

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES August 5, 2025

The AMGA Advisory Council met on August 5, 2025 at Petals from the Past, Jemison, Alabama.

Chairman Skeeter (Edwin) Sims asked for the roll call of the associations. There were 30 associations present. Skeeter then recognized Debbie Boutelier for a special called business meeting to approve the recommendations and changes to the AMGA Bylaws.

Skeeter called the business meeting to order and welcomed all attendees. He asked for the approval of the May AC minutes. The minutes were approved and will be posted as approved on the AMGA website.

Next Skeeter recognized Cynthia Kershaw, chairman of the AC Nominating Committee to introduce the members of her committee: Dena Morris (denamorris@frontier.com) and Joyce Christianson(bjchris@centurylink.net). She stated the positions to be filled were Vice Chairman and Secretary. Vice Chairman Tony Wallace will become Chairman for the next term. Anyone interested in serving on the Advisory Council needs to contact Cynthia Kershaw (cbkrshw@comcast.net) or the committee members.

President's Report

Debbie Boutelier welcomed everyone and stressed the need for the representatives to go back to their associations and tell what is happening and bring any concerns from the associations to the November meeting.

The AMGA wanted to better assist the Extension Master Gardener associations. To better assist the LMGA, the AMGA Board of Directors approved the following:

- Paying for badges and "Reach for the Stars" stars
- Increase Project Funding from \$10,000 to \$16,000 each year and reduced the amount of time between requests from three years to two years.
- Provide two 2026 conference registrations: one at the Fall Seminar in Columbiana and one at the state conference in Huntsville.
- AMGA will give away a native plant to all state conference attendees

Debbie stated the AMGA is looking for ways to help support the local MGAs.

Vice President's Report

Julie Conrey recognized the planning committees for the upcoming state conferences.

- 2026, Huntsville, May 6-8, 2026
Carlita Edwards reported the committees are meeting monthly. She stressed monetary donations of \$100 or more for the Silent Auction will be accepted at any time. Checks will need to be sent to the State Treasurer, Susan Steele.
- 2027, Homewood, April 7-9, 2026
Katherine Ennis reported the program committee has confirmed six speakers and it is working on workshops and tours. Contracts for venue, caterers and AV equipment have been acquired. Various other committees are continuing to work through their tasks.

Julie is looking for an association to host the 2028 state conference.

Extension Update

Kerry Smith distributed a packet containing announcements and reminders.

- *All Are Welcome* presentation—The presentation was sent to each association's representative and president. (A copy of the presentation will be posted on the AMGA website)
- The Service Report is being updated. The categories for volunteer hours will have both quick and fully expanded lists.
- Committees are meeting to develop standards in various areas for the EMGs. Reports will be presented at November and February Advisory Council's meetings.
- Schedule for the EMG Monthly Update webinars (two sessions)
 - August 25, 1 pm.-- Veggie Garden Trials; Hobson City Community Garden
 - September 29. 1 pm—Wild Gardens for Wildlife; Butterfly Gardens, Supporting Plants
 - October 27, 1 pm—Demonstration of Drying Pumpkin seed; TBA
 - November 24, 1 pm—Grow More-Give More; TBA
- Registration for Spring 2026 Intern training will begin November 1-December 12. Flyer has been sent to the local associations
- 2025 Intern graduation will be December 16 at Auburn University.
- APTV has filmed a segment that highlights Alabama EMG Volunteer Program. It will air some time in the fall.

Kerry stressed social media images should not have URL links because they are not active. Post the links in the written post.

New Business

- Elizabeth York announced there are still spots available for the Fall Seminar in Columbiana. The cutoff date for registration is September 9. Registration forms are in the summer edition of Pathways.
- Amy Weis, Chairman of the AMGA Nominating Committee stated the committee has positions to fill:
 - Two Board Members at large for three-year term
 - One Nominating Committee position for two-year termMembers who are willing to serve need to contact the committee or provide names of capable members.
- Cecilia Adams suggested an endowment to support Extension Master Gardener program. She presented several possible ideas.
 - Funding for ACES Publications for Farmer Markets, signage, and banners.
 - Demonstration garden permanent signage
 - Volunteer appreciation activities
 - Fund program to provide Assistant Agents in each region and other personnel to increase Extension to volunteer connections and activities

- Recommendations should be sent to Cecilia.(904-910-7764) call or text
- Rose McCauley, Membership Chair, reported on changes in membership status in Dues Tracker. The following categories will be listed in the system: *Active, Lifetime, Intern, ACES*. Emeritus and undeclared will be removed. Rose stressed dues must be in by December 31 to the State Treasurer.

Skeeter reminded members the Service Report has different categories. To be *certified active*, a member must pay dues, report 25 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of CEUs. An *alumni* pays dues but does not report the required hours.

The next meeting for the Advisory Council is November 4, 2025 at 10 am at Petals from the Past in Jemison, Alabama.

The meeting adjourned with a motion from Bill Holland and a second from Dena Morris.

Cynthia Kershaw,
Advisory Council Secretary