

## **Historic Iris Preservation Society**

Minutes of the Board Meeting of April 29, 2021

### **I. Call to Order**

A. The meeting was called to order by President Wendy Scott at 9:02 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time via Zoom.

### **II. Roll call** by Secretary, Nina Morris.

- A. Present: Wendy Scott, Dave Prichard, Nina Morris, Judy Keisling, Cathy Egerer, Delane Langton, Suzanne Butler, Linda Baumgartner, Lori Vandette, Susan Flow, Gary White, Nancy McDonald, Laetitia Monro, Tammy Skahan and Tim Vanover.
- B. Absent: Alice Laughlin, Janet Smith, Allyson Whalley, Lori Lensch-Marcotte and Judy Schneider.

### **III. Additions/Changes to the Agenda**

President Wendy Scott called attention to two changes to the Agenda that were posted prior to the meeting.

Nancy McDonald reported that Guardian Gardens had been contacted by someone in Switzerland. They sent a wish list of irises needed for their Botanical Gardens and HIPS will attempt to help locate some of them. This will hopefully forge a good relationship for HIPS.

### **IV. Approval of the previous meeting minutes**

Acknowledgement of Approval

### **V. Treasurer's Report**

- A. Written Interim Financial Report for the year-to-date was submitted prior to meeting via email to board.
- B. Verbal report by Judy Kiesling: Year-to-Date Income of \$4,192.99 and Year-to-Date Expenses of \$3,792.66 for a Year-to-Date Profit of \$400.33. Combined with Total Assets at end of 2020, it brings Total Assets as of March 31,2021 to \$79,808.15.

### **VI. President's Report**

- A. President Wendy Scott welcomed Tim Vanover, who has taken over as the new Commercial Iris chair.
- B. Nancy McDonald asked about email address changes for Roots. Official [historicism.org](http://historicism.org) email addresses are being adopted so that the addresses will remain the same even though officers change.
- C. The agenda items for the Annual Meeting next week were set forth. The financial report will be presented, candidates for the HIPS election will be introduced, and the Distinguished Service Award will be presented. Discussion will continue on whether new membership rates will be discussed. Wendy will prepare a slideshow of agenda items.
- D. Wendy and Cathy reported that they had met with the Dwarf Iris Society and discussed how they conduct their rhizome sale. The group sells collections of 6 iris shipped directly by the growers. More details will be obtained and shared later.

### **VII. Old Business / Action Items**

- A. Committee/Chair Updates

1. Membership Update: Lori Vandette reported that HIPS currently has 755 members. There are 671 members from the United States, 49 Canadian or International members and 35 E-members
2. Preservation Projects Update: Tammy reported on an emergency preservation project that did not work out according to plan. There was no actual inventory of irises and plans changed at the last minute. Despite those problems, some 438 rhizomes (21 historic varieties) were rescued and shared with HIPS members. A separate group of GG designated varieties was obtained; these varieties will be grown to confirm their identities and offered in a future GG share-out.
3. Policies and Procedures Committee Update: Nancy McDonald reported that the committee had not met.
4. Retail Iris Update: Tim Vanover reported on the Searchable Air Table he had prepared of irises available from Retail Vendors. There were originally 41 sources, but 5 have closed so there are 36 sources on the list—three from Canada and the rest from the United States. He has started an Instagram account with pictures of irises and sources. The posts will be copied to Facebook pages and refer readers to the HIPS Gallery. There is a possibility that retailers may be able to host the Instagram pages for a short time.

- B. Membership Fee Recommendations: Judy Keisling and Nancy McDonald reported that postage rates have increased and membership fees have not changed for a while. They suggested that a 25% rate increase seemed logical, so they calculated the new fees, rounded them off to a whole number and massaged some of them a little. A table with the recommended rate increases was emailed to board members.

They also reported that Lifetime Memberships are not sustainable and recommended that they no longer be offered after June 1, 2021, but that existing Lifetime Memberships be honored. They recommended that the increases be effective on August 1 to allow people to get used to the increase. Further discussion revealed that an effective date of July 1 would better coincide with renewal terms. Also discussed were 20-year memberships, youth memberships, and possible AARP discounts, but general consensus was that the existing membership categories were sufficient.

Cathy Egerer made a motion that the board adopt the recommended rate increases with a July 1, 2021, effective date. The motion was seconded by Dave Pritchard. All were in favor of the motion and it carried.

- C. A slate of board members up for election this year was introduced. Incumbents, Wendy Scott and Nina Morris, will run for re-election as President and Secretary, respectively. Suzanne Butler will vacate her seat as South Central Director to run as Vice President; Randy Smith will run to replace Suzanne. Jessica Kelley, who assists with the Guardian Garden program, will run for North Central director. Treasurer Judy Keisling, who has been trying to step down, will run again for Treasurer. When a replacement is found, a successor will be appointed to her position. Two possible candidates are on the radar.
- D. Tim Vanover and Cathy Egerer reported on the Website Overhaul. Eight or nine developers responded that our desired list of improvements was in the \$30,000 to \$50,000 range and discussion was held on how to bring the price down. Webfitters, who designed the Peony Society's website, responded with a \$25,000 proposal that still included some things that weren't essential, so a not-to-exceed price of \$19,800 was negotiated. Laetitia Monro expressed concern that the Wordpress Membership Portal be retained and that the Gallery function be optimized. Cathy reminded the board that the website is the public face of HIPS and recommended that the board accept the proposal, while Nancy McDonald commented that the update was for the good of HIPS. President Wendy Scott asked for a motion that the board accept the quote from Webfitters. Judy Keisling made the motion, which was seconded by Dave Pritchard. By roll call vote, the proposal was

accepted, with none dissenting. Judy Keisling will revise the budget, allowing \$20,000 for the overhaul.

### **VIII. New Business / Action Items**

- A. Website Contact Information Restructure: Wendy reported that email phishing has been problematic for some board members lately. She recommended that individual email addresses be hidden from non-members of HIPS by placing a basic “Contact Us” email on the main site and making individual board emails available on the “Members Only” section of the site.
- B. Board Liability Insurance: Cathy reported on insurance to protect the personal assets of board officers and members from legal actions. She will look into the insurance and report back to the board.

### **IX. Other**

None

### **X. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Suzanne Butler to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Delane Langton. The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 p.m. EDT

Respectfully Submitted by Nina Morris, Secretary