

Blowing Rock Garden club board meeting January 28,2026

Board officers present: President, Marie Caracuzzo
Treasurer, Patricia (Tricia) Aiken
Secretary, Barbara Law

Board members present:

Melaine Campbell

Evenlight Eagles

Joyce Zellner

Lise Jenkins

Susan Sweet

Elmyra Morris

detail

Recap: The Garden Club board discussed various administrative matters including Zoom account setup, meeting locations and donation policies while addressing technical difficulties during the meeting. The group explored options for managing invasive species, particularly Japanese knotwood, and discussed a potential educational outreach program. We also reviewed plans for future activities including a botanical paper flower making class and a train-the-trainer workshop, while considering improvements to facilities used and educational initiatives.

Next steps:

Marie: Contact Deb Boyd (and/or appropriate BROCCBlowing Rock Opportunity Commission representative) to inquire about town policy and process for installing memorials/statutes/plaques in public gardens and report findings to the statue committee.

Statue Committee (Marie, Susan Sweet, Evenlight Eagles, Pat Wheeler and others). Research and determine the approval process and requirements for placing a memorial statue/plaque in the garden including consultation with BROCC and possibility the Village Foundation and make a recommendation to the board.

Lise: Organize and conduct a pilot “botanical paper flower” workshop for a small group of garden club members (including potential trainers) in April at Joyce’s barn with materials funded by the club. Coordinate with Marie and Joyce to schedule the pilot workshop date and communicate details to participants. Connect with Willard Watson at the museum (via Susan/Elmyra) to explore partnership opportunities for the botanical paper flower program.

Evenlight, Kathy and Lise: Meet with Corey (Cathcart?) and possibly David Goodson to discuss Garden Club support for invasive plant removal; specifically regarding consultation and potential funding for expert consultations with John and Rachel of Magna Silva.

Lise and David Goodson: Develop educational materials (e.g. flyers) and outreach for the Japanese Knotweed/invasive plant invasive plant tissue, including preparation for the July 4th parade.

Evenlight and Kathy: Meet with Corey to discuss for proposal for renovating or replacing the dilapidated shed near the gazebo for both aesthetic and storage/tool shed purposes and develop a proposal for BROCC.

Marie: Put the ZOOM Pro account discussion (club ownership vs President, cost, etc.) on the agenda for the April board meeting for decision. Put the possibility of in-person board meetings (and potential locations/hosts on the agenda for the April board for discussion.

Joyce and Lise: Prepare and distribute Japanese Knotweed educational materials for use at the 4th of July parade.

Evenlight: Update Ed Rooley on the status of the statue project, informing him that the club is investigating the feasibility and town requirements, and that his donation can be returned or redirected if a memorial cannot be placed as requested.

Summary

Club Zoom Account Setup Discussion

Marie and Lise discussed setting up a Zoom account for the club. They considered options for ownership and accessibility, including making it transferable between presidents or keeping it as a club expense. Lise offered to help set up and manage the account, including providing training if needed. In-person board meetings were discussed depending on location and the availability of members. Marie will be retired in May. The transition of responsibilities was discussed.

Donation Policies and Meeting Logistics

The board discussed donation policies and the Ed Rooley statue donation. It was agreed to maintain the current practice of acknowledging donations in meeting minutes, and on the website, while avoiding named memorials in the gardens due to limited space and potential maintenance issues. The board confirmed we would use the American Legion for most meetings with Joyce's barn as a backup location July 8th. We also reviewed the current balance of \$38,996 and noted that Marie would submit the tax form applications by February 1st.

Public Statue Memorial Proposal

The group discussed a proposal for a memorial statue in a public garden with the Ed Rooley donation of \$10,000 for a statue honoring his wife. There was a discussion as to whether the club should proceed with the statue or redirect the funds to other projects like native plant initiatives. Joyce suggested dropping the statue idea entirely and focusing on garden maintenance. The group agreed to table the discussion until they could determine the protocol for adding memorials in public spaces with Marie planning to contact Deb Boyd from the BROCC committee for guidance.

Memorial Donations and Invasive Plants

The group discussed two main topics: a memorial donation and invasive plant management. Susan suggested checking with the Village Foundation (VF) about accepting memorial donations, while Evenlight proposed using the funds for a statue rather than a bridge. Regarding invasive plants Evenlight reported that David Goodson presented to the town council about Japanese knotweed which is approaching an explosive growth phase. The group agreed to work with Corey to develop a plan with John and Rachel from Magna Silva providing professional expertise on native plants and invasive species, and proposed funding consultations and some physical labor for removal. Evenlight also suggested revisiting the group's mission statement to formally commit to ecological health and community gardening initiatives.

Japanese Knotweed Education Campaign

The Garden Club discussed the Japanese knotweed infestation in Blowing Rock, with Lise proposing an educational outreach campaign rather than direct removal. The club agreed they could help through presentations, flyers, and a speakers bureau leveraging David Goodson's existing contacts and expertise. The bylaws were reviewed which already support environmental education and horticultural improvements. Potentially funding consultations with John and Rachel to provide guidance on the knotweed removal process was discussed.

Botanical Flower Making Pilot Program

Lise proposed a pilot program to teach botanical paper flower making to Garden Club members with plans to expand to the public and potentially use it as a fundraiser. The class would focus on native plants and include educational elements about botany and pollination. The group agreed to organize a pilot class in late April with a small group of interested members with potential use of Joyce's barn as a location. Lise emphasized the need to find a group of dedicated participants who could help develop and teach future classes. Evenlight made a motion to have participants pay a \$10-15 fee for the workshop with the remaining cost funded by the club and Elmyra seconded it.

Workshop Funding and Meeting Plans

The group approved funding for a train-the-trainer workshop led by Lise to teach members how to create plant centerpieces with the workshop to be held at Joyce's barn in April. They discussed the possibility of transitioning from the current Zoom Basic to Zoom Pro (\$159/year) for future meetings, and considered holding some board meetings in person at members' homes. The group also explored ideas for the July 4th parade to include educational banners about invasive plants and also discussed ideas to improve the gazebo area's small tool storage shed.

Structure Plans and Event Updates

The group discussed plans for a new structure near the hose reel, with Evenlight proposing to meet with Corey to explore options and gather feedback. It was agreed to table the statue proposal for now with

Marie planning to reach out to BROC about the memorial plaque. The group also confirmed a bingo event scheduled for September 3rd at the Conference Center due to concerns about parking at the American Legion.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara F. Law, Secretary