



FRIENDS OF
**BOERNER
BOTANICAL
GARDENS**
Milwaukee County's Living Museum

October 13, 2015

Rec'd 10/15

John Dargle, Parks Director
Milwaukee County Parks Department
9480 Watertown Plank Road
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

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Dear John --

As requested, I am writing to you on behalf of the *Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens, Inc. (FBBG)* as it relates to the development of a new MOU between Milwaukee County and FBBG.

This letter specifically addresses Point 4 of the County's June 2015 Operations Audit of Boerner, which states the recommendation that the County "request payment of past amounts owed by FBBG".

As discussed directly with you and members of your team by FBBG Board Members in meetings on August 19 and September 28, FBBG has, since our inception in 1984, invested steadily and heavily in the Gardens -- a County owned venue.

On September 28 we shared a spreadsheet with you which enumerates highlights of our expenses in support of Boerner just since 2007. Total of the highlights listed: \$1,701,660. (*I have re-attached the spread sheet here.*)

This total does not include the more than \$8,000,000 that was raised by FBBG from 1998 > 2003 for the design and construction of the Education and Visitor Center...a County owned property, paid for largely by FBBG, a self-funded, private, non-profit organization.

All of our work in support of Boerner and, the expenses to do so (including the operation of the venue gift shop which has long operated at a loss due to low venue traffic), are raised and borne by FBBG alone. (Reference our 990s and annual audits.)

Therefore, as we have discussed in our meetings with you, our Board of Directors and our donors believe that *no fees are owed.*

HIGHLIGHTS: BOERNER FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE FRIENDS OF BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS.

Year	Funding \$	Description
2007	\$ 600,000	Bank payments on E&V Center debt
2008	\$ 35,000	Restoration- Rose Garden fountains; (fountain operation continues to fail during peak visitor periods/events)
2009	\$ 100,000	MMSD grant for water conservation stream bed; FBBG facilitated the grant with the Garden Director.
2009	\$ 100,000	Labor for project - donated; led by FBBG Board Director who facilitated entire project.
2010	\$ 10,000	Feasibility Study demanded by the bank holding the letter of credit on the building debt
2011>12	\$ 1,000	Rack card & map - County Parks produced - requested FBBG payment.
2012	\$ 4,500	Restoration of historic Woman's and Boys Statue (perennial mail).
2012	\$ 10,000	FBBG facilitated grant from Rainbird International for expansion of 2009 water conservation project.
2012	\$ 3,400	Gift from FBBG donors for Eco Hut & signage at bubbling rock (enhancement of 2009 water conservation proj.)
2013	\$ 9,000	Memorial sale and restoration of 3 historic stone benches in Perennial mall
2008 > present	\$ 760	Herb Society membership/event expenses for BBG Hort. Peggy Zautke participation (approx.)
2011>2013	\$ 12,000	Memorial donations for 4 wooden benches at the bubbling rock garden feature
2011>2013	\$ 800,000	Debt retirement; inc. all debt payments, attorney's fees, various interest payments; all related exp.
2014	\$ 16,000	(more than) raised in chair rental; purchase of chairs funded by FBBG Garden Fund.
Total	\$ 1,701,660	

DETAIL

- 1). The FBBG (building) Capital Campaign fundraising expenses borne entirely by FBBG.
- 2). The cost absorbed by FBBG for management of the building from opening thru 2005. \$200K shortfall from County - did not meet their commitment.
- 3). Ongoing funding for the Garden Fund raised from plant societies, private philanthropy/memorials/foundations/events.
- 4). FBBG completely subsidizes office copier - FREE use for County staff since 2008; Co. decided not to repair own. For Sept '15 only: 1,015 Co. copies made.
- 5). Continuous FBBG manpower completely self funded and devoted to BBG support - since 1984.
- 6). Numerous donated hours on the part of FBBG attorneys and accountants in preparing for the retirement of the building debt.
- 7). Mgmt. of FBBG Garden Fund continually drawn upon by Garden Dir. to pay BBG bills, send horts. to seminars, petty cash needs (latest 9/28/15 AM)..

FBBG VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE*

2010 - 1st Year	364 hours	Began initiative in August (Parks Dir. approval received July 19 2010)
2011	738 hours	
2012	1,265 hours	
2013	1,466 hours	
2014	1,478 hours	
2015 to date	1,521 hours	(running 360 hours ahead of 2014 to date as of Sept 26)

Total Expense if Actual Employment Cost >>>>>>>>

\$ 49,530

Cost if @ WI minimum wage**
\$ 2,639
\$ 5,350
\$ 9,171
\$ 10,628
\$ 10,715
\$ 11,027
\$ 49,530

*All costs to recruit volunteers for in-garden support borne by FBBG.

**2009 rate \$7.25; State of WI website as of July 24 2009.