

WORCESTER COUNTY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

178th ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

MARCH 28, 2019

Jim Karadimos, the Society's President, welcomed the Society's members to its Annual Meeting and called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

Mr. Karadimos called for a motion to approve the minutes from the 2018 Annual Meeting. A motion was made and seconded and the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes were approved.

Steve Pitcher, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's report. He reported that the organization achieved excellent financial results in 2018 with revenue of \$4,639,157 exceeding expenses of \$4,389,362. Admissions and memberships continue to grow, and the value associated with volunteers continues to increase. He also reported that with the proposed change of the fiscal year to now begin on April 1 of each year, fiscal 2019 will be a "stub" year running from January 1, 2019 to March 31, 2019 and that the results from fiscal year 2019 will be reported on the Tower Hill website and that a meeting of the members will not be held to report these results. Instead, questions regarding both the FY19 and FY20 fiscal years will be addressed at the annual meeting in June 2020.

In the President's report, Mr. Karadimos stated that Tower Hill Botanic Garden continues to grow with membership now standing at 8,600 households. He stressed the need for the organization to continue to be a positive force in the community by demonstrating the ways in which horticulture can contribute to the health and happiness of people and to aid in the sustainability of the environment. Our efforts should be reflected in programming that we offer for people of all ages, economic backgrounds, and cultures and that we need to reach out to increase our presence in the communities we serve. He concluded his remarks by informing the meeting members that Tower Hill Botanic Garden has been selected as a finalist for the 2019 National Medal for Museum and Library Services. We are the only public garden to be included as a finalist for this prestigious award. At the conclusion of Mr. Karadimos' remarks, a wonderful video was presented about Tower Hill containing scenes of the beauty of the garden and comments from staff, volunteers, and visitors relating to the many benefits that people derive from the garden.

In the CEO report, Ms. Elton expressed her appreciation for the excellent support she has received from the Board, staff, volunteers, and membership as she completes her second year at Tower Hill. She asked staff members present at the meeting to rise and they received a warm round of applause of appreciation from the members. Ms. Elton then reviewed progress on the development of Phase 1A of the Master Plan and the Ramble, our newest garden which will be a learning space for intergenerational groups to connect with nature. She informed the membership that attendance in 2018 reached a record number, surpassing 151,000 visitors, and that we are proud to be a "Garden for All" as we engage a more diverse set of groups than ever before. Ms. Elton then welcomed Mark Richardson, the new Director of Horticulture, to our organization. Finally, she recognized the outstanding efforts of the Worcester Tree Initiative

which has become integrated as a department of Tower Hill. The WTI has accomplished their goal of replacing 30,000 trees destroyed by the Asian Long Horn Beetle and are now educating hundreds of youth and adults on methods for proper tree planting and care and are forging many community partnerships.

Frank Reece was asked to give his report as chair of the Governance Committee. He presented for approval the following recommendations of the Governance Committee:

To serve a first three year term as Trustees ending in 2022

Pat Bigelow, Curtis Falzoi, Abe Haddad, Tom Halpin, Dennis Murphy, and Mike Pagano

To serve a second three year term as Trustee ending in 2022

John Lee

To serve a one year term as Trustees ending in 2020 to continue serving as an Officer

Rick Leif, Barbara Morse, Jim Karadimos, Shirley Williams

To serve as Officers of the Society

President	James Karadimos
Treasurer	Stephen Pitcher
Asst Treasurer	Mike Machnowski
Secretary	Rick Leif
Vice President	Barbara Morse
Vice President	Frank Reece
Vice President	Matt Mattus
Vice President	Dix Leeson
Vice President	Shirley Williams

To serve on the Governance Committee

Frank Reece chair, Curtis Falzoi, Abe Haddad, Howard Jacobson, Jeremy O'Connell, Pat Gray

These recommendations were approved by the meeting.

Mr. Reece then introduced Pat Gray, Trustee and a member of the Governance Committee. Ms. Gray presented a list of changes to the bylaws recommended by the Governance Committee for approval. The most significant of these changes modifies the fiscal year of Tower Hill to begin each year on April 1 and end on the following March 31. A motion to approve these changes was made, seconded, and approved by the meeting.

Trustee Emeritus Jeremy O'Connell and a member of the Governance Committee then came to the podium to recommend that past Trustee Betsy DeMallie be elected as Trustee Emerita. A motion was made, seconded, and the election of Ms. DeMallie as Trustee Emerita was approved.

Mr. Karadimos recognized outgoing Trustees Nazneen Cooper, Michelle Hanss, Patty Gates, Howard Peterson, and Doug Radigan and thanked them for their outstanding service to the Society.

Mr. Karadimos then asked members of the Worcester Garden Club in attendance to come to the front of the room. He informed the membership that the Worcester Garden Club is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019. He announced that in recognition of the outstanding contributions the club has made to the Worcester community, the Worcester County Horticultural Society is honored to present its highest award, the Silver Medal, to the Worcester Garden Club. The membership gave a warm round of applause to the club members present at the meeting.

Mr. Karadimos declared the business portion of the meeting adjourned at 5:10pm at which time Jessica Pederson, Director of Education, introduced Don Rakow from Cornell University who made a thought-provoking presentation on the role that public gardens are playing in under-served communities by providing services “beyond the garden walls” to improve the quality of life in these communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard A. Leif, Secretary