared an idea that a group of gardeners in Quechee is trying – they are pooling their efforts and purchasing seeds or native plants. They have selected 50 varieties and are planting in trays this winter. In the spring, they will get together and swap the plants. If successful, the Chapter might adopt this approach which would result in several flats of clean, native plants to sell. The group agreed that these were excellent suggestions and agreed to wait a year to get organized.

Danielle asked about the Chapter's Facebook account and expressed her interest in assisting with it. Sarah holds the account information and will work with Danielle on the Chapter's social media presence.

Sarah motioned to adjourn the meeting. Marion seconded. All in favor – motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7 pm.

Next Meeting

Feb 4, 6 to 7 p.m. on Zoom at: <https://uvm-edu.zoom.us/j/85876962943>, Meeting ID: 858 7696 2943; One tap mobile: +19294362866,,85876962943# US (New York).

Tentatively, the agenda will include project updates from Little Tree and Michele Delhaye.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Deb Heleba, 1/9/2024.