

BY-LAWS

(Approved May 24, 2018)

SJC Master Gardeners

(In Support of Texas AgriLife Extension)

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the “SJC Master Gardeners”, hereinafter referred to as the “Organization.”

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVE

This organization shall be a non-profit, educational, literary, and charitable association to support Texas AgriLife Extension Service. This organization will not be affiliated with any commercial enterprises. Its objectives shall be:

- To increase knowledge of gardening to its members and the public.
- To support and assist Texas AgriLife Extension Service by providing the community with information on good gardening practices through educational projects, including publishing news articles and other mass media, presenting at garden clubs, schools and other community groups, and responding to telephone inquiries.
- To assist and recruit “Master Gardener Interns” in fulfilling their training and volunteer commitments.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Members of the Organization shall be graduates of a Texas Master Gardeners program, administered by the Texas AgriLife Extension, the Texas A & M University System and determined to be in good standing in any given year. Graduates of the Master Gardener Programs administered by Extension Services outside of San Jacinto County may seek membership in the SJC Master Gardeners by applying to the Organization President.

Section 2

Non-voting associate membership shall be extended to participants of the “Master Gardener Training” conducted by the SJC Master Gardeners. No dues will be required of associate members.

Section 3

To maintain good standing, each member must have paid dues for the current year, meet at least the minimum re-certification requirements as set by the Organization and must maintain the integrity of the organization. Minimum requirements are: 12 CEU hours and 24 volunteer hours per year.

Section 4

If extenuating circumstances prevent meeting these requirements, an individual may petition the Executive Committee for an exemption. If a member has become inactive by choice, they may petition the County Agent for re-certification.

Section 5

Failure to attend half of the regular meetings of the association may result in loss of membership in the association.

Section 6

Dues for members of the Organization shall be set at \$27.00 per year.

Section 7

Interns will be accepted into full membership upon completion of the Master Gardener Program and payment of their dues.

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

Section 1

Meetings will be held the 4th Thursday of every month excluding holidays. When in holiday conflict, the Executive Committee will determine the meeting date and will notify the general membership with a 30-day notice.

Section 2

Special meetings may be called, if the need arises, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Such special meetings shall be announced to members by phone, US mail, or email at least three days before the special called meeting date.

Section 3

The Annual Meeting of the General Membership shall be held on the 3rd Thursday in November with a primary purpose to elect officers for the coming year.

Section 4

SJC Master Gardeners will respect the rights and rules of various meeting sites.

ARTICLE V. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the SJC Master Gardeners shall run from January 1 through December 31. Within 30 days after the completion of the state and federal revenue and expense reporting, an annual audit of the financial records shall be initiated by a person appointed by the President who is not a member of the Executive Committee. The results of this audit will be tendered to the President within 90 days.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

Section 1

The nominating Committee, appointed in September of each year, shall present an officers' nominee slate to the Executive Committee in October consisting of members in good standing who have accepted their nomination. The Nominating Committee chair or designee shall send the slate to the Secretary for distribution via email to all members prior to the next regular November general meeting.

At the November meeting additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor provided the nominee has submitted written acceptance. Officers will be elected by a simple majority of the members in good standing present or by proxy using a secret ballot. A simple majority is 51% of the members in good standing, a quorum.

- A. All duly qualified members in good standing may be nominated for any office.
- B. An officer may be elected to the same office for more than one (1) term, but not more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- C. Each officer shall serve a two (2) term beginning January 1 and ending December 31 of the following year.
- D. To ensure continuity the President and Secretary will be elected in even years, the Treasurer and Vice President will be elected in odd years.
- E. In the event of a tie, a run-off election shall be held immediately, by secret ballot, until a candidate has been elected.

Section 2

Officers of this Organization comprising the Executive Committee are:

- i. President
- ii. Vice-President
- iii. Secretary
- iv. Treasurer
- v. Immediate Past President
- vi. Parliamentarian - Appointed

- vii. County Agent, Adjunct

Section 3

The rules for removal of an officer are:

- A. An elected officer may be recommended for removal from office of the SJC Master Gardeners at the discretion of the Executive Committee and Extension Agent if three consecutive Board Meetings or regular monthly meetings are missed.
- B. Two thirds of the members in good standing, present or by proxy, must vote to remove an officer from office 30 days after the recommendation.

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Each officer will maintain appropriate records for their office. Following are the basic duties expected of each officer.

Section 1: The President shall:

- A. Plan the agenda and preside at all meetings of the Organization.
- B. Appoint a Parliamentarian and the Chairperson of each Standing Committee and create ad hoc Committees as needed.
- C. Be an ex-officio member of all Committees except the Nomination Committee. The President shall not lead any Committee and may only vote in the event of a tie.
- D. Work with the Treasurer to develop an annual budget.
- E. Represent, or appoint a designee to represent the Organization in all additional relevant functions and groups.
- F. Supervise the website.
- G. Co-sign all checks.
- H. Ensure that all participants receive credit for continuing education.

Section 2: The Vice-President shall:

- A. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President.
- B. Help develop, promote, and have oversight over the new trainee programs and continuing education programs to enable members to meet re-certification requirements.
- C. Fulfill the duties of President in the President's absence.
- D. Chair the Program Committee.
- E. Vice President may co-sign checks with the Treasurer only at the direction and/or incapacitation of the President.

Section 3: The Secretary shall:

- A. Record the minutes of each Executive Committee and general meeting and report the highlights by email as an addition to the monthly minutes.

- B. File all minutes, records, and documents/ attachments to meeting minutes with the webmaster for posting within two weeks of the meeting date.
- C. Be responsible for all necessary correspondence.
- D. Maintain a repository of all Organization-related documentation in an electronic format.

Section 4: The Treasurer shall:

- A. Assist the President in preparing an annual budget to be reviewed by the Executive Committee and approved by a simple majority of members in good standing.
- B. Comply with general accounting and auditing procedures.
- C. Receive and keep an exact account of all dues, other income, bank deposits, disbursements, and other financial matters.
- D. Pay all bills related to budgeted expenses with required approvals submitted by the appropriate officer or Committee chair.
- E. Present the financial records for audit monthly and annually within 30 days of the new calendar year.
- F. File all required tax forms in a timely manner.
- G. Invest funds each year in an amount to be designated by a majority vote of members in good standing at the January meeting, into a savings account for future projects and/or long-term goals.

Section 5: The Parliamentarian shall

- A. Advise the President during meetings and give rulings on Parliamentarian Law using the current Robert's Rules of Order.
- B. Be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

Section 6: The Past President

- A. Is a non-voting member of the Executive Committee to advise on continuity of the Organization.

ARTICLE VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers listed in Article VII, with the President serving as Chairperson. A quorum will consist of at least half of the voting officers. The County Extension Agent, as Adjunct, will provide the deciding vote, if needed.

Section 2

Purposes and/or objectives of the Executive Committee include but are not limited to:

- A. Coordinating Organization activities with the Extension Office.
- B. Providing overall direction for the Organization.
- C. Reviewing activities of Committees and providing guidance.

- D. Reviewing the budget and approve supplemental financial requests up to \$300.
- E. Reviewing and taking necessary action in the event a member has not complied with the requirements of membership.

Section 3

A staff member of the Texas AgriLife Extension with horticultural duties shall serve as advisor to the Executive Committee.

Section 4

The Executive Committee shall meet monthly or as necessary on call of the President or two other members of the Executive Committee.

Section 5

In the event a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee it shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a member in good standing approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 6

The Executive Committee may approve up to \$300 in unplanned expense, provided funds are available. Requests exceeding \$300 must be approved by simple majority of members in good standing, provided funds are available.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES

Section 1

All Committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the President and announced to the membership at the time of appointment, except when stated differently in the duties of specific officers. With approval of the Executive Committee, the President may also cause all Committees to be formed or dissolved.

Section 2

Where appropriate, each Committee chairperson shall submit to the Treasurer a proposed budget of the Committee's planned activities for the coming year by December 15.

Section 3

Associate members (trainees and interns) may serve as members of Committees.

Section 4

Each Committee will keep a record of any accomplishments of the SJC Master Gardeners throughout the calendar year to be eligible to apply for awards in the Texas Master Gardeners Association competition.

Section 5

Each Committee will identify grants or awards appropriate to their activity and submit suggestions and final applications to the Executive Committee and Extension Agent for review and approval.

Section 6 Standing Committees include:

A. Audit

- a. The Committee will consist of a chairperson who is not currently a voting member of the Executive Committee and at least two members.
- b. The Committee will audit the financial records of the Organization annually after the end of the fiscal year or monthly at discretion of the President and report the results to the membership.

B. Bereavement/Get Well

- a. The Committee will consist of at least a chairperson.
- b. If notified by an officer or member of a death of a member, a stepping stone will be ordered and installed in The Gardens of SJC Master Gardeners in a timely manner.
- c. Cards will be sent to members in the case of death of a family member or serious illness of the member.

C. Educational Outreach and Programs (including sub-Committees for Junior Master Gardeners and Trades Days)

- a. The Committee will consist of a chairperson and at least two members.
- b. The Committee, in conjunction with the Vice-President, are responsible for developing, promoting, and implementing continuing education programs and new intern classes.

D. Fundraising

- a. The Committee will plan and manage all activities for the Organization's fundraisers.
- b. The Committee will be responsible for coordinating and executing all aspects of the Chapter's two major fundraising projects.
- c. The chairperson of the Publicity/Marketing Committee will be an ex-officio member of this Committee.

E. Gardens

- a. The Committee will consist of a chairperson and sufficient members/associates to maintain the Gardens of SJC Master Gardeners.
- b. The Chairperson will be the manager of the Gardens of SJC Master Gardeners.

F. Nominating

- a. The President will appoint this Committee each September to facilitate the selection of a slate of officers for election.
- b. The Committee will consist of a chairperson and at least two members not currently serving on the Executive Committee.

- c. See Article VI, Section 1 for detailed responsibilities.
- G. Publicity/Marketing
 - a. The Committee will consist of a chairperson and two members.
 - b. The Committee shall gather information from the Executive Committee and members about local gardening events and report to the general membership through the appropriate channels.
 - c. The Committee will create press releases, design brochures/flyers, and write articles for the local newspaper and the Texas Master Gardeners Association, to support and promote the Organization's activities.
- H. Hospitality
 - a. The Committee will consist of a chairperson and one member responsible for scheduling refreshments for all appropriate gatherings.
- I. Social
 - a. The Committee will consist of one member who will coordinate, plan, and oversee all field trips.
 - b. Members or associates attending field trips will cover any required fee.
- J. Propagation
 - a. The Committee will consist of a chair person and two members.
 - b. The Committee will work on propagation materials that will support the Organization's activities.
- K. Website and Online Data
 - a. The Committee will include one member with at least one back-up, designated as webmaster, who will keep the Organization website linked to the Texas Master Gardeners Association website.
 - b. The webmaster will work with the Publicity/Marketing Committee and the County Agent's Office to publicize news, activities, classes, and information related to the Organization's activities and horticulture in the County.
 - c. The Committee will be responsible for posting all chapter news and events on all Organization designated social media platforms.
 - d. The webmaster will maintain the Organization's VMS and provide monthly reports to the President.

ARTICLE X. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Organization in all cases in which they are applicable and when consistent with the By-Laws of the Organization. The President will appoint a current member in good standing to serve as Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE XI: RULES FOR FISCAL TRANSFER

Section 1

Following the election of new officers, it is necessary to report any changes to the bank holding the SJC Master Gardeners account. Before the January meeting the newly elected or current President, Vice President, and Treasurer will meet with a bank official to remove the names of officers no longer serving and add the newly elected President, Vice President, and Treasurer as signers for the account(s).

ARTICLE XII. VOTING

Section 1

A quorum or simple majority at a meeting shall consist of a minimum of 51% of the members in good standing.

Section 2

All elections will be carried out by secret ballot.

Section 3

Any SJC Master Gardener member, who represents another group or organization that could benefit from the expenditure of SJC Master Gardeners' funds, should recuse themselves from voting on any such expenditure. The member may advise SJC Master Gardeners on any topic.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1

These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the membership in good standing and voting, either present or by proxy.

Section 2

Notice of all proposed amendments to the By-Laws must be presented in writing at a regular meeting and a copy emailed or mailed not less than 10 days prior to the next regular meeting to the members in good standing. Proposed amendments will be voted on by all members in good standing, present or by proxy, at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the SJC Master Gardeners, all assets shall be distributed to the Texas AgriLife Extension Office in San Jacinto County, Texas, as specified in Section 214, and which has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or under Section 23701d of the Revenue and Taxation Code.