

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Des Moines Water Works Transfers Management of the Botanical Center to Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

DES MOINES, Iowa (December 31, 2012) – After operating the Des Moines Botanical Center the past nine years, Des Moines Water Works will ceremonially hand over the keys to the tropical cultural attraction to the new Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. The event will take place under the Dome on January 3 at 9 a.m.

In 2003, Des Moines Water Works assumed management of the Botanical Center from the city of Des Moines, which remains the owner. Water Works staff and several Water Works Board of Trustees at the time recognized the Botanical Center as a significant public facility and helped improve declining revenues.

“Our staff brought talent in horticulture and management to update and upgrade the facility,” said Randy Beavers, retired Des Moines Water Works CEO and general manager.

“Plants are an important aspect to water quality and watershed management,” Beavers added. “The Botanical Center brought educational opportunities and exposure to Des Moines-area schools, adults and visitors.”

With several facility upgrades, special events, room rental sales and educational programs, Des Moines Water Works turned the Botanical Center into a popular cultural attraction that offers educational, recreational, and community resources to thousands.

“Residents and visitors of the Des Moines area owe a huge debt of gratitude to Des Moines Water Works,” said Stephanie Jutila, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden President and CEO. “With limited resources, the employees advanced the facility by addressing deferred maintenance and establishing new programs.”

Community leaders Buz Brenton, Tom Urban and Janis Ruan approached Des Moines Water Works in 2007 with their vision of what the Botanical Center could be.

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, a nonprofit organization, will assume the lease on the Botanical Center on January 1, 2013. The Garden's campaign for the renovations began in 2011, raising more than \$11.6 million for the first phase of the multi-year and multi-phase project.

The Botanical Garden will be open seven days a week through June 30. After a two-month closure for interior renovations, the facility will reopen again in September.

Outdoor renovations will be completed throughout 2013 and 2014, and include a new entry garden, water education garden, tree allée, event lawn encircled by perennial borders, display gardens, and reconfiguration of the parking lot.

Des Moines Water Works will continue to partner with the Botanical Garden, offering \$200,000 of annual in-kind contributions for 10 years.

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Photos Attached

- Des Moines Botanical Center
- Rendering drawing of new water garden

About [Des Moines Water Works](#)

Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) is a municipal water utility serving the citizens of Des Moines and surrounding communities (approximately 500,000 people). DMWW is an independently operated public utility with a commitment to leading, advocating and investing today and in the future to deliver water you can trust for life.

About [Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden](#)

A new beginning for the Des Moines Botanical Center is underway. After years of being undercapitalized, community leaders have developed a new business model and an exciting master plan for what will be called the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. The Botanical Garden's programs and gardens will be focused on the new mission of "Exploring, explaining and celebrating the world of plants." The Garden will be an urban and cultural oasis for the community, fully operated as a 501(c)3 privately governed, not-for-profit institution.

LAURA SARCONI | Communications Specialist

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Des Moines Botanical Center | Operated by Des Moines Water Works

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