

**Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners
Policies & Procedures (P&P)
Revised 11/20/2012**

Article I. Name (Refer to Bylaws)

Article II. Association Description and Objectives (Refer to Bylaws)

Article III. Organization (Refer to Bylaws)

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. Membership and List of Members

The Aransas County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office will maintain a current list of members' and Interns' names, addresses, telephone numbers & e-mail addresses. Members will be responsible for updating the office of any changes to their information.

a. Approved MG Training Programs

- 1) Master Gardener Specialist Training – Master Gardener applicants who apply for Specialist Training must have achieved certification plus 100 additional hours of volunteer service. Reimbursement for specialist training tuition will not occur until the member has served as a Master Gardener Specialist for one year and completed 24 hours of volunteer time preparing and teaching their specialty in Aransas and/or San Patricio counties. The Agent will inform the Board of Directors of applicants approved for Specialist Training.
- 2) Intern Training
- 3) In-service training for certified Master Gardeners (See Policies & Procedures, Article IV, Section 2).

b. Dues

\$20.00 per year are due at the Extension Office by December 15 for the following year except Interns (See Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2 and in cases of Reinstatement and Lapsed Membership (see Policies & Procedures, Article IV, Section 4).

c. Title of Master Gardener, Volunteer Choices, Certification and Awards

- 1) The title "Master Gardener" is to be used only by individuals trained and certified in the Texas Master Gardener program to assist Texas AgriLife Extension. The title is valid only when the volunteer is participating in activities approved by the Extension Office and the Association. When an individual fails to renew certification in the organization, designation as a Master Gardener becomes void.
- 2) Volunteer work must be of a type that furthers the goal of the Texas Master Gardener program. The program is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information & extend horticultural-natural resource projects throughout the community.
- 3) Volunteers who belong to two organizations, both requiring volunteer service, may not count the same volunteer and continuing education hours twice, getting credit from both organizations. Volunteer work must be performed as a Texas Master Gardener rather than as a member of another organization.
- 4) Volunteer work that profits another organization or a business cannot be approved. Volunteers will not count work for a nonprofit organization that results in the organization earning money for its own programs. Volunteers will not count volunteer work for a for-profit organization. Paid work will not count as volunteer hours.

- 5) The current Volunteer Log/Certification Choices form is hereby incorporated by reference. It describes approved volunteer and continuing education (CE) choices as determined by the Extension Agent.
 - 6) Awards for volunteer hours served are presented at the General Meeting in March of each year. Awards or recognition are based strictly upon the total of the number of hours served and reported by that member, each month, during a calendar year (December 15–December 15).
 - a) All volunteer hour awards presented to a member are based upon the cumulative number of volunteer hours reported. These hours accumulate over a Master Gardener's years of service. Milestones of volunteer service awards (MG hours) are 100, 250, 500 hours and every 500 thereafter.
 - b) All CE Hours will be added together each year and accumulate toward CE awards. Milestones of CE awards begin when a cumulative total reaches 60 hours, then 150 hours, 300 hours and increments of 300 thereafter.
- d. Background Check
Cost of the background check will be included in an intern's tuition and the Association will pay for member renewals.

Section 2. Intern Membership and Initial Certification

- a. To be certified as a Master Gardener, interns must complete the Master Gardener Training class and meet certification requirements as described in the current Volunteer Log/Certification Choices form.
- b. Upon completion of all certification requirements, an intern will become a certified Master Gardener. Regardless of certification date, no member of the class is subject to the annual requirement of volunteer hours and CE hours for the following calendar year.
- c. Interns who do not obtain certification by December 15 of the year following their class graduation will not be eligible for the \$50 refund.

Section 3. Code of Conduct (Refer to Bylaws)

Section 4. Lapsed Memberships and Reinstatement

- a. If a Member becomes inactive, i.e. does not complete required volunteer and/or continuing education hours in a calendar year, they may return to active (certified) status by completing the required volunteer and continuing education hours for the current year & pay dues upon re-certification.
- b. In any case, if re-certification requirements have not been met for more than 3 years, it is required that the inactive Master Gardener audit, at no charge except for materials, the Master Gardener training classes.

Article V Meetings

Section 1.

- a. Scheduling and announcements of all meetings must go through the Texas AgriLife Extension office. The office needs notification of any meeting cancellations.
- b. Announcements of all committee meetings must be provided in writing to the Extension office by noon on the Wednesday proceeding the week of the meeting.
- c. Notification of unexpected meetings must be provided to Extension in ample time to be sent to the membership 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Section 2. General Meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise notified.

Article VI Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association will run from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

Article VII Officers (Refer to Bylaws)

Article VIII Duties of Officers (Refer to Bylaws)

Section 1. Treasurer Responsibilities

Texas AgriLife Extension requests the use of the following internal controls:

- a. Detailed records should be kept on money collected: type of funds, date collected, from whom, amount collected, and purpose.
- b. Detailed records should be kept on money spent: date spent, who was paid, amount paid, purpose of payment, copy of original invoice, and who authorized the expense;
- c. Make all payments by serially numbered checks.
- d. Check requests should be used to authorize payments.
- e. Issue checks to vendors only for payment of approved, original invoices that have been re-added and verified.
- f. Reimbursement claims should be supported by cash register receipt and/or paid invoices.
- g. Ensure no personal purchases are made from Master Gardener funds.
- h. Each year the Treasurer is responsible for issuing a dues check to Texas Master Gardener Association by February 15. It is suggested that the dues be sent "return receipt requested".
- i. In mid-September, the Treasurer, working with the President, renews the Texas Nursery License required by the state for the Association to have plant sales.

Article IX Executive Committee

Section 1. Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper will be proficient in use of current software, keep a detailed account of all income & disbursements, reconcile all bank statements, & create reports as required by the Treasurer. The Bookkeeper is expected to attend all General Meetings and Board of Directors Meetings.

Section 2. Texas Master Gardener Association (TMGA) Delegates:

- a. The Executive Committee will approve delegates chosen by the president (two plus two alternates) willing to attend the Texas Master Gardener Association Board meetings four times each year. Only certified Master Gardeners, who have served on our Association's Board for at least one year, are eligible. A delegate shall serve for a minimum of two years, but no longer than five years.
- b. If a delegate is unable to serve the full two-year term, the President will select one of the alternates, with Executive Committee approval, to complete that delegate's term and a new alternate. The delegates' terms will be staggered so that all are not appointed in the same year. The Association will reimburse each of the two delegates \$50 for each Texas Master Gardener Board meeting attended out of town. Delegates will report to the Board of Directors and to the membership at a General Meeting.

Article X Board of Directors (also Refer to Bylaws)

Section 1. Budget Development:

- a. After officer elections in the fall, the outgoing & incoming Board of Directors (including interested members) shall meet to jointly develop a budget for the new year. Outgoing officers & standing committee chairs, serving as mentors, help ensure a smooth transition for incoming officers & chairpersons. These meetings should begin in October so that a budget can be in place by the first meeting in January.
- b. Budget maintenance is the responsibility of the Board of Directors (refer to Article X Section 2 of the Bylaws). Entire membership is required to use the Payment Approval Process (see back of the Purchase_Request for chart for gaining approval).

- c. If an expenditure does not follow the process and/or exceeds 10 percent of the approved amount, the Treasurer will inform the Board who will vote on whether to approve or disapprove the amount. The member could become personally liable for unapproved expenditures.

All committee members should check with the Extension office manager before purchasing any office supplies.

Section 2. TMGA Awards

The president will solicit member input for nominations in October for the TMGA awards. The Board will select the nominees at the October Board of Directors meeting to be announced at the November General Meeting. The information needed on projects, publications, mass media, individual and chapter awards will be provided to the outgoing Board of Directors, who will then prepare and submit the application to the state. The award winner or the outgoing President will accept awards if in attendance at the annual Master Gardener state conference.

Article XI Committees and Special Assignments: See Master Gardener Committee Duties and Time Line Sheets for detailed explanation and timelines for each committee and special assignment.

Section 1. Standing Committees (also Refer to Bylaws)

- a. **Audit** – Financial records will be audited including review of items as listed under Treasurer Responsibilities in this document and in the Bylaws. The Bookkeeper and the Treasurer will provide information for the audit. Also included will be an audit of compliance with local, state, and federal regulations including licenses and taxation. A detailed report, along with recommendations for compliance/improvements and suggestions for changes, will be presented at the General Meeting in February of each year.
- b. **Communication** – Duties of this committee include press releases, media, and website.
- c. **Education** – The Committee will schedule educational programs such as Brown Bags, seminars, and educational field trips to Green Acres. Kids Fest is a subcommittee of this committee. The grants and scholarships subcommittee shall consist of a chairperson/co-chair, the Vice President and at least one additional member. This subcommittee will disseminate information, review and select grant/scholarship recipients.
- d. **Food and Refreshment** – The committee provides for evening dinner meetings, refreshments for seminars and special workday meals.
- e. **Fund Raising** – Examples of these committees may include Spring/Fall Plant Sale Committee, Hidden Garden Tour Committee) -- The committees will organize various fund-raising functions throughout the fiscal year, under the direction of the Board.
- f. **Greenhouse** – The committee will consist of a chairperson/co-chair and will be responsible for the operation of the greenhouse. Propagation is a subcommittee of this committee with its own chairperson.
- g. **Landscape** – Provide oversight for the planning and implementation of all facets of the Coastal Oaks Gardens Demonstration Gardens. Prepare an annual budget for all gardens. A written plan and budget must be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval prior establishment of a new garden or revision of existing gardens.
- h. **Member Relations** –
 - a. Host and Provide refreshments for intern training classes.
 - b. Mentor the interns of the Training Class.
 - c. Obtain and place memorial/honor bricks.
 - d. Recognition of appreciation to non-members who volunteer time and energy.
 - e. Coordinates directory, if one will be produced.
- i. **Planning** – The committee will be chaired by the Vice President, and consist of the Board of Directors and the Extension Agent; the committee is open to all members. The committee

will review the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures and then suggest revisions as needed. The committee will review the long-term plan annually. The committee will be called as need is determined.

Section 2. Special Assignments – For detailed information on each, refer to Master Gardener Committee Duties and Time Line Sheets. Master Gardeners with Special Assignments may be asked to give a brief report about their project, event or activity at regular monthly meetings. Examples of Master Gardener Special Assignments are:

- a. Timekeeper
- b. Office Volunteer Desk Coordinator
- c. Tree Team Coordinator
- d. Landscape Design Team Coordinator
- e. Special Events: Fair and Festival Booth Coordinators (e.g. Herb Fest, Farmer's Market, etc.)
- f. Caring Coordinator
- g. Rain Water Harvest Team Coordinator
- h. Sales Coordinator
- i. Coordinator for Designated Community Demonstration Gardens
- j. Design Team
- k. Hidden Gardens Tour Chairs
- l. Plant Sale Co/Chairs

Article XII Elections (Refer to Bylaws)

Article XIII Parliamentary Authority (Refer to Bylaws)

Article XIV Amendments (Refer to Bylaws)