

**FREE STATE MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION**  
**of Van Zandt County**  
**STANDING RULES**  
**Adopted November 10, 2016**

The rules contained in ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER REVISED shall govern the meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and are not inconsistent with the BYLAWS.

**MEMBERSHIP**

To be a member in good standing:

- Any dues for the current year must be paid. Annual dues of \$20 are payable by January 31 of each year. The first year membership dues for Van Zandt County Master Gardener Interns will be deducted from their class fee.
- Attendance is encouraged at regular meetings to expand on a member's horticultural knowledge and to keep current on association activities.
- Participation is strongly encouraged at all MG events and projects.
- Members must maintain their Certification (see Certification requirements below). Recertification requirements will be consistent with those as set forth by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for Master Gardeners which may change from time to time.
- Members must consistently exhibit a positive and professional manner toward and about Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Master Gardener Program, the Master Gardener Coordinator or other Master Gardener volunteers and clients. They must act in accordance with the highest standard of ethics: not physically, verbally or sexually harass/abuse anyone. Members must refrain from illegal or unsafe behavior. They must dress appropriately and not use harsh language.

Selection for membership shall be made without discrimination based on gender, color, race, religion, income, marital status, handicapped condition, disability, or national origin.

**OFFICERS**

All officers must be members in good standing (current in dues, regular participants in association meetings and projects and maintain their MG certification). Officers are elected at the annual meeting in November to serve a one year term beginning in January. Officers are elected by a majority vote when a quorum is present. An officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of the members present, provided there is a quorum at the meeting. If an officer is absent from three consecutive regular meetings without the Executive Committee excusing them for extenuating circumstances, the office will be open for the Executive Committee to name a replacement for the remainder of the year

**President:**

Designated to perform the functions of the principal executive officer. Duties shall include (but not be limited to):

- Prepare agenda and preside at all meetings
- Establish committees, dissolve committees and appoint chairpersons
- Serve as ex-officio member of all committees (except nominating committee)
- Assist Treasurer in working with Budget Development Committee to prepare and submit annual budget for members to adopt at the January meeting
- Prepare and file all reports required by the Secretary of State.

Immediate Past President:

- Serve as Chair of Nominating Committee
- Serve in advisory capacity on Budget Committee
- Serve in advisory capacity on Executive Committee
- May attend any committee meeting in an advisory capacity.

Vice Presidents:

Duties shall be (but not limited to):

- Designated to assume duties of President, Secretary or Treasurer in his/her absence or inability to serve.
- Responsible for scheduling programs for monthly meetings and/or events under the direction of the Executive Committee.
- Serve as chairperson of Program and Social Committee.

Secretary:

Duties shall be (but not limited to):

- Record minutes of monthly meetings and Executive committee meetings
- Distribute minutes of previous meetings within one week after meeting
- Prepare all official correspondence for Association and maintain appropriate files
- Maintain attendance records
- Keep record of all reports filed by President with the Secretary of State
- Keep record of current membership as provided by Membership Committee.

Alternate Secretary:

- Serves as backup in the absence of the Secretary.

Treasurer:

Duties shall be (but not limited to):

- Maintain bank account and reconcile monthly bank statement to the Treasurer's records
- Receive all dues and monies for the association
- Pay all approved bills
- Prepare budget (with assistance of President and Budget Development Committee) to present to members at January meeting.
- Prepare and file all reports required by the Internal Revenue Service to maintain tax exempt status under Section 501(c)3.
- Maintain all financial records for Association.
- Present monthly financial report to membership at all regular meetings.

Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President(s), Secretary and alternate Secretary and Treasurer. The immediate Past President shall serve as a non-voting advisory member. The Executive Committee shall assist in setting the agenda for regular meetings, make all decisions necessary between regular meetings, coordinate activities with Master Gardener Coordinator and oversee the activities of all committees.

**TERMS OF OFFICE**

Election of new officers will be held at the November meeting. The one-year term of office shall begin on January 1 of each year and run through December. An officer may serve in the same office for 2 consecutive years as long as they vacate same office for one year. Serving for any part of the year is considered a full year.

## **COMMITTEES**

The standing committees are listed in the By-laws. Additional committees shall be appointed by the President-elect with the assistance of the outgoing President. Chairpersons of standing committees shall be announced at the January meeting.

### **Committees shall be:**

#### **Budget Development Committee:**

This committee must include three non-officer members to serve with the immediate past and present Treasurer and President to develop a proposed budget and recommendations for source of funds (gifts, dues, grants, etc.). The preliminary budget will be presented to the membership for approval at the January meeting. The final approval for the budget will be at the February meeting.

#### **Communications Committee:**

This committee shall have primary responsibility for relaying information to all membership and/or the public as necessary. Subcommittees shall be:

Membership Notification - shall be responsible for communications as needed via telephone, email, postcards. Also responsible for publishing each annual yearbook.

Newsletter - publish and distribute a newsletter to include educational articles, upcoming activities and events.

Social Media - responsible for maintaining the FSMGA website and Facebook pages.

Publicity - responsible for any newspaper articles, radio or TV advertising to disseminate to the public upon approval of the Master Gardener Coordinator.

#### **Program and Social Committee:**

This committee shall be chaired by the Vice President(s) to:

- Plan all programs for regular and special meetings;
- Plan or oversee the plans of all social functions.

#### **By-Laws and Policy Committee:**

Responsible for updating by-laws and policies as needed in coordination with and for the approval of the Executive Committee and Master Gardener Coordinator.

#### **Fundraising Committee:**

This committee plans, organizes and directs annual fundraisers.

#### **Hospitality/Refreshments Committee:**

This committee plans and prepares refreshments for meetings. They also recommend and provide general goodwill gestures, i.e., flowers, cards, etc., within their approved budget.

#### **Education/Speakers Bureau:**

Maintains a list of "certified" speakers from the FSMG membership and receives request for consideration and approval of the Executive Committee.

### Community Service Projects:

An FSMG member is appointed each year by the President as the Community Service Project Coordinator to receive, review and evaluate requests for new projects. Any member or intern can submit a request, which after consideration, may be presented to the Executive Committee. Final approval is required by the Master Gardener Coordinator, after which the membership would vote to accept or reject the new project.

### QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of 51% of voting members present. A motion passes by majority vote of those present unless specified otherwise in the ByLaws. Official business cannot be conducted without a quorum of voting members present. With a quorum present, a motion passes by majority vote of those present unless specified otherwise in the BYLAWS.

Amendments to the ByLaws (including amendments to the Standing Rules) may be presented at any meeting after notification to members with a quorum (51% of voting membership) present and be adopted with a 2/3 acceptance of voting members present.

Proxy votes can be accepted at the discretion of the President and Master Gardener Coordinator.

### MEETINGS

Regular monthly meetings shall be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 9 AM in the designated meeting place, unless otherwise advised.

### CERTIFICATION HOURS

The Master Gardener Coordinator (AgriLife Extension Agent) approves all hours submitted. These hours will be for:

- Service to Extension Office
- Educational programs preparation and delivery by FSMG members who are certified presenters
- Educational programs attended for CEU hours
- Community service projects approved by the Master Gardener Coordinator
- Regular Meetings (1 hour volunteer plus 1 CEU time if a certified presenter teaching)
- Time (rounded to the nearest half hour) for commuting to a meeting or function which qualifies for volunteer or CEU hours earned. (See the Directions for Earning and Reporting Training and Service Hours found in the Handbook.)

Initial hours for certification are 50 CEU and 50 Volunteer hours. Current requirement for re-certification each year is 6 CEU hours and 20 volunteer hours earned between January 1 - December 31.

Any exceptions must be approved by the Master Gardener Coordinator. Each member is responsible for recording their hours monthly into the Texas A&M Volunteer Management System:

<https://texas.volunteersystem.org/>

### SIGNING AUTHORITY & DISBURSEMENT APPROVAL

The President, Vice President and Treasurer are authorized signers on the bank account. Two signatures are required on each check. The Executive Committee is approved to make disbursements that are either (a) in the approved annual budget, or (b) not in excess of \$200 for a previously approved project. All other disbursements require advance approval by the membership. Receipts are required for reimbursements to be made.

**ADDITIONAL BANK ACCOUNTS**

With a majority vote of voting members present at any regular meeting, additional bank accounts can be opened for exclusive use of an approved Van Zandt County Master Gardener Association project. All deposits to that account must be donations or grants designated for that project. All checks written on the sub account must be for the designated project only, must have the approval of the designated project committee and will require two signatures. Any such sub accounts using the Van Zandt County Master Gardener Association tax ID number will be subject to the same audit and maintenance requirements as the regular bank account. In addition to the President, Vice President, and Treasurer of the Association, two members of the project committee will be designated signers of that project bank account only. At the conclusion of the project any balance not able to be returned to the donor or grantor will be paid into the regular bank account and the sub account will be closed.