

Victoria Gardens Women's Club
MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 7, 2021

Members in attendance: Laura Blackburn, President; Bonnie Friedman, Vice President; Barbara Solis, Treasurer and Directors: Linda Holmes, Rosie McKenna, Linda Reim, Susan McMahon, Connie Hampton.

Treasurer's & Secretary's Reports were noted and approved respectfully.

Laura welcomed Darlene Cross as the new secretary to the club.

Cruise Week: Rosalene Feller provided a status update which included:

- Net estimates for cruise activities: Mahjong \$500, Sequence \$900, Texas Hold-em \$500, Pickleball \$500, Water Volleyball \$400, Bunco \$1300, Bingo \$800 - \$1000. The fashion show featuring Lace & Accessories has a potential of \$800.
- The Sail Away event will include entertainment, cash bar and a signature drink. This will be a highlight event and is expected to break even.
- The Beer Gardens event will be sponsored by Laura & Bill Blackburn, allowing more of our proceeds to go to our charities.
- Captain's Dinner will cost \$35 per person; entrée selection will possibly be Chicken Kiev or Chicken Cordon Bleu.
- Port of Call dinners will be organized and managed by the Vine Restaurant; they graciously agreed to donate \$2 per dinner back to our charities.
- Barbara Solis and Dorothy Stangle will manage raffles and free events respectfully.
- Lynda Stein is the lead on the decorating committee and has the creative genius needed.
- Baskets will be created by each branch and auctioned off.
- Savannah is working on the overall budget for cruise week.

Rosalene has done an incredible job-to-date and continues to work on this project. She is managing all aspects of this event and has many committees and members assisting her.

Membership Update: Laura provided us with exciting news: we reached the milestone of 250 members!

Nametag Status: Connie has received a large number of tags and will oversee distribution of them. A new order has been initiated and will be submitted when we have enough requests to submit.

Tribute Card: Nancy Greenfield proposed that the club offer tribute cards which will allow members to make a \$5 donation in honor/memory of a friend or loved one. It is a tasteful way of receiving donations for the club with low costs. 100 cards = \$51.44 (plus postage). Nancy acknowledged Joan Neumann for her assistance with this project. Nancy agreed to manage the program.

Storage Units: There are two units currently. One is free and one is \$200 monthly. The \$200 unit is filled with furniture. Susan volunteered to see if one of our charities would be able to use and remove the items. The remaining unit will be organized to stockpile our monthly collection items from the branches; plus, other Club items. Susan has a goal of accomplishing this in October.

October Luncheon: will be held at the Sanborn Center. Lynn has arranged transport of the box lunches from Publix. Tablecloths are taken care of. Directors will disburse to various tables to ensure all members (new and old) feel welcome. Raffle tickets will be sold at this event. We will return to the clubhouse for the November luncheon due to the lifting of COVID restrictions. It is possible the lunch price may need to be increased.

Dues 2022: Laura initiated discussion regarding \$35 membership fee. She asked board to give it some thought, and we will discuss at a future meeting.

Bake Sale: There is a bake sale October 16th. Laura will send out an email requesting baked goods from our members. Our only involvement in this project is providing baked items.

Charities

- Susan presented a request from Stetson University. It was viewed as a worthwhile cause but there was concern that it could restrict other financial help that we have done in the past. This discussion will continue after additional research because it represents a significant amount of the budget. The request is \$14,000.
- The Stetson University detailed request was sent out to all directors prior to the meeting. If anyone needs a copy, let me know. Susan's charitable report has additional information relating to this request.
- We lack data on previous spends before making any decisions. Since last year's data did not depict an accurate picture due to COVID, Susan offered to create a charitable budget.
- Going forward, charitable donations will be captured to report the non-cash donations more accurately to our membership.
- Rosie and Susan are working together to develop a vetting process to manage requests.

T shirts: Connie modeled a black t- shirt with Women's club logo on the front and the branch's logo will be on the back. It looked great and has some potential profit.

Website future enhancements: Laura continues to work on the site improving it. Mailboxes are being created and Laura encourages us to put the site to use and provide input. Branch leaders are encouraged to obtain feedback from their members regarding the site. Victoria Park has a Residence's Only presence on Facebook; it's under discussion to include VGWC. Laura discussed creating business cards to hand out to introduce the web site to get members comfortable using it.

Visitation House request for plastic bins: Susan volunteered to contact them for additional details to see if we can help with this need.

Treasurer's report: Barbara reported that our account is balanced and available on our website.

Friendship Branch Committee – Ellen's notes

The Friendship Branches are off to a great start with 14 active Branches, (10) returning Leaders and (4) Branches with new Leaders. All the Leaders had a refresher training session led by Rosie McKenna. It was not only informational but inspirational. The groups have met in September and have begun to plan for the next couple of months. Each group is unique unto its own and sets their own agenda. I have taken note that this year Branch members are starting to take more ownership in their group and have a keen interest in helping with planning and executing activities. I get new applications every week and my committee has an organized and efficient plan for placing applicants with a group.

I have worked with Susan McMahon on a schedule for charitable donations which the Branches will be collecting on a rotating schedule. I have asked Susan to convey that information to the Board.

Connie Hampton and I have worked together to collect both the Women's Club applications and Branch applications. We still need to work on making sure the applications get to the proper location.

In addition, Rosie reported that surveys were distributed by branch leaders to gather information on social and charitable ideas.

Membership Committee – Connie's notes

- Membership continues to grow.
- Thanks to everyone who helped to make the Rack Card "Gorgeous".
- Membership committee has been born. Members are: Maureen Dube, Joann Grabowski, Sara Green, Nancy Greenfield, Sherry Mack, Ann Shanley, Johnnie Thornett.
- I would like to entertain the idea of having a "Flamingle" for our New Members. A get together with some tea/coffee and a side item. Time for the new members to meet the Board of Directors and help them get their feet on the ground.
- My committee will be present for the October meeting at the Sanborn Center. Their mission is to make sure everyone has a pleasant experience and be available to answer any questions. We are also interested in maybe starting a caring card project and we have discussed other ideas to come.
- I am wearing a sample T-Shirt with our Organization's logo and when we place an order we will also add the Friendship Branch logo to the back of the shirt. Could turn into a money-making project and we might look into getting visors.
- Got a New Neighbor?

Charitable Action Committee – Susan's notes

Technology Update

- I am dropping this from Charitable Action Reporting as this initiative is now a VGWC wide endeavor. Laura and Edie Olmedo own development of the website benefiting all director groups.

Family Renew Update

- Family Renew is assessing their needs and will be moving out most items in October when they expect a vacancy at the apartments. They have gained access to their unit.
- Linda and Dorothy are going to the unit to organize contents. I asked if they could include me as well and can select furniture items they want held for October.
- VGWC currently has two units. Both are filled with furniture. Family Renew doesn't need furniture frequently enough and we have therefore been left storing the pieces. That will be resolved in October by moves to Family Renew and Neighborhood Center at which time we will release the second unit.
- We purchased and delivered diapers, toilet paper, baby wipes and laundry detergent. Susan used existing gift cards to make the purchases. As a result, she is creating a gift card tracking system to

account for how these funds are used going forward. This will tie into our overall reporting and tracking needs.

Neighborhood Center

- Charitable Action Committee members asked us to explore Neighborhood Center. Susan met by phone with Laurie Chilcot, Thrift Store Manager who can coordinate pick-up of the donated goods and they will either be sold in the store or placed in one of their Bridge apartments.
- I am trying to set-up a meeting with Waylan Neice, Director of Operations to do a needs assessment with him and learn more about their programs. Their main focus is providing services to the homeless, managing Bridge transitional housing program for the homeless, serving youth and single homeless, a Meals on wheels type program and the Thrift Store is a main source of revenue for them. They appear well organized and have a professional board of directors and several staff members.

Volusia County Council On Aging (COA)

- Rosie and I met with Penny Young-Carrasquillo, Chief Development Office for COA. We requested the meeting to gain a deeper understanding on senior services needs in our community. This is one of our themes and we feel currently it is underserved and COA seemed a good place to start. I left materials for the BOD at this meeting.
- Some potential opportunities:
 - Meals On Wheels – Adopt a Route
 - Pet Meals On Wheels – pet food donations
 - Telephone Reassurance – shut-ins because of the Pandemic
 - Annual Giving Tree Recipients
 - VGWC donate – Robotic pet (assists seniors with dementia)

Shred Event

- We will host a Shred event, co-hosted in conjunction with the men's club.
- We have secured 3 confirmed sponsors: Eric Hansen, Realtor; Beth Weinbrenner, Realtor and Saimir Hosha, Painter. We may have a fourth sponsor.
- Bids received from two shred-it companies. Crown Infrastructure Management – 4 hour minimum at \$250.00/hr and Shred-It company- 4 hour minimum at \$270/hr (reflects a 10% discount)
- Event held on a Saturday morning late November/early December. A canned food drive will be held in conjunction. Residents encouraged to bring canned goods to the event. No fee to residents to participate, open to all VG residents
- Coordinating with Doug Stenson, Men's Club on details. Will coordinate with Joan Neumann announcements and posters and Evelyn on club house property use

Branch Collections Schedule

- Launched a collections schedule of most frequently requested items for agencies we serve. Four branches each month will be asked to donate designated items for that month and

schedule will rotate through the 14 branches. Schedules have been delivered to branches. Collections start in October and to-date the program is being well received by members.

- Cheryl Sullivan and Marianne Smith have agreed to help with inventory tracking and controls. We will store excess items in the storage unit. In the future the inventory can be updated and tracked via the website. (future enhancement)
- Drop Off locations are:
 - Susan McMahon
 - Rebecca Carpenter
 - Laura Blackburn

Stetson Latin-American and Latino Studies Aid Funds

- Committee voted to continue exploring this opportunity and bring a recommendation to the BOD on our commitment. Rosie and Edie will remain contacts on this project and provide more insight into their specific short/medium/long term needs.
- Proposal presented to BOD for consideration and discussion at this meeting.

Annual Giving Tree

- VGWC will again sponsor a Giving Tree for Holiday gifts. Joan Neuman and Loretta Ditmars will assist as in the past, but it is the Charitable Committee's responsibility to make sure this is supported and successful. In the past this has supported Family Renew, Rose Manor, Visitation House, GAL and Community Partnership for Children. Our primary role is to be the main point of contact for the project, get the lists from agencies and help manage gift distribution. We have volunteers from past years to assist with tags.
- Cheryl Sullivan has offered to be point of contact for the program and soliciting volunteers to help with tags and gift drop off.
- Trees will go up mid-November and Drop off will be two days in mid-December.
- Planning meeting TBD in October.