

KAWO Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 15th at 7:00 pm on ZOOM

Present: Noel Ocen, Quyen Edwards, Kathy McGoff, Mike Weis, Jessica Hagen, Cameron Lockwood, Carole Offerman, Beth Bradburn, Paul Laferriere, Ann Klobucar, and Ilse Gebhard.

Absent: Ellie Shenker, Mel Luna and Mike Klug.

1. Call to order by President Noel Ocen at 7:02 pm.
2. Changes to Agenda are Fall Plant Exchange under Old Business, Mike's report on Asylum Lake rezoning under Reports of Committee, Mike's report on meeting with City of Kalamazoo Parks under Reports of Committee and Noel's report on message board under Announcements and Action Items.
3. Reading of Minutes from September 17, 2025 for discussion and approval.  
Motion to approve minutes made by Jessica and seconded by Ann. All in favor and motion approved.
4. Treasurer's Reports were tabled to November 12th meeting.
5. Old Business
  - a. Noel reported that Fall Plant Exchange had 160+ visitors, 1,500+ plants and Crane Park's volunteers very cooperative and helpful with set-up and sorting. Looking forward to next Fall Plant Exchange at Crane Park.
  - b. The third Complimentary Membership is recommended for Ted Linaberry, owner of Brewery Outré. Quyen made a motion to give Complimentary Membership to Ted Linaberry. Beth seconded. All in favor and motion passed.
  - c. Beth reported Mail Chimp costs went to higher rate because numbers went over 1500 threshold. Rate increased from \$26.50 to \$39.25. Beth will be testing the free Wild Ones Mass mailer for our usage. Beth will continued to used Mail Chimp for now. Beth will update us at the November meeting.
  - d. Kathy reported on elections. Quyen is running for President, Ellie is running for Treasurer, Cameron is running for Secretary, Mike Weis is running for Member at Large and Kira Griggs is running for Member at Large. Open positions are Vice President and two Member at Large positions. Noel and Jessica are not seeking reelection. Only one current Board Member has not replied.
  - e. Paul reviewed the Nancy Small Memorial Fund applications sent by Ilse. Paul proposed

KAWO help the hosts pick the site, design the installation, make the plant list and install the plants. The hosts will do weeding and watering under KAWO's instruction for 2 to 3 years. Noel wants the hosts to help install the plants while KAWO supervises the installation. Mike Weiss asked about prep work. Paul mentioned concerns over herbicides. Quyen suggested using ADAPT Ecology Model. Quyen mentioned ADAPT might provide labor for planting. Paul mentioned KAWO should not maintain Native plant sites in perpetuity. Maintenance of long established sites should revert to the land owner. Noel suggested the proposed member rooster and message board might be a place for these hosts to get in touch with each other. Ann mentioned the potential of new members getting information through the message board. Noel asked Paul if he is planning to combine all plant orders. Paul plans to combine all sites with a single order. Paul plans on using plugs instead of 2 or 3 inch pots to reduce per plants costs. Paul will have to work with selected nurseries for multiple delivery dates. Noel asked if the grant would be approved by Executive Board or smaller Sub Committee.

## 6. New Business

a. Noel reminded Committee Chairs to email Ellie their Committee's 2026 budget request. The 2026 budget will be finalized at the November meeting.

b. Dave Wendling has resigned from the Executive Board.

## 7. Reports of Committees

a. Mike reported the City of Kalamazoo Planning Commission has received the resubmitted application to rezone southwest corner of Drake & Stadium Drive for another Drive & Shine carwash. That corner is next to Asylum Lake Preserve. The meeting is scheduled for November 6th. Also Mike reported on a meeting with Justin and Hannah from City of Kalamazoo Parks, Bella from Kalamazoo Watershed Council and Noel. This meeting was a follow up from last spring invasive removal project organized by Mike Stout of Michigan Waterways Stewardship. Michigan Waterways Stewardship was expected to return and plant natives but planting has not happen. Justin was looking to KAWO for help on this site. Mike advised continue invasive removal and delay planting natives. Mike and Noel thinks KAWO should advocate at Kalamazoo City Commission meetings for funding for Natural Areas in their parks.

b. Program - Quyen reported Monthly Programs schedule is waiting for several confirmations. After Mel returns, the committee will finalized the monthly programs and email the Executive Board prior to November meeting.

c. Outreach & Education - Jessica has done 3 events, a couple wetlands presentations and teacher training in last two months. Wild Ones information was available at all six events.

d. Monarch Group - Ilse has plenty of milkweed seed packets. Quyen mentioned Native

Connections is cleaning milkweed seed for a small fee. Quyen will accept uncleaned milkweed seed pods.

e. Hospitality - Kathy had no report.

f. Community Projects - Paul has met with new site stewards. Glen Park has ordered bare root plants from Prairie Moon Nursery for fall planting.

g. Mentorship & Site Visits - Ann reported 32 site visits this year. Site visits increased by 12. Ann could use more mentors for next year.

h. Publications - Beth had no report.

## 8. Announcements & Action Items

Noel asked if KAWO did a donation to Glen Park for Paul Olexia's Memorial. Paul will consult with Karen on KAWO's contribution to Paul Olexia's Memorial.

Noel asked if KAWO Executive Board voted in the language for Educational Grant. If not, this voting can be done by email.

Noel would like a digital message board for members only for asking questions, for offering native plants, looking for native plants and such. Mike suggested Google Group. Beth has looked into Google Group and is willing to create KAWO group. Noel volunteered to monitor adding or deleting people.

Noel thanked Mike for doing a Q & A program on invasive species when speaker failed to arrive. Noel would like more Q & A programs. Kathy suggested questions be sent in advance so experts come prepared with recommendations, sources and/or handouts.

Mike announced Rezoning Informational Meeting at Kalamazoo Public Library's Van Deusen Room on October 23rd from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Pints & Native Plants at Brewery Outré at 567 East Ransom near Harrison on October 16th at 7:00 pm.

KAWO Program Cultural Fire Stewardship of Anishinaabeg Guiding Prescribed Fire and Co-Management by Mary Parr on October 22, 2025 at Portage District Library from 6:30 to 8:30pm.

Seed Stewardship: Harvesting Cleaning and storing crops for Food & Seed on Saturday, October 29, 2025 at Food Innovation Center 224 East Crosstown Parkway from 10am to 1pm. Costs are \$30.00. Register at [www.kvcc.edu/community](http://www.kvcc.edu/community)

KVCC Honorable Harvest Lecture Series: Restoring The Wisdom of Ancestors and The More-Than-Human Community by Tom Small on November 11th at 418 East Walnut St., Kalamazoo from 6:30 to 7:30 pm.

9. Adjournment

Kathy made to the motion to adjourn. Beth seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.