

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
November 4, 2025

The AMGA Advisory Council met on November 4, 2025 at Petals from the Past, Jemison, Alabama.

Chairman Skeeter (Edwin) Sims called the meeting to order and welcomed the members. He asked for the roll call of the associations. There were 28 associations present.

Skeeter asked Cynthia Kershaw, Chairman of the Nominating Committee to present the nominees for the 2026-2027 Advisory Council. Tony Wallace, Chairman (currently Vice Chairman, who automatically moves to the Chair); Dena Morris, Vice Chairman; and Anne Ness, Secretary. He then asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Wanda Birge nominated Carlita Edwards for the Vice Chairman. There were no other nominations. A representative from each association present casted a written ballot for the Vice Chairman position. After the votes were counted Carlita Edwards was elected as Vice Chairman.

The minutes from the August 5 meeting were approved and will be posted as approved on the AMGA website.

President's Report

Debbie Boutelier welcomed everyone and presented an update from the State Board of Directors meeting.

- The Board is continuing to update the governing documents.
- She has asked each Board to prepare a position of continuity document for their assigned position. This document will assist incoming board members to the assigned tasks for that position.
- The Board voted to work and support Bethany O'Rear in a research project for her doctorate degree. The board will be providing \$2500 in supplies. It involves serving the underfed in Alabama. Ten groups have been identified in Alabama: five in rural areas and five in urban areas. Master Gardeners will be working with the families in assisting them in building raised beds and teaching them how to establish a garden.
- Debbie presented the possibility of an AMGA license plate. A prerequisite would be 250 members would need to commit to the purchasing the plate

each year at the additional cost of \$50. After discussion, there was not enough interest in this plate. Two other possibilities were a full color plate for the front of the car and an AMGA surround frame for the rear car tag. Debbie stated she would investigate these alternatives.

Vice President's Report

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

- 2026: Huntsville, May 6-8, Westin Hotel, Bridge Street Town Center
Carlita Edwards reported all speakers and have been confirmed. Workshops will for hydroponics and flower arranging are scheduled at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. There are tours planned for the Space and Rocket Center, the Botanical Gardens and Hudson Alpha Institute. Members can now make hotel reservations through the AMGA website for the group rate for the Westin Hotel. Early bird registration is from January 15 to February 15. Regular registration is from February 15 to April 15. She stated there are 10 hotels within a four-mile radius to the conference site at Bridge Street Town Center
- 2027: Homewood, April 7-9, Rosewood Hall
Katherine Ennis reported all speakers have been confirmed and they are continuing to identify tours. All committees have been reporting in, and they plan to not reconvene until after the holidays.
- 2025 Fall Seminar had 141 people attending. Registration fees totaled \$5670, with expenses of \$2043. The AMGA and Shelby Association each received \$1800 each from the profits of the Fall Seminar.

Extension Update

Kerry Smith was not present but she assigned several people to present the updates.

- Bill Holland presented information for Search for Excellence Awards. Bill referenced the handout Extension Master Gardener Search for Excellence Guides (<https://mg.aces.edu/resources/>) and spoke about the process they went through in applying for their 21st Century Project which serves 125-150 in the middle school in Cherokee County.
- End of the Month Webinar will be Monday, November 24. The link will be sent out.

- Trish Williams stressed the importance of the AMGA members posting their service hours to show the valuable work Master Gardeners provide to the Extension Service. Members should categorize their hours which will assist in providing a detail report the members are providing to their communities and to individuals. Hours need to be posted by December 31. Unless a member is continuing volunteer hours through the holidays, the goal should be to have the hours reported by December 1. Kerry's report is due January 10, 2026. EMG Volunteer Service Report Glossary was available for the representatives.
- Susan Hagen, chairman for the Speaker's Bureau, gave an update on possible programs to assist the local associations: creating an agenda for a meeting, composing emails, introduction of speakers, basic parliamentary procedures for proposals and motions and keeping meetings on point. Susan requested if any member is knowledgeable in these topics, please contact her.
- For the counties who want to transition to the AMGA webpage for the local website, there are associations testing the association template. The association template design should be available to associations in January 2026.
- Master Gardeners intern class locations are posted on the Alabama Master Gardener Application.
- Rose McCauley reported that dues are due to her by December 31.

The next Advisory Council meeting will be February 3, 2026 at 10 am at Petals from the Past.

The meeting adjourned with refreshments and fellowship.

Cynthia Kershaw
Advisory Council Secretary