

KAWO Executive Committee Agenda
July 12, 2025 at 7:00 pm on ZOOM

Present: Noel Ocen, Quyen Edwards, Ellie Shenkar, Cameron Lockwood, Mel Luna, Ilse Gebhard, Paul Laferriere, Ann Klobucar, Beth Blackburn, Kathy McGoff.

Absent: Carole Offerman, Mike Weis, Jessie Narda Davis, Jessica Hagen and Dave Wendling

1. Call to order by President Noel Ocen at 7:01 pm.
2. Changes to Agenda are under New Business Wetland Complaint EGLE.
3. Reading of Minutes from April 16, 2025 for discussion and approval. Spelling corrections needed in section 8 & 9. Motion to approve minutes made by Quyen and seconded by Ann. All in favor and motion passed.
4. Ellie reported the Plant Sale invoice from Hidden Savanna was not paid in June. Because extra Plant Sale Plants were sold at Spring Plant Exchange, the monies are co-mingled. Quinn and Cameron purchased 6 ft tables for Plant Sale and can be used for other KAWO events. Trays and other items were purchased for Plant Sale. Donations were made in memory of Paul Olexia. Tax Exempt Certificate was sent to the Executive Board. Ellie does not want to use VENMO and has switched to PayPal. In future, better tracking of signs and book sales might be needed. Beth will advertise KAWO signs on KAWO website. Quyen would like to do Zeffy for raffle. Ellie mentioned a raffle license is needed. Might not need the license if monies are called donations.

Reading of Treasurer's Report dated April 30, 2025, May 31, 2025 and June 30, 2025 for discussion and approval. Motion to approve all Treasurer's Report made by Beth and seconded by Cameron. All in favor and motion passed.

5. Old Business
 - a. Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones Educational Scholarship Program:

Purpose: KAWO would set aside \$1,000 annually to fund reimbursements of up to \$200 for Executive Committee Members to attend educational programs intended to their knowledge of native plants, the environment or the development of programs and/or systems supporting the work of the Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones.

Requirements: The recipient must be a voting member of the Executive Committee at the time of the request and program attendance. The recipient must submit receipts to the Treasurer for the approved program in order to receive the reimbursements. The recipient should submit a brief written request explaining the value of the program, and, if appropriate, the recipient's ability to share the knowledge gained at the program with other KAWO members. Each

recipient can only receive one scholarship per calendar year. After discussion, this program would start in 2025. Motion made by Ellie and seconded by Cameron. All in favor and motion passed.

b. Noel reported on \$200 donation from the Michigan Garden Club.

c. Noel reported Plant Sale profits at \$4,946 after expenses.

d. Spring Plant Exchange was held with a memorial for Paul Olexia.

e. Fall Plant Exchange will be held at Crane Park on September 7th. Flyers will be made for Pints Native Plants and Portage Backyard Garden Tours. Beth will create a dedicated web page. Quyen mentioned Crane Park volunteers collect native seeds for Portage Seed Library. Noel mentioned also collected for Kalamazoo Library. After discussion on refreshments, the Executive Board decided on water only. Ellie inquired about rental fees. Noel reported that Natalie Patchell has taken care of fees. Kathy inquired about canopies and tables. Noel requested one canopy and several tables. Noel would like 3 to 4 KAWO Native Plant Experts to volunteer from 9 am to noon for approval and sorting plant donations. Noel would like KAWO Native Plants Experts to volunteer for Crane Park Tours at 2 & 3 pm. Mel made a motion to donate KAWO sign to Crane Park. Noel seconded. All in favor and motion passed. No restrooms are available in Crane Park.

f. Native Plant Demonstration Garden in Bronson Park has been revised by Mike Weis with new cost estimate. Meeting was requested with City of Kalamazoo. KAWO committee for this project is Noel, Quyen, Mike and Paul. This KAWO committee would like stamped concrete pathways like Portage District Library. These pathways would increase costs about \$20,000. KAWO committee has met with Justin Gish and Patrick McVerry from Kzoo Parks who supports stamped concrete pathways. Because of deadlines for City Budget, fall planting would be in 2026 or 2027.

6. New Business

a. Complimentary Memberships are available. Ted from Brewery Outré was suggested for Complimentary Membership.

b. Egle Complaint was filed against Portage Public Schools over installing a disc golf course in a wetlands that houses Blanding's Turtles, an endangered species. Extensive mowing is being done in the wetlands. Quyen was written a letter to support this complaint from KAWO. The letter was included in the Executive Board meeting packet. Ilse made a motion to approve the letter and Beth seconded. All in favor. Passed. Quyen will be sending the letter online tonight.

7. Reports of Committees

a. Program Chair Mel reminded Board of two events this week. Details in Announcements & Action Items.

- b. Outreach & Education had no report.
- c. Monarch Group had Ilse coordinate volunteers to create 300 Milkweed Seed packets.
- d. Hospitality purchased pinwheels, cookies and beverages for Paul Olexia Memorial Service at Tom Small.
- e. Community Projects Chair Paul reported Marci Larsen is Site Supervisor at Northglade School who needs help during summer because she is not available. Kelli Herbert and Cassie English are Site Supervisors at Kalamazoo Public Schools Administration Building. Jessica Hagen is Site Supervisor at Axtell Creek near Paris Cleaners who will work with Montessori Student volunteers. At Glen Park, Paul has been doing a plant map of surviving natives. Paul was contacted by FUELmi Credit Union service group offering 20 volunteers to KAWO project. Paul contacted Karin Larsen from Friends of Glen Park for using Credit Union volunteers to help build trail leading to Paul Olexia Memorial Bench. Paul is going to ask Bruce Alden to be KAWO Plant Expert at Glen Park. Five volunteers helped prepped for Spring Plant Exchange. Two workdays were done at Jerico with Krystal Gast. Paul visited Karen Williams at Confections With Convictions. Paul talked with Justin Gish about City Hall beds and Frays Parks. Paul plans to contact Plaza Corp about Michigan Avenue Courthouse Monarch Way Stations on Academy Street. Paul has not been in contact with Margo Rebar about Gull Lake project this summer. Ellie reported paying \$450 bill to Barry Conservation District for Gull Lake Project. Paul would like to meet with Ilse about her former projects.
- f. Mentorship & Site Visits Co-chair Ann has scheduled 29 site visits this year up from 12 last year.
- g. Publications had no report.

8. Announcements & Action Items

Garden Tour: Portage Backyard Tours have been rescheduled for July 17th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

Pints & Natives Plants at Brewery Outré on July 16th at 7:00 pm.

New Executive Board contact list was sent yesterday by Noel Ocen.

- 9. Motion to adjourn meeting made by Kathy and seconded by Mel. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.