

IV-change “Convention” to “Conference”

Recommendation: “Use the word ‘Conference’ rather than ‘Convention’ at which the Annual Meeting is held.”

Bylaw Changes:

Article VIII: Meetings.1 currently Reads “The Annual Meeting of the membership of MGC shall take place at the MGC State **Convention.**”

Change Convention to Conference.

Change to Read: “**The Annual Meeting of the membership of MGC shall take place at the MGC State Conference.**”

Background.

A convention :

- An event where a group meets to discuss/engage in come common interest.
- Held for a week or longer.
- Is typically light-hearted.
- Is headed up by an organization.
- Provides networking opportunities where attendees share one’s thoughts and ideas with others.
- Are more like a trade show with innovative/ interactive exhibits.
- May have speakers, but more face-to-face talking happens .
- May have breakout sessions, but the primary purpose is to familiarize attendees with .advancements/trends within their particular field.

A conference:

- Is a more formal gathering –a platform for gaining knowledge.
- Is shorter in duration (1-3 days).
- Is headed up by a Director.
- Provides an opportunity for attendees to network with others to talk about ideas or problems related to a particular issue.
- Attendees are prepared to take notes during keynote and guest speaker presentations and subsequently share what they learned with colleagues.
- Often have seminars/breakout sessions where they learn from specialists on a specific topic.

Rationale for changing the MGC Bylaws:

- The Mission of MGC is **to provide education**, resources, and network opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral and landscape design, and environmental responsibility.”
- EDUCATION is a key component of MGC Mission and we believe that the word *conference* described above fits our mission better.
- All the MGC conventions that we have attended have been educational --more like a conference. Even our District “meetings” are more like conferences because of the educational component.
- During fund-raising for the National Convention, Carol learned that sponsors are more likely to sponsor a conference rather than a convention. Being able to seek sponsors may offer an

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opportunity to have a sponsor underwrite a portion of such an event at the State or District level so registration fees could be reduced or to be able to afford nationally-known keynote speakers.

- Members across the State have expressed their interest that we provide more educational opportunities for them and less time in meetings. Many have indicated that they don't want to attend District meetings because they don't want to attend another meeting and want more educational opportunities at the MGC "convention..."
- The Millennials want to learn and not spend time in meetings. We believe that having "conference" in the event title may be more appealing to them?
- In the corporate world, conventions haven't really been held for decades because many companies didn't send staff because they considered them "boondoggles"---play time with booze and women. However, companies encouraged staff to attend conferences to learn and then to share that information upon their return to work.
- When searching the Internet-- found the following:
 - non-profits using "convention" for 2017 Texas Music Educators, Kiwanis, Vietnam Vets, NCAA, Los Angeles National Soccer Coaches, Animation, Washington State, DAV, Horror. In 2016, the following non-profits used "Convention:" Democratic NC, Republican NC, Libertarian, American Speech, Language-Hearing, Mining, Boy Scouts, Origami, Comic. ASHA, Racing Pigeons, Oregon Healthcare and Engineering/Leading (has sessions on re-occurring topics).
 - organizations using "Conference:" Corporate Citizen Conference, Boston College, American Institute of CPAs, International Society for Tech in Educ., World Wide Web, Global Technology, Christian Women, Physician Assistant OME, Special Ed., Extraordinary Women.
 - Mid-Michigan Farm & Garden seems to have "Shows—basically a show of exhibitors—what's new—no seminars...purpose to inform public and farmers of resources available to them...youth brought in for field trip. Originally started by Lion's Club.
 - Michigan Master Gardeners title their annual meeting "College."
 - The following gardening-related "conferences" have sponsors: Harvest, Missouri Master Gardener, National Garden Writers, National Gardening Association, National Lawn and Garden, Oregon Master Gardener.
- We believe that it is time to modernize and call our conventions what it is—a "Conference" and to emphasize the learning aspect of the District "meeting" by calling it a "District Conference."