

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES DRAFT
August 4, 2026

The AMGA Advisory Council met on August 4, 2026 at Petals from the Past, Jemison, Alabama.

Chairman Tony Wallace called the meeting to order and welcomed the members. He asked for the roll call of the associations. There were 28 associations present.

The minutes from the April 26 meeting were approved. The minutes will be posted as approved on the AMGA website.

President's Report

Debbie Boutelier welcomed everyone and announced she had spoken with the presidents of all the associations, and enjoyed the comments and questions that had been discussed.

There was an extended discussion about the definition of "certified active members." It was reiterated that, in order to remain a certified active member, each person must have paid their dues, completed and posted a minimum of 25 volunteer hours and 10 CEU hours, and signed the memorandum of understanding each year.

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.
The conference was a success, and committee chairs are meeting after the AC meeting to transfer documents to the next year's conference leaders
- 2027: Homewood, April 7-9, Rosewood Hall. The theme is "Forging A Garden Oasis," the speakers have been set, several tours and workshops have been arranged. The committee chairs expressed great enthusiasm about the conference.

- 2028: Dothan, April 27-29 (the date has been changed). The theme is “Nuts about Gardening,” and the venue will likely be Calvary Baptist Church.

Extension Update

Kerry Smith presented several updates.

- The Fall AMGA seminar will take place on October 9 at Auburn. Registrants can visit the Raptor Center on October 8, and the main event October 9 will provide information on new Transformation Garden projects. Registration opened August 1.
- Several associations were recognized for their donations and gifts of produce, including MGNA, Marshall, and Cullman. Marshall County is leading the 250 Challenge for Grow More, Give More. More information can be found at www.aces.edu/go/250Challenge
- The Pollinator Census will take place August 21 and 22. Associations are encouraged to promote and participate in this event. More information can be found at www.aces.edu/GreatSoutheastPollinatorCensus
- Association Hours Managers should be on the lookout for an email from Kerry about reporting updates.
- Webinars are available via Zoom from Extension. A link will be forthcoming.
- The Alabama Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Store is now open. Items include hats, shirts, and aprons. More information is at www.aub.ie/EMGVolProgramStore
- There is a new endowment that has been established to support the AMGA Extension Program. AMGA has made a contribution, and all associations and members are encouraged to contribute and become members of the Branch and Bloom Society. More information can be found at www.aces.edu/go/BranchandBloom

Awards

Sondra Henley has a new form to order replacement badges.

Communications

No Report

Membership

Rose McCauley asked that associations check to ensure membership fees match the number of members. Training is available to explain how to manage changes in a member's status.

Project Funding

Cynthia Kershaw reminded associations to submit photos and documentation of project completion by January 31.

Endowment

Skeeter Sims had no report.

Website

Caroline Etheriedge had no report.

Nominating

Janell Digs reported that Julie Conrey has agreed to serve as President. Other positions open include Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, Nominating Committee Chair, and 3 At-Large Board Members.

Record Retention

No report.

Speakers Bureau

Susan Hagen reminded associations that there are tips on how to run meetings. She reminded Advanced Master Gardener students of the requirement to give presentations.

New Business

The Blount County Fall conference will take place on October 1, with the theme of "Happiness in the Garden." Registration is open. Contact Sherilyn Osborne at 205-382-0791 and leave a message.

The next meeting will be November 3 at 10 am at Petals from the Past in Jemison.

The meeting adjourned with refreshments and fellowship.

Anne Ness

Advisory Council Secretary