



# American Hibiscus Society National Convention

## Kenner, LA

### June 19-21, 2025

#### President's Committee

President Schimek called the meeting to order at 4:20pm.

Roll call by Karen Sullivan, President Ottmar Schimek, 1st VP Frank Sullivan, Executive Secretary Gloria Mikulenska, Recording Secretary Karen Sullivan, & Chairman Ryan Perry were all present

Absentees: 2nd VP Sean Mohme and Treasurer Walter Bisselle

- AHS Seedling Evaluation Committee
  - Gary Mathews has resigned from the Seedling Evaluation Committee
    - Ottmar made motion to replace Garry Mathews position with Frank Sullivan starting with the 2024 class.
    - Karen second the motion.
    - All in favor: 5 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes
  - Joyce Melebeck has resigned from the Seedling Evaluation Committee
    - Ottmar made motion to replace Joyce Melebeck to continue with the classes from 2022 & 2023 which will end her 10th year and to replace with Jerry Grant for the 2024 class.
    - Frank second the motion.
    - All in favor: 5 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes
  - Carol Powell Seedling of the year Briar Fire
    - Discussion was made about an exception to be made that the seedling to began this year and to be moved to next year class due Flooding, Hurricanes & the passing of the grower / exhibitor.
    - Beth Meehan & Valerie Costa will be produce grafted plants and will provide them for the 2026 AHS convention.
    - Seedling will remain in the 2024 class.
    - Beth Meehan will be the point person between the AHS Seedling Committee and the Powell family.
      - Ryan made motion for Briar Fire not to be dropped and given an extension to allow until 2026 convention for plants to be produced.
      - Frank second the motion
      - All in favor: 5 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes
    - Sam & Jim will not drop from the AHS SEC
- AHS Board to move forward with Nominating Committee for Next Year

- Ottmar made a motion to move forward with the nomination committee for next year directors.
- Frank second the motion
- All in favor: 5 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes
- Seedling Entry Cards
  - Discussion was made that the Hybridizer is not being listed on the entry cards by the exhibitors.
  - Todd Alvis recommends that when we need to order new seedling cards (not to order new ones at this time) that a place is shown for the Hybridizer to be listed.
  - Possible re-design card to allow ample space which might consist of a new die-cut.
  - Hybridizer, Grower & Shower should be on entry cards. If no space write the Hybridizer on the back.
  - Frank to check on price for the die-cut to possibly be re-done to allow the seedling entry card to show a place for Hybridizer, Grower, & Shower on the card.
  - Back in 2023 a motion was approved that the AHS will recognize the hybridizer, grower, & shower for seedling winners and seedling of the year award will be present to the party that provides the plants for seedling evaluation. Additional awards can be purchased at cost for other involved winners. This was never approved. It was approved to go through the Bi-Laws process but never published and voted on at convention. This is only listed in the Seedling of the Year Documentation and not in the Bi-Laws.
  - Ottmar acknowledges that this is not part of the president committee and needs to go in front of the Board of directors.
- President committee adjourned
  - Frank made motion for President Committee to be adjourned at 4:47pm.
  - Ottmar second the motion
  - All in favor: 5 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes

### **Board of Director's Committee**

President Ottmar Schimek called the meeting to order at 4:55pm.

Roll call by Karen Sullivan, Chairman Ryan Perry, Ottmar Schimek, Frank Sullivan, Karen Sullivan, Gloria Mikulenska, Todd Alvis, Robert Price, Micki Dougherty, Denise Helfrich, Celeste Matherne, Laura Shamrock, Sig Simpson all present.

Absentees: Sean Mohme, Walter Bisselle, Sandy Lichauer, Andrea Contreras

- Nominating Committee
  - Ottmar made a motion that the board moves ahead for a nominating committee to be formed and recommends the following to consist of: Tim O'Keefe, Sandy Lichauer, Micki Dougherty, Jann Pigg, Krista Mathews, Ryan Perry, Gail Price, Kimberly Roth, Christine Schnitzer, Gail Woods (MAL).
  - Sig Simpson 2nd motion
  - All in favor: 12 All Opposed: 0 Vote passes
- Removal of the AHS 2nd VP Sean Mohme due to ethical reasons
  - Motion was made by Ottmar
  - Second by Sig Simpson
  - All in favor: 12 All Opposed: 0 Vote passes with more than 2/3 per bi-laws

- Replacement of the AHS 2nd VP with Beth Meehan to fill unexpired term for 1 year
  - Motion was made by Ottmar
  - Second by Sig Simpson
  - All in favor: 12 All Opposed: 0 Vote passes
- Historian Beth Meehan
  - AHS has a 5X10 control air storage unit in Wesley Chapel, which is completely packed from floor to ceiling with a lot shown as unprocessed materials, items specific to chapters, old chapters that are no longer active, and some that would be for the AHS to keep.
  - Beth would like permission for AHS to move the unit closer to her house (it is a 4 hr drive one way).
  - Tim O'Keefe has offered to drive to Chapel Hill to empty out the unit and relocate it to a unit closer to the AHS historian Beth once a new unit is secured.
  - Beth to provide estimates on costs of a new unit that is close to her location.
  - Once moved Beth will go through and make contact with chapter presidents on items found to see what they would like to have done with items. Items that belong to nationals should be digitalized.
  - Ryan suggested that once unit is moved closer to the Historian. Beth will go through unit and anything that should be kept by Nationals be digitized and items that are mainly for chapters she will reach out to the chapter presidents to let them know what was found and if they want it back or get rid of items. All dissolved chapters Beth will use her judgement on what to do with items.
  - Todd made motion:
    - A sub committee will be formed consisting of: Ottmar, Beth, & Walter
    - Beth to provide estimates on costs of a new unit that is close to her location and provide via email to the sub committee for approval to proceed.
    - Tim O'Keefe has volunteered to move entire unit from Wesley Chapel to new location once approved by sub committee.
    - Once the unit has been gone through some then next convention Digitizing, Cloud storage, Library etc is tabled to next year convention
  - Ottmar second motion
  - All in favor: 12 All Opposed: 0 Vote passes
- Seedling Cards - Hybridizer
  - Re-designing of entry card with the Hybridizer, Grower & Shower be displayed.
  - Possible estimate on a new die cut to support the new design
  - No new cards to be ordered until all existing supplies have been used
  - Cross above the fold, hybridizer, grower & shower below fold
  - Card face up with Mini documented on top corner and then exhibitor can write the hybridizer and extra info on back of card. Up to each chapter how they want to handle it.
  - Judges Manual only specifies for the Hybridizer to be listed on the card and if being shown by someone other than the hybridizer the name of the exhibitor must also be on the entry card.
  - Ryan noted that the Board has agreed to:
    - Continue to use seedling cards we have
    - What happens on the cards but match what is shown in the Judges Manual
    - Communication with show directors & checking process with entry of the blooms
  - Karen made motion that all seedling entry cards show the Hybridizer & shower on the front as long as it can be hidden and if not to write additional information (including growing) on the back of card. We will re-visit the changing of the card when supplies are used.
  - Todd second the motion

- All in favor: 12 All Opposed: 0 Vote Passes
- Show Winner Paper
  - Original goes to Executive Secretary, 2nd copy goes to 1st VP, & final copy stays with show chair.
  - Photo of the Show Winner Paper is sent to AHS president & Tim O'Keefe will receive a copy as well so, he can provide info for the Seed Pod.
- Board of Director's Committee Meeting
  - Ryan made motion to adjourn at 6:10pm
  - Frank second the motion
  - All in favor 12 All Opposed 0 Vote Passes

### **General Session**

- Ottmar welcomed everyone. Carolyn Cormier-Stoute gave invocation and the pledge
- Judges training was presented by Beth Meehan

### **Seed Bank**

- Don Bernard gave update
  - Volume stabled with requests
  - Donations have been consistent with seeds and are able to keep up with requests

### **SEC**

- Sam Andrews gave update
  - Two new members Frank Sullivan & Jerry Bryant
  - Gary Mathews & Joyce Melebeck both have resigned after many years

### **Show & Judging**

- Frank Sullivan presented James Frazel his Senior Judging badge to AHS youngest (13yrs) Senior Judge.

### **Treasure Report**

- Over all sitting very comfortable
- Raffle tickets sold \$3,070.00 for the AHS treasure and another \$3,089.00 from the auction after banquet

### **Chapter Reports**

- Carnival Coast -
  - We have completed our first year as a society and have learned a lot
  - Currently have 16 full members, 19 Associate Members with 19 potential members pending payment.
  - We are struggling to get members to our meetings. As a society we plan to do a better job with engaging our current membership while seeking new members.
  - Our initial \$1,000 start up from AHS was perfect for us to have a successful first year. We are currently just over the start up \$1,000 after having our first show.
- Harry Goulding -
  - Carl Powell passing
  - Made profit on the show / sale with plant sales are not enough to cover all costs.
  - Hold monthly meetings that include plant raffles, 3 home and garden show booths which is no cost. During all the shows / sales we offer handbooks, fertilizer and membership.
  - Balances are not growing but steady
- Space City
  - Current membership is over 50 and we almost have \$20,000 in the bank
  - Last December we joined with Lone Star chapter for Christmas dinner

- April was our annual show and sale at a new venue in Webster. We ordered 800 plants but only sold about 400. Our chapter did sell 200 more, donated some to the convention and only have less than 100 left.
- Sunset
  - Held our two shows again with great success
  - Encourage promotion of Hibiscus at each of our monthly meetings. Currently have 40 members with about 12-14 core active members.
  - Our Chapter keeps growing with members
- James E Hendry
  - Providing more hands-on learning activities for our members
  - Expand our reach in the local community to raise awareness of our chapter and attract new members
  - Involving more members in chapter to participation and leadership
- Lone Star
  - Changing around how our meetings are conducted in hopes to bring new members
  - Show was success but we did not sell out of plants
- Mike Bernard Acadiana
  - This year broke our sales record while recruiting a few new members. We now have 70 full members & 25 associate members.
  - Launched a promotional blitz two weeks prior to our show including: flyers, postcards, banners around the city, TV interviews on local affiliates news / variety shows
  - After show our net income was about equal to last year
  - We had 417 blooms entered with 35 seedlings for our show
- Emerald Coast
  - We had our Best Show Yet
  - 36-41 members and we have \$8,400.00 in our account
  - Looking forward to possibly adding another show, attending additional flower festivals, cookouts, and a plant party to help increase our membership.
  - Our society has joined the Florida Federation of Garden Club which puts in in their newsletters and hopefully will reach more potential members.
  - Over all our chapter is looking up and doing well
- New Orleans
  - Our chapter keeps growing bigger and better every year
  - This year was a very busy one as we were the host chapter for the 2025 convention
  - Monthly meetings included lunch, programs that focused on Hibiscus, plant raffles and we had about 50 member in attendance
  - Members participated in 4 chapter shows in LA in April & May. Our show this year was probably our largest one with 1200 Cajun Hibiscus and we ended up only sending back a little over a 100
- Mathews-Fallman
  - Held three shows / sale (not selling out of plants)
  - This year we were invited to sell hibiscus at a Farmer's Market in hopes to spread information of our society
- Conrad-Sunrise
  - Our Spring sale / show was a great success. We increased our number of plants to sell and we still sold out within three hours. We plan to increase our number of plants again for next year.

- Membership remains small in number due to the area is now a posh & cosmopolitan county.
- Created book markers with our chapter information on it to get our society out there.
- St Thomas, St Croix, & Tortola (British Virgin Islands)
  - Are not active at this time.
  - St Thomas members are keeping in touch with each other. I have asked Bradly Christian and Errol to help manage this group and for them to also work on St Croix & Tortola.
  - Hopeful by 2026 convention we will have a active report.

**Ottmar Schimek made motion to adjourn our 2028 convention @ 3:30pm**

**Frank Sullivan second**

- All in favor – unanimously
- All opposed – None
- Motion passes

**July 9 – Board voted**

- Storage Unit that houses our Historical Facts
  - Beth Meehan made a motion for the AHS storage unit to be moved from Wesley Chapel to Cape Coral by a professional mover for approximately \$1600 to a new storage facility that will cost \$63 a month for the new storage unit.
  - Ottmar Schimek 2nd the motion
  - All in favor was unanimously
  - All opposed – None
  - Motion passes