

**ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
July 12-14, 2024  
Delta Hotel  
Guelph, Ontario  
Royal City Ballroom**

***“The Heartland of Gardens Growing and Rivers Flowing”***

**FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2024**

Registration desk and vendors' area were open before the start of the convention for delegates to visit. Early bird draws were held prior to the start of today's session.

The meeting opened at 9:00 a.m. in the Royal City Ballroom, Delta Hotel.

**Convention Theme:** “*The Heartland of Gardens Growing and Rivers Flowing*”

**OPENING CEREMONIES:** The Opening of the Convention include a piper who paraded the Officers and into the convention room.

**Welcome:** Kathy Bouma, District 7 Director and Karen Redmond, District 8 Director, brought greetings from District 7 and 8 and welcomed everyone to the area.

**Canadian National Anthem:** The membership present sang the Canadian National Anthem.

**Land Acknowledgement Statement:** Karen Redmond read the Land Acknowledgement Statement of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

**Introduction of Dignitaries:** Kathy Bouma, District 7 Director and Karen Redmond, District 8 Director introduced our special guests and dignitaries to the 116<sup>th</sup> Convention. Greetings were received from Dean Ribey, Cooperators representative, Anuraj Gill, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness and shared a video greeting from Honourable Robert J. Flack, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. We also received a video greeting from Joe Salemi from Landscape Ontario.

**Master of Ceremonies:** Sharlene Desjardins, OHA President, welcomed everyone to the convention.

**OHA Annual General Meeting Opening:** Sharlene Desjardins, OHA President, opened the 116<sup>th</sup> OHA Convention.

**OHA PRESIDENT'S WELCOME:** Sharlene Desjardins welcomed the Dignitaries, Officers, District Directors, and Past Presidents of the Ontario Horticultural Association. Sharlene thanked everyone in District 7 and 8 for their work to put this convention together. Sharlene wished everyone a weekend of learning, sharing, and meeting new people.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Charles Freeman, OHA Past President, read the Mission statement for the OHA.

**IN MEMORIAM:** Anne Harbord, Past District 2 Director was introduced and paid tribute to Debra Bellevue, District 2 Director who passed away suddenly in June 2024. Charles Freeman, OHA Past President read 4 poems for those that we have lost since the last convention. The names were highlighted on the screen by District. The Passing of the Past Presidents' Tree Dedication is scheduled for Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 2 pm at the OHA Oak Grove at the Guelph Arboretum to honour Past President, Judy Lewis.

**ROLL CALL:** Kelly Taylor called on each Officer, District Director and District to be recognized.

**MINUTES OF THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** The minutes of the 2023 OHA Annual General Meeting were made available on the OHA GardenOntario website for review and posted on the doors of the convention room.

# DRAFT

**MOTION 24-64:** That the OHA AGM Minutes of July 21-23, 2023 be approved, as presented. M/S: Kelly Taylor, District 10/Katharine Smyth, District 11. 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Sharlene Desjardins introduced Past President and Nominating Committee Chair, Charles Freeman who presented the report of the Nominating Committee and introduced the candidates as follows:

**President – Sharlene Desjardins, Vice President – Vicky Culbert, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Sandra Mazur and Kathleen Lang.**

The first call for nominations from the floor was requested and no nominations were received for any position. The elections will take place on Sunday, July 14, 2024.

**CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS AND RESOLUTIONS – CHARLES FREEMAN:** There is a maximum of 317 votes on the floor including proxies through the OHA Secretary.

**MOTION 24-65:** The time allotted to each Resolution and Motion brought before the membership for debate and consideration be limited to ten (10) minutes. M/S: Charles Freeman, District 1/Katharine Smyth, District 11. 0 Opposed, 1 Abstention. Carried.

## **RESOLUTION 24-1:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 7, 7.7 be amended as follows**

### **Current wording:**

In the event that an Officer is unable to cast a vote at an Association Board Meeting, the proxy voting rights of the Officer shall be assigned to the Association Secretary.

### **Proposed amendment:**

In the event that a District Director or an Officer is unable to cast a vote at an Association Board Meeting, the proxy voting rights of the District Director or of the Officer shall be assigned to the Association Secretary.

**0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

## **RESOLUTION 24-2:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 7, 7.8 be amended as follows:**

### **Current wording:**

Upon being elected to office or being appointed to office or being hired to an office position or signing a contract, each member of the OHA Board, any person identified in By-Law 7, 7.6 and all persons hired or under contract must sign the Code of Conduct and the Oath of Office and Confidentiality Agreement.

### **Amended wording:**

Upon being elected to office or being appointed to office or being hired to an office position or signing a contract, each member of the OHA Board, any person identified in By-Law 7, 7.6 and all persons hired or under contract must sign the most recently approved Code of Conduct and the most recently approved Oath of Office and Confidentiality Agreement.

**0 Opposed, 3 Abstentions. Carried.**

Gay MacQuarrie questioned who would approve the Code of Conduct and Oath of Office. Charles confirmed that this document would be approved by the OHA Board of Directors.

Mary Ann Vercammen asked if the Society Code of Conduct was included with this change or if the Society/Club was independent. Charles noted that this is for the Association only and that the Society/Club Code of Conduct is separate and approved by their Society/Club membership.

# DRAFT

Darlene Blair questioned where the revised By-Law indicates the re-signing frequency as it is not listed. Charles noted that Directors and Officers are elected yearly aside from the employees. The employees are hired yearly with new contractual agreements.

Tami Lyons noted that the changes brought forward for the OHA Constitution/By-Laws should be reviewed at the District and Society Level for review as well. Charles advised that this should occur and that that is why all proposed amendments are circulated to the Societies/Clubs in advance of the AGM.

## **RESOLUTION 24-3:**

Be it resolved that:

### **a) By-Law 10, 10.1 be amended as follows:**

#### **Current wording:**

A quorum for meetings of the Officers shall be 50% plus one of the Officers. At all meetings of the Officers, every question shall be decided by a majority vote. In case of a tie, the Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

#### **Proposed amendment:**

A quorum for meetings of the Officers shall be 50% plus one of the Officers. At all meetings of the Officers, every question shall be decided by a majority **of the votes cast**. In case of a tie, the Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

And

### **b) By-Law 10, 10.2 be amended as follows:**

#### **Current wording:**

A quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors shall be twelve voting members of the Board. At all meetings of the Board, every question shall be decided by a majority vote. In case of a tie, the Chair of the meeting shall cast the deciding vote.

#### **Proposed amendment:**

A quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors shall be twelve voting members of the Board. At all meetings of the Board, every question shall be decided by a majority **of the votes cast**. In case of a tie, the Chair of the meeting shall cast the deciding vote.

And

### **c) By-Law 13, 13.11 be amended as follows:**

#### **Current wording:**

Each District shall be entitled, by a majority vote of the voting delegates present at its Annual General Meeting to set a per capita annual fee. The limit of membership for any Affiliated Society/Club for assessment purposes shall be 1,000 members. Fees must be sent to the District Treasurer or Secretary-Treasurer. Fees retained by the District must be accounted for in a financial statement that has been reviewed by two financial reviewers or an auditor. The financial statement is to be presented at the District meeting, and a copy provided to each Affiliated Society/Club within the District, and to the District Secretary.

#### **Proposed amendment:**

Each District shall be entitled, by a majority **of the votes cast by** the voting delegates present at its Annual General Meeting to set a per capita annual fee. The limit of membership for any Affiliated Society/Club for assessment purposes shall be 1,000 members. Fees must be sent to the District Treasurer or Secretary-Treasurer. Fees retained by the District must be accounted for in a financial statement that has been reviewed by two financial reviewers or an auditor. The financial statement is to be presented at the District meeting, and a copy provided to each Affiliated Society/Club within the District, and to the District Secretary.

And

### **d) By-Law 13, 13.12 be amended as follows:**

#### **Current wording:**

Every District shall adopt a set of rules and policies or By-Laws to govern the proceedings of the District; such rules, policies or By-Laws shall not be in conflict with the rules, policies or By-Laws of the OHA. The By-Laws and

# DRAFT

any subsequent amendments shall be approved by a majority vote of the voting delegates at its Annual General Meeting.

## **Proposed amendment:**

Every District shall adopt a set of rules and policies or By-Laws to govern the proceedings of the District; such rules, policies or By-laws shall not be in conflict with the rules, policies or By-Laws of the OHA. The By-Laws and any subsequent amendments shall be approved by a majority of the votes cast by the voting delegates at its Annual General Meeting.

**1 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

Roger Harbord questioned what does “votes cast by” mean. Charles noted that votes for, votes against and votes abstain are counted.

Angela Davis questioned about the vote counting of the abstentions. Since the vote was completed she was asked to speak with Charles on the break.

## **RESOLUTION 24-4:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 13, 13.7, 13.7 2 be created as follows:**

District Financial Records shall be kept in a secure location for 7 years. In the following year, the records will be returned to the District Director at an in-person Board meeting.

And

Be it resolved that By-Law 13, 13 .7 be renumbered to read 13 .7 1

**0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

Caroline Marsh questioned what “secure location” means. Charles noted that we have a secure storage facility where the records are kept for the Association. Lynn Viomoran questioned if this pertains to digital records. It was confirmed that the records are not digital as they are provided in hard copy by the Districts. Should the OHA be audited, the District records may be audited as well and the hard copies would be required. Mary Ann Vercammen questioned if the records should be kept electronically as well. Marian Heil spoke on the question about digital copies and questioned who would create the digital copies, how they would be saved and provided and if they would survive for 7 years. This may be considered moving forward but at this time we are storing paper copies only.

Tami Lyons noted that the government is accepting of electronic copies but may request hard copies as well. Once the records are returned back to the District after 7 years it is up to the District to determine if they wish to destroy the records or not.

Theresa Airdrie questioned about the receipt of hard copies vs. electronic copies.

Joan McLaughlin noted that CRA determines the standards of how we manage our records. A photo copy of receipts may be required as they can degrade over time.

Roger Harbord questioned if the OHA and Districts were audited in year 8, after the records were destroyed, who would be liable. Who would be accountable for an audit if the OHA has the records of the Districts. The OHA Treasurer would be accountable to manage the audit for the Association. Should there be questions from the CRA, the OHA Treasurer would reach out to the Districts for information. After 8 years, the OHA Treasurer would work with the CRA on the audit.

Tami Lyons noted that when the records are returned it is 7 years plus a year so everyone is covered from an audit perspective.

Bonnie Wine noted that we can be audited after 7 years in the case of fraud and it is up to the District to determine if they wish to keep the records beyond that time.

# DRAFT

## **RESOLUTION 24-5:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 13, 13.8 2. Be created as follows:**

The OHA Regional Representative responsible for the District may, if invited, facilitate the resolution of disputes within the District's Leadership and may, if invited, facilitate the resolution of disputes within a Society/Clubs Leadership.

And

Current By-Law 13, 13.8 be renumbered to read 13. 8.1.

**3 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

Mary Ann Vercammen noted a typo in the rationale. Charles noted that it is not part of the resolution and thanked her for the notation.

Darlene Blair questioned why this was added as a By-Law and not part of a process. Charles noted that in the By-Laws currently if there is a matter that the Society requires assistance the District Director can mediate in the situation. In the situation where a Director finds themselves in a conflict of interest, the Regional Representative may mediate as the next person in the chain of command.

Anne Harbord noted that this resolution didn't need to come to the convention floor and this could have been a policy and procedure. It was noted by Charles that the Officers are not currently listed which is why this is being added. By leaving this gap it doesn't allow for the Association to support and assist the Societies/Clubs. Anne suggested that this By-Law could be removed in its entirety and have it added as a policy and procedure. Charles noted that removing the By-Law would require a resolution.

Darlene Blair inquired about how a conflict is defined and who defines it. Charles noted that conflict can be identified at any level and a concern of conflict can be raised. This By-Law allows for the provision of a conflict of interest to be managed by an appropriate person in the chain of command.

Leslie Daniels noted that this is a By-Law that is appreciated and will be used by a variety of Directors.

**ADJOURNMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** The AGM was adjourned to July 13, 2024.

**GARDENONTARIO GARDEN JOURNAL:** Sandra Mazur and the GardenOntario Garden Journal Committee introduced the Garden Journal noting that it is \$20 each and will be available for pre-ordering this weekend with delivery at the Fall OHA Board Meeting for distribution at the District Fall Meetings. Kelly Taylor created a garden apron and donated it to the Association for a draw on Sunday for anyone who pre-orders a garden journal this weekend.

**SPEAKER:** Rob Johnson spoke on The Green Legacy in Wellington County: Green Legacy Programme.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Kathy and Karen noted that the flower show and competition rooms will be open for viewing from 12:00 – 5:00 p.m., various bus trips will be departing promptly at 1 p.m. and seminars would be available in the afternoon from 1:30 – 2:30 and 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Delegates were reminded of the evening festivities and to join in on the fun of the silent auction.

**BANQUET HIGHLIGHTS:** Highlights for tonight's buffet dinner include live entertainment with Steve the Magician, Mike the DJ along with the District 7 and 8 Silent Auction.

## **SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2024**

Registration desk, vendors' area and competition rooms were open before the start of the convention for delegates to visit. Early bird draws were held prior to the start of today's session. Rose Odell presented all the offerings at the Supplies table this weekend. Sharlene welcomed all delegates back to the OHA Annual General Meeting.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Sharlene presented a year in review summary for 2023. Sharlene shared highlights on the new and upcoming GardenOntario Scholarship, the CNE and new documents, forms and information created and shared by the OHA. Sharlene shared some of her travels through various Districts this past year and thanked everyone for their support during her first term.

# DRAFT

**MOTION 24-66:** That the 2024 President's Report be accepted, as presented. M/S: Anne Harbord, District 2/ Lianne Krane, District 6. 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.

**TREASURER'S 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT:** Marian Heil, OHA Treasurer, introduced our auditor, Amanda Pyper, CPA, CA of Durward Jones Barkwell & Company LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants to review the Audited Financial Statement.

**2023 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** Amanda Pyper, CPA, CA reviewed the OHA Audited Financial Statement with the delegates in attendance. Amanda noted that the costs have increased and that the OHA is not exempt from those increases. There is approximately \$319K in equity and \$200K in GICs which puts the OHA in a good financial position.

**Revenues from 2023:** It was noted that total revenues in 2023 was \$309,080 with the largest amounts coming from Affiliation Fees \$99,656, Recovery of Insurance costs \$51,272, and Fundraising \$1,066. The 50/50 Raffle accounted for revenue of \$29,700.

**Donations:** Total donations in 2023 were \$3,915 which consisted of In Memoriam donations of \$2390, and other supporters of \$1525. There was also \$7294 donated towards convention costs.

**Expenses:** Total expenses for 2023 amounted to \$374,029. A total of \$20,236 was given out as Awards and Grants; Board and Committees were \$62,804, Director/Officer expenses amounted to \$20,330; Operating expenses and website was \$22,302, insurance costs were \$51,106 and salaries were \$42,446 and professional fees were \$9,018.

For 2023, the OHA realized a loss of \$64,949. It was noted that the OHA was successful in the 50/50 raffle, sale of supplies and investment interest which each helped to reduce the potential loss. The convention lost \$12K in 2023.

On the Balance Sheet, the OHA has a total of \$211,237 in investments. Under the Not for Profit rules, this amount is acceptable as it would help to cover one year of expenses.

Gay MacQuarrie inquired what the 50/50 expenses were related to. The expenses related to the raffle include the administration of the raffle for the website and the credit card costs and the payouts from the raffle.

Marian noted that there were many positives during the year 2023. We saw the COVID restrictions reduced or removed, membership increased slightly, our AGM and convention was held in person, which was the first in person convention in 3 years. We made initial connections with Dubois Agrinovation and in collaboration with Cooperators developed a Home and Auto program for members where they could save money on their insurance costs. We made improvements to our website and created new categories within our Awards program.

**50/50 Raffle Fundraiser:** Tickets are on sale this weekend and the draw will take place on Sunday at 11 am. Fifty percent of the proceeds go towards paying for education and grants for the Societies/Clubs. Our next draw will take place on September 28, 2024.

Tami Lyons questioned why the meals expensed were so much more than the revenue brought in. Marian noted that meals and breaks that were included in registration fees do not all show up as revenue on the meals line.

Roger Harbord indicated that he reviewed our financials over the last 5 years and noted that all years were reasonable aside from 2023 which has a ~\$65K loss. Roger questioned what we did to try to mitigate this loss and if this loss was forecasted. Marian noted that we had a large loss on the convention, meetings were held in person compared to during pandemic times, our fundraising was not as successful as anticipated, plus the OHA is not exempt from inflationary costs. The budget is set in advance of the year with knowledge at the time of setting the budget thus making it challenging to predict the inflationary costs or other changes that occurred.

Roger Harbord asked if the Treasurer believed that about the budget and who was going to be held accountable for this loss as he didn't feel the Treasurer had answered his question. Charles Freeman noted that he was out of order. Roger apologized and took his seat.

# DRAFT

Angela Davis thanked Marian for her work and noted appreciation for everyone's work in horticulture and food security.

Kathleen Gorsline noted the drastic increases in costs over the last few years which could not have been predicted.

Scott Roberts noted that the convention loss was approximately 10% which is not out of line for anyone who does budgeting considering the pandemic and the supply chain issues.

Linda Fraleigh noted that \$42K of the \$65K was out of the control as it was fundraising, donations and inflationary costs.

Gay MacQuarrie inquired what this year's budget is planning for with respect to a profit/loss. Marian noted that a loss is predicted for this year but not as large as last year. Katharine Smyth asked to explain the food and room costs for convention planning.

Kelly Taylor spoke on the change of convention planning today compared to previous years as there are penalties associated with not meeting meal and accommodation room minimums today. Significant negotiations occur every year to manage the budget as best as possible. For each convention a variety of convention sites are reviewed including academic sites and hotels/conference centres. Unfortunately, academic centres do not always work as they are not always accessible for our membership. We are always looking for the best price for everything that is required. Anne Harbord supported Kelly's comments and noted that there were a lot of negotiations last year and accommodation prices were held from 2019 for our members.

A suggestion came forward that the Association budget should come out to Societies so ideas and suggestions could come forward.

It was suggested that Societies/Clubs should set money aside to support the convention and to be able to send delegates.

Tami Lyons noted that she would like to see Societies do more fundraising for the Association through promotion of OHA fundraisers and that the budget being available would assist Societies in bringing forward suggestions.

Charles Freeman noted that conventions have changed dramatically over the years and we have reviewed and will continue to review academic locations. We have used academic locations and ended up having to book buses to move people around as the distance between buildings was significant which ended up costing the Association more in the end.

**MOTION 24-67: That the 2023 Treasurer's Report be approved, as presented. M/S: Marian Heil, District 6/Rose Odell, District 19, 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

**MOTION 24-68: That Durward Jones Barkwell & Company LPP, be retained as the Auditors for the 2024 year. M/S: Marian Heil, District 6/Catherine McGill, District 6. 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

## **SECRETARY'S YEAR 2023 ACTIVITY REPORT**

**Volunteer Hours:** In 2023, Societies/Clubs resumed activities within their Society/Club and community. Societies/Clubs reported 441,453 volunteer hours, plus OHA Officers reported 7,127 hours, District Directors and District Executives reported 9,670 for a total of 458,250 volunteer hours. This is an increase of 51,753 volunteer hours or a 12.73% increase over 2022. If the government had to pay minimum wage for all the beautification and betterment of the communities that was received by way of the OHA affiliated Societies/Clubs and Districts volunteering, it would cost \$7.8 million dollars. The OHA, Districts and Societies/Clubs are truly Keeping Ontario Beautiful®.

**Membership Numbers:** The OHA membership numbers reported for 2023 were 264 Societies/Clubs with 26,267 members. The membership number has increased by 1,416 members from 2022. This increase represents a 5.70% increase over the previous year. New members represent 22.30%, Youth Membership represent 1.53% and Life members represent 4.50% of our total membership of 26,267 members.

# DRAFT

**MOTION 24-69:** That the 2023 Secretary's Report be approved, as presented. M/S: Kelly Taylor, District 10/Wilma Wood, District 14. 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.

**NOMINATIONS:** Charles Freeman presented the report of the Nominating Committee and introduced the candidates as follows:

**President – Sharlene Desjardins, Vice President – Vicky Culbert, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Sandra Mazur and Kathleen Lang.**

The second call for nominations from the floor was requested and no nominations were received from the floor at this time for any position. The elections will take place on Sunday, July 14, 2024.

**CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS AND RESOLUTIONS – CHARLES FREEMAN:** The resolutions will be deferred to Sunday as the time was 10:35 and it was noted that we had run out of time today.

**OHA SCHOLARSHIP INTRODUCTION:** Sandra Mazur presented the OHA Scholarship Program and noted that this is designed to empower ambitious individuals to achieve their academic goals in a horticultural related field. The scholarship is open to members, children, stepchildren, grandchildren or step grandchildren. Up to 1 scholarship per year of \$1000 is awarded. This scholarship is for education at a Post-Secondary Education Institution in Ontario and must be a minimum of a 2-year program. Applicants may be any age. The program must be a horticultural related field. Donor cards were shared with all delegates in the ballroom should they wish to make a donation towards this new scholarship program.

Lianne Krane asked for everyone to consider donating to this scholarship fund.

Linda Clendenning noted that a charitable organization who can provide receipts will receive the full amount of a donation vs. giving the funds to family as they will only receive part of the funds. Tax receipts will be provided for donations to the Association.

Christine Gross noted that to make the scholarship more inclusive we could consider removing the need to share their marks. It was noted that the transcript request will show that they are in attendance at the school and will allow us to confirm that they are attending the program in which we will be providing funding to. A letter from the school could be provided to confirm the attendance of the student as an alternative. Robin Burns noted that she participates in a scholarship program through her workplace and has found that the transcript is important and that there are some safeguards that we should consider implementing as part of the process. Patricia Delby noted that the weighting of the criteria is important and should be reviewed before we provide the first grant. Sandra noted that this component is yet to be finalized but we will take her comments into consideration.

Christine Scheewe commented that she has gone back to school and noted that a number of grants/scholarships have excluded people who are older. Christine noted that she was pleased to see that this grant is for all ages. Christine suggested that things such as food securities and other areas not related to the OHA be considered moving forward.

**ADJOURNMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** The AGM was adjourned to July 14, 2024.

**SPEAKER:** Adam Brylowski, Manager of Conservation and Trail at the Bruce Trail Conservancy spoke on Exploration of the Bruce Trail and Significance of the Niagara Escarpment.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Kathy Bouma and Karen Redmond noted that the various bus trips will be departing promptly at 1 p.m. and various seminars would be available in the afternoon from 1:30 – 2:30 and 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

**GALA DINNER & AWARDS HIGHLIGHTS:** Highlights for tonight's gala dinner included Vicky Culbert, Master of Ceremonies and Keynote Speaker Jeffrey (Jeff) Stewart, Chef and Sommelier who spoke on the Legacy of Anita Stewart & Power of Food Day. OHA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Sandra Mazur, announced the following awards to honour OHA members for their contributions to their Society/Club and OHA.

**Community Improvement Award – 1 awarded:** presented to the Mount Forest Community, District 7. This award is a plaque provided by the Ontario Horticultural Association. It may be given to an individual, organization

# DRAFT

or company that, in the estimation of the Awards Committee, has enhanced the beauty of the landscape and/or added to the quality of life of a community with a horticultural project.

**Environmental Award – 1 awarded:** presented to Haliburton County Master Gardeners, District 4. This award is a plaque provided by the Ontario Horticultural Association. It may be presented to an individual, organization, municipality, company, school or other educational establishment that, in the estimation of the Awards Committee, has made a significant contribution to environmental preservation including habitat, restoration, and/or improvement.

**Technical Award – 1 awarded:** presented to Ellen Power, East Gwillimbury Horticultural Society, District 5. This award is a plaque which may be presented to a person who has been an asset as a technical advisor/coordinator/webmaster for a Society and/or a District and who has assisted with virtual meetings, coordinating virtual flower shows, assisting with TPON, etc.

**Award of Merit – 2 awarded:** presented to Catherine McGill, Haldimand Horticultural Society, District 6 and Harry Wyma, Ridgeway & District Horticultural Society, District 11. The award is a framed certificate given to an individual(s) for notable contributions to the programs of the Association, District or a Society with notable contributions in special beautification, outstanding work in the science or art of horticulture or supporting individuals or organizations in the area of communication or any other worthy efforts such as contribution towards advancement of sound horticultural practices, ecological and conservation practices.

**Honour Roll – 2 awarded:** presented to Trudy Bliedung, Flamborough Horticultural Society, District 6 and Audrey Lee, Acton Horticultural Society, District 6. Each recipient will be given a framed certificate and pin to commemorate the occasion. Nomination(s) can be made by an individual or a Society/Club and should be forwarded to the Awards Coordinator. The Awards Committee will select a maximum of two candidates from those nominated. The criteria to be followed are a member of an Affiliated Horticultural Society/Club with at least five years of service to one or more Societies/Clubs, has made a contribution of horticultural service to the community, District or Association or in the development of horticultural practices and has given outstanding service at the Society/Club, District or Association level.

**Trillium/Silver Fir Award – 2 awarded:** presented to Barbara Twiner, Pickering Horticultural Society, District 17 and Katharine Smyth, Tilbury & District Horticultural Society, District 11. This award as designated in 2009 is given to the 2 worthiest candidates who have given outstanding service to horticultural Societies/Clubs and to the Ontario Horticultural Association.

**OHA Membership Challenge Trophy:** The OHA Membership Trophy, originally donated by Fines Flowers of Ottawa, is a trophy to be awarded to a District with the highest percentage membership increase overall for the year. This year it was awarded to District 14 as they saw an 82.18% increase in membership for the District. Phyllis Garton, District 14 Director accepted the award on behalf of the District.

**OHA Tree Grants – 18 awarded:** The following Societies/Clubs received tree grants, up to \$300, in 2024.

- Kemptville HS – District 1
- Williamstown Green Thumb HS – District 1
- Almonte & District HS – District 2
- Pembroke HS – District 2
- Kingston HS – District 3
- Flamborough HS – District 6
- Haldimand HS – District 6
- Paris HS – District 6
- Clifford and District HS – District 7
- Chesley HS – District 8
- Tara HS – District 8
- Fort Erie HS – District 9
- Lincoln Garden Club – District 9
- Niagara-on-the-Lake HS – District 9
- Pelham HS – District 9
- Kapuskasing HS – District 12
- Thessalon HS – District 13
- Wilmot HS – District 19

**Community Garden Grants – 3 awarded:** The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) encourages its member Societies/Clubs to create or contribute to community gardens whether urban or rural. The OHA will award a grant of up to \$500 to assist in the funding of a new community garden or the upgrading of an existing community garden.

- Cramahe HS – District 4
- Mount Forest HS – District 7
- Thessalon HS – District 13

# DRAFT

**Technical Advancement Grants – 6 awarded:** To assist Societies/Clubs in meeting the objectives of the Ontario Horticultural Association, the Board will provide a Technical Advancement Grant to a maximum of \$250 to up to 6 Societies/Clubs.

- Williamstown Green Thumb HS – District 1
- Lake Simcoe South Shore HS – District 5
- London Fanshawe HS – District 10
- Dryden and District HS – District 14
- Richmond Hill HS – District 15
- Cannington HS – District 17

**Pollinator Project Grants – 3 awarded:** The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) is committed to collaborating on a province-wide strategy to improve pollinator health. The OHA will provide up to 10 grants of \$200 each annually to eligible member Societies/Clubs to create habitat in the form of pollinator friendly gardens or nesting sites on public land.

- Martintown & District HS – District 1
- Tweed & District HS – District 3
- Ambassador HS LaSalle – District 11

**Seedy Saturday/Sunday Grant – 5 awarded:** The Ontario Horticultural Association will provide a grant of up to \$250 annually to a member Society/Club to organize a Seedy Saturday/Sunday event in their community. It is hoped that such support will promote seed saving and the exchange of regionally adapted, bio-diverse seed in Ontario for the purposes of promoting seed saving and seed exchange in Ontario.

- Williamstown Green Thumb HS – District 1
- Thorold HS – District 9
- Beeton HS – District 16
- Cannington HS – District 17
- Magnetawan HS – District 18

**Youth Help Grant – 13 awarded:** This program was developed to provide financial support to Societies/Clubs who are working with youth. Any OHA Affiliated Society/Club, in good standing, which is working with youth may apply for the grant.

- Eganville and Area HS – District 2
- Pembroke HS – District 2
- Minden & District HS – District 4
- Lake Simcoe South Shore HS – District 5
- Leaside HS – District 5
- Haldimand HS – District 6
- Oakville HS – District 6
- Clifford and District HS – District 7
- Ripley & District HS – District 8
- Kingsville HS – District 11
- Ridgetown and District HS – District 11
- Pickering HS – District 17
- Wilmot HS – District 19

**Youth Project Grant – 5 awarded:** The OHA developed this grant to assist Youth Programs for their work on a public beautification/native/pollinator project. OHA outdoor signage and a grant of up to \$150 may be awarded annually to up to three (3) Youth Programs/Clubs.

- Tweed & District HS – District 3
- Minden & District HS – District 4
- Leaside HS – District 5
- Fort Erie HS – District 9
- Kingsville HS – District 11

## **SUNDAY, JULY 14, 2024**

Early bird draws were held prior to the start of today's session.

Sharlene Desjardins drew the Garden Journal Apron prize winner. The winner was Louise Freeman, District 1.

Sharlene Desjardins, OHA President welcomed everyone back to the Annual General Meeting.

## **CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS AND RESOLUTIONS – CHARLES FREEMAN:**

There is a maximum of 314 votes on the floor including the OHA Secretary proxies.

## **RESOLUTION 24-6:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 13, 13.8.3. be created as follows:**

The Officers of the OHA may, if invited, facilitate the resolution of disputes within a Society/Clubs Leadership, disputes within a District' Leadership and disputes where the Regional representative may be involved.

**0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

## **RESOLUTION 24-7:**

Be it resolved that:

The OHA Affiliation fee referenced in By-Law 4, 4.1 for the membership of Horticultural Societies/Garden Clubs be increased each year by twenty-five (25) cents for each of the Affiliation years 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028.

Angela Davis noted that if the price is less more people would attend.

Lianne Krane noted that she would like to see an increase to 50 cents as the Societies have the money in their budgets.

**MOTION 24-70: That the OHA affiliation fee referencing By-Law 4.4.1 for the membership of Horticultural Societies/Garden Clubs be increased each year by fifty cents (50) for each of the Affiliation years 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028. M/S: Lianne Krane, D6/ Veronica Heiderich, D6. 61 Opposed, 2 Abstentions. Carried.**

Marian noted that this increase of 25 cents/year is only 1 mechanism to balance the budget. The OHA is reducing expenses by reducing the mileage rate from 70 cents/km to 60 cents/km. Payments have been restricted to District Directors for only 2 visits to each of their Societies this year. We held the March 2024 Board of Directors meeting virtually and the March 2025 Board of Directors meeting will be held virtually as well which will save us money. We moved to having the Trillium delivered electronically only which eliminated the Distributor position and the Secretary taking on those duties. We are holding the convention every other year including holding the AGM virtually in the off years. We have also limited free meals at the Saturday night banquet to only the award winner.

We are increasing revenues by continuing with the 50/50 raffle to help cover costs of grants and education. We planned a fundraiser by selling garden journals and will be holding another tea fundraiser this fall. We negotiated an agreement with Dubois Agrinovation which will see the OHA receive 2% on all purchases. Having a small increase to affiliation fees of only 25 cents per member per year for 4 years allows Societies/Clubs to plan their own budgets. This small increase will provide the OHA with ~\$6200 a year, but costs the Societies/Clubs very little in relation to their membership.

The OHA currently does not receive any grant money from OMAFA. The last time we saw administrative support was prior to 1987. In 1987 the government of that time decided that the OHA should provide their own administrative support. A grant of \$19K from 1987 to 1994 was provided by OMAFRA to the OHA. Since 1994 we have not received anything from the government. The OHA would like to continue to provide grants to Societies/Clubs for things like tree plantings, Seedy Events, Pollinator Gardens and Youth Activities. The OHA would like to continue with services such as free pollinator brochures, post cards, etc.

Diana Cosby questioned what the fee is per member currently. The fee is currently \$4/member.

Diane Robichaud asked if the increases will allow us to go back to annual conventions. Charles noted that if the financial situation improves, discussion and research can be completed to determine our move forward.

It was clarified that a motion to reconsider the discussion time would extend this discussion time by 7 minutes only.

**MOTION 24-71: A motion to reconsider the motion on debate and to increase the debate time on this subsidiary motion for 7 minutes. M/S: Ursula Eley, D5. Katharine Smyth. 51 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.**

# DRAFT

Darlene Blair noted that she disagrees with the increase as Societies are trying to balance their budgets at this time now as well.

Catherine McGill noted that she heard that the OHA is an elitist club and she clarified that the fee being requested is the cost of a cup of coffee each. Catherine noted that Societies need to increase their fees as many have not increased their fees for many years. Catherine noted that all expenses have gone up including speaker fees, etc.

Gloria Brocks noted she increased the fees for their society and have now created a family membership.

Nancy Barnes noted that their Society increased their membership by 100% going from \$10 to \$20 per member. She noted that this is a small price to pay for the leadership of the OHA.

Tami Lyons noted that she belongs to 9 Societies in District 9 and they will all be able to manage this increase. It was pointed out that many of their Societies support members to attend this convention and that we need to support the Association.

Leslie Daniels supported the increase and that by bringing forward the increase over time it is more manageable for Societies/Clubs.

Libbi Hood noted that us sitting here in this room makes it very difficult for us to judge what members can manage themselves.

## **Amended Resolution 24-7:**

The OHA Affiliation fee referenced in By-Law 4, 4.1 for the membership of Horticultural Societies/Garden Clubs be increased each year by fifty (50) cents for each of the Affiliation years 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028.

**33 Opposed, 24 Abstentions. Carried.**

## **RESOLUTION 24-8:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 6, 6.3 be amended as follows:**

### **Current:**

A Nominating Committee, chaired by the Immediate Past President or the person identified in By-Law 6, 6.9, shall be appointed by the Board to ensure that candidates are available for each Office. All nominations must be forwarded to the Association Secretary, who shall forward them to the Committee Chair. A Report of the Nominating Committee shall be submitted to Affiliated Societies /Clubs 50 to 40 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall call for any further nominations from the floor at the Annual General Meeting, and complete the nomination process

### **Proposed:**

A Nominating Committee, chaired by the Immediate Past President or the person identified in By-Law 6, 6.9, shall be appointed by the Board to ensure that candidates are available for each Office. All nominations which comply with By-Law 6, 6.5 must be forwarded by the Society/Club Secretary directly to the Association Secretary with a copy to the nominee. The Association Secretary shall forward all nominations to the Nominating Committee Chair. A Report of the Nominating Committee shall be submitted to Affiliated Societies /Clubs 50 to 40 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall call for any further nominations from the floor at the Annual General Meeting, and complete the nomination process.

**0 Opposed, 2 Abstentions. Carried.**

## **RESOLUTION 24-9:**

Be it resolved that:

**By-Law 6, 6.4 be amended as follows**

### **Current wording:**

Nominees for Office should be a past or present director, having served on the Board for at least two years, or a past or present holder of an executive position on the Board.

# DRAFT

## **Proposed amendment:**

Nominees for Office shall have been a past or present director, having served on the Board for at least two years, or a past or present holder of an executive position on the Board.

And

This amendment shall come into force July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**35 Opposed, 1 Abstention. Carried.**

Anne Harbord noted that she is opposed as she doesn't believe you need to have OHA Board experience. Sheila King noted that she agrees that you do not require to be a District Director to move up to the Officers Group.

Bonnie Wynn noted that having individuals that come from outside of the Board can bring new ideas and experience.

Karen Redmond noted that she has come from being a Society member to District Secretary to a Board member and then on to an Officer as the S/W Regional Representative. Karen noted that she has been on various Boards in her volunteer career but needed the 2 years as a Director to understand how the OHA functions at the Board level.

Leslie Daniels noted that she has partnered with other groups and this could be beneficial to the OHA.

Katharine Smyth noted that she has been on other Boards and each Board runs differently. Katharine noted that she was a Society President and attended an OHA Board of Directors meeting and it was quite different and that all Societies/Clubs must be represented.

Theresa Airdrie noted that the membership should be able to decide who are in these positions.

Catherine McGill noted that she has seen change in all positions she has previously held and they change frequently and you require time to familiarize yourself with the position.

Kelly Taylor shared that this change is not to exclude anyone from putting their name forward. We want individuals to step up for these roles and put their names forward at the District AGMs. Having experience as a District Director, for a period of time, will benefit the individual when they put their name forward to run for an Officer position. The intention is to ensure that we have set the person up for success when they come forward to run for an Officer position. These positions have signing authority and decision making capabilities and we want them to be prepared for their roles. The Association also wants to reduce their risk by ensuring that those sitting in these Officer positions are provided with the time needed to gain the experience necessary to move the Association forward in a positive way.

## **RESOLUTION 24-10:**

Be it resolved that:

### **By-Law 19 be created as follows:**

By-Law 19 – District Governance

A District shall comply with the Constitution and By-Laws when forming a District Executive body however, when a District is unable to effectively form an Executive body as noted in the Constitution and By-Laws, a District may choose to use a Governance by Committee model should significant circumstances dictate. Governance by Committee shall be performed by "the Committee".

19.1 The Committee:

1. There shall be one person elected or appointed as District Treasurer. The term of office shall be from one District AGM until the next District AGM.
2. There shall be one person elected or appointed as the primary contact person for communications with, to and from the Association and OMAFRA. The term of office shall be from one District AGM until the next District AGM.

# DRAFT

3. Directors shall be elected to perform Governance by Committee and shall form the Committee to govern the District. The term of office shall be from one District AGM until the next District AGM.
4. The Committee shall appoint an individual(s) to perform the duties of a District Director as noted in the Constitution and By-Laws, sections 1 through 18 inclusive, and shall advise the Association Secretary.

19.2 In the Constitution and By-Laws, all inferences or references to a “District” related position or duty or task or otherwise shall also mean a related position or duty or task or otherwise of the Committee membership or the individual(s) appointed or both.

**This resolution was withdrawn by the mover.**

**REGULATION 16:** Charles noted that Suzanne Hanna had spearheaded the Pollinator Garden initiative at Queen’s Park. This was back in 2015 while we were in Toronto at the convention and we travelled with 2 buses to Queen’s Park. The garden at Queen’s Park has never come to fruition due to a change in government shortly thereafter. The garden at the OMAFRA Office here in Guelph has been named as the Pollinator Garden.

Charles noted that in Regulation 16 there is a notation about how an Agricultural Society will receive \$1500 as a grant on their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary to erect a structure. After many discussions and requests, OMAFRA has agreed to provide a grant for a Horticultural Society to erect a garden on their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. A definitive amount has not been set at this time and a start date for this grant has also not been set.

## **FINAL NOMINATIONS:**

The slate of Officers, as received by the Nominating Committee, was presented on the first and second day of the Convention. Final calls were made for further nominations from the floor. No further nominations were brought forward from the floor for the positions of President, Vice President and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

With no nominations from the floor, Sharlene Desjardins was acclaimed into the position of President. With no nominations from the floor, Vicky Culbert was acclaimed as the Vice President.

**SELECTION OF SCRUTINEERS:** Charles Freeman made a call for volunteers to fulfil the role of scrutineers. Four scrutineers were requested from Districts other than District 2, 8 and 14 and who are not OHA Board of Director’s members. The following volunteers were chosen to become scrutineers:

- Robert Houston, Moorefield and District HS, District 7
- Angelique Ellerton, London HS, District 10
- Catherine McGill, Haldimand HS, District 6

## **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT SPEECHES:**

Sandra Mazur, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President was nominated by Dryden & District HS and spoke on her experiences, willingness and interest to stand for the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

Kathleen Lang was nominated by Smiths Falls HS and shared her experiences and interest in sitting as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

**GARDENONTARIO 50/50 DRAW:** Marian noted that the raffle brought in \$7850 and the winner will take half. The name of Kim Hewitt, from the East York Garden Club, District 5 with ticket number D-34086 was randomly chosen as the winner of the 50/50 draw. Kim won \$3925 in the 50/50 draw. Kim was in attendance at the convention and was able to receive her prize.

## **ELECTION OF ASSOCIATION OFFICERS – Charles Freeman:**

Sharlene Desjardins was declared, by acclamation, the President for 2024-2025.

Vicky Culbert was declared, by acclamation, the Vice President for 2024-2025.

Charles thanked the three scrutineers for their work.

We had a total of 314 votes on the floor today. We handed 282 ballots out. We collected 281 ballots.

Congratulations to Sandra Mazur who was declared the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for 2024-2025.

# DRAFT

**THANK YOU'S:** Sharlene Desjardins thanked the retired Board Members for their years of service and dedication to the OHA. Thanks went out to Anne Harbord, District 2, Barbara Collinson, District 16 and Nancy Thompson, District 18. Sharlene thanked Kelly Taylor, Marian Heil and Donna Hussey for their efforts with this convention and Association business. Sharlene thanked the Board Members, Officers, Contractors and Volunteers as well as all the membership for their support throughout the last year.

**SPEAKER:** Serena Soucy, Arborist: Arboriculture spoke on Lessons Learned from the Canopy.

**MOTION 24-72:** That all ballots cast during the course of conducting the business of the OHA at the 2024 AGM be destroyed ninety-three (93) days after the adjournment of the OHA 2024 AGM and that all proxy records held by the Association be destroyed ninety-three (93) days after the adjournment of the OHA 2024 AGM. M/S: Kelly Taylor, District 10, Sharon Nivins, District 8. 0 Opposed, 0 Abstentions. Carried.

**ADJOURNMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** Charles Freeman announced that the OHA AGM was closed and the next AGM will be held on July 19, 2025 via WebEx.

**CLOSING CEREMONIES:**

**Thank You from Kathy Bouma, Karen Redmond and Districts 7 and 8:** Kathy Bouma and Karen Redmond thanked their committee as well as everyone for attending the convention and thanked all of their amazing volunteers, the donors and sponsors.

**Invitation to 2025 OHA Annual General Meeting – Sharlene Desjardins:** Sharlene noted that we will be hold an AGM only next year via WebEx and look forward to having everyone join us for the important business of the Association.

**Adjournment:** Sharlene Desjardins, OHA President, thanked the delegates for attending and acknowledged our donors and sponsors of the OHA and the Convention Hosts. The 2024 Convention was declared closed.

---

Signature of President