

Master Gardener Association of Passaic County, Inc.

BYLAWS

Article I: Name and Purposes

Section 1. Name: The association shall be known as the Master Gardener Association of Passaic County, Inc. (MGAPC).

Section 2. Purposes:

- A. To assist Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) in its service to the public.
- B. To promote community awareness of and participation in Extension programs related to horticulture through educational programs.
- C. To sustain the interest and enthusiasm of our members through continuing educational programs and field trips.
- D. To support the Master Gardener Association of New Jersey (MGANJ) in promoting and expanding the program.
- E. To cooperate with other RCE departments in an effort to improve community life.

Article II: Membership

Section 1. Eligibility: Membership is open to all people without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, or political beliefs.

Section 2. Requirements include: completing a training program of 70 hours, successful completion of a written examination and 70 hours of volunteer service, there-by attaining RCE Master Gardener certification.

Section 3. Categories of Membership:

- A. RCE Certified Master Gardener/Active: Active members have attained RCE Master Gardener certification. Continued Active membership requires 25 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of annual update education as approved by the local coordinator during each calendar year and payment of annual dues by the due date.
- B. RCE Master Gardener Intern: Participant in the current class. These individuals are exempt from dues during their class year.
- C. Alumnus: Alumni members are RCE Certified Master Gardeners who have not completed either the annual service or education requirement during the previous year, and who elect to remain on the mailing list upon payment of the dues. RCE Master Gardener Alumni may not vote or hold elective office but may participate in Master Gardener projects and activities, attend Master Gardener and RCE sponsored events and field trips and attend Master Gardener meetings.

Section 4. Recording Volunteer Time: Volunteer time must be recorded on the Master Gardener Time Sheet and be submitted to the Second Vice-President by December 31.

- A. Volunteer Time: Volunteer time is at the discretion of the RCE Master Gardener Coordinator. Volunteer time includes time worked at approved MGAPC projects and activities, attending MGAPC and RCE sponsored educational events and field trips, and attending MGAPC and MGANJ meetings.
- B. Travel Time: Travel time shall be recorded as part of volunteer time or as set by the RCE Master Gardener Coordinator.

Section 5. Awards shall be distributed at the December meeting. RCE certification awards (70 and 100 hour) may be distributed at graduation from the training program or at an equivalent ceremony. At the milestones listed below, members of the MGAPC are eligible to receive the following awards:

- A. 100 hours: A Master Gardener name badge, and certificate.

- B. 500 hours: A certificate.
- C. 1000 hours: A certificate and gold name badge.
- D. At each additional 1000-hour increment a certificate of recognition shall be issued.

ARTICLE III: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Master Gardener Association of Passaic County shall be president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary.

Section 2. Eligibility: Only active members are eligible to hold an elective office.

Section 3. Election of Officers:

- A. Nominations: A nominating committee of three (3) members, including a chair, shall be appointed by the president in September. A slate of candidates will be presented at the October General Meeting at which time nominations from the floor will be accepted. Job sharing by two people is permitted.
- B. Voting: If, at the November meeting no nominations are made from the floor, the recording secretary will cast a unanimous ballot for the entire slate. If further nominations are made from the floor, each position will be voted upon separately, either by written or voice ballot.
- C. Terms of Office: Terms of office will be for one year effective from the date of installation at the December meeting. No officer may serve in a specific office for more than three (3) consecutive terms. No one may hold more than one office at a time. Absence without a satisfactory excuse at a combined three general or executive committee meetings may be deemed a resignation of the board position.

Section 4 Duties

A. Duties of All Officers

1. All officers are required to support the purposes of the MGAPC.
2. All officers will attend General, Executive Board, and special meetings.
3. All officers shall perform the duties of the president during his or her absence in the order of the list of officers.

B. Duties of the President:

1. Preside over all Executive Board, General, and Special Meetings.
2. Appoint committee chairs with the concurrence of the Executive Board.
3. Act as ex-officio member of all committees, except the nominating committee.
4. Call special meetings of the General Membership and Executive Board to facilitate business and address emergencies. The minutes of said meetings will be read at the next General Meeting.
5. Shall vote only in the event of a tie.
6. Appoint two representatives and two alternates to attend meetings of the MGANJ with the concurrence of the Executive Board. If possible, the president should be one of the representatives.
7. Establish written agendas for all meetings and distribute when appropriate.
8. Ensure that each member receive a monthly mailing advising of upcoming meetings and other activities.
9. Will present a report of the activities of the MGAPC for the previous year at the December meeting.

C. Duties of the First Vice President:

1. Shall organize a minimum of ten (10) field trips and/or programs per year.
2. If possible, shall serve as one of the representatives or alternates to the MGANJ.

D. Duties of the Second Vice President:

1. Will calculate and report the volunteer hours of all Master Gardeners on an annual basis in collaboration with the RCE Master Gardener Coordinator.
 2. Will coordinate with the Awards Committee to arrange for certificates, name badges, and pins as appropriate to Master Gardeners who have reached volunteer hour milestones.
 3. If possible, shall serve as one of the representatives or alternates to the MGANJ.
- E. Duties of the Treasurer:
1. Be responsible for all financial transactions directly related to Association business.
 2. Present reports at all scheduled Executive Board and general membership meetings. A copy of these reports will also be kept on file at the RCE Office.
 3. Propose an annual budget which shall be submitted to the Executive Board at its January meeting. The budget will be presented to the General membership to be voted on in its entirety. If the vote is negative, the budget will go back to the Executive committee for restructuring and will be presented again at the following general meeting for approval in its entirety. Any unused funds from the previous year will automatically revert to the general fund.
 4. Prepare the financial records of the Association for audit at the conclusion of the calendar year.
 5. Will send out dues notices on an annual basis, will collect dues and deposit them into the MGAPC account, and will keep records of which members have paid their dues.
 6. Shall file the appropriate reports to government agencies annually.
 7. Reimbursements will be made only with a voucher and receipts.
 8. Only the treasurer and president are authorized to sign checks.
- F. Duties of the Recording Secretary:
1. Record minutes of all Executive Board, General, and Special meetings. During the secretary's absence the minutes will be recorded by a volunteer.
 2. File copies of all minutes in the appropriate file at the RCE Office.
 3. Maintain a second file which will be available at all Executive Board, General, and Special meetings. This file will be passed on to the next secretary.
 4. Shall serve as Parliamentarian.
- G. Duties of the Corresponding Secretary:
1. Receive, record, and report to the MGAPC all correspondence to said Association and go to the RCE office at least once per month to check correspondence.
 2. Prepare and send all correspondence from the MGAPC.
 3. File records of all correspondence and summary reports of projects and special events at the RCE office.
 4. Will assist the president with all mailings
 5. Will maintain and distribute annually to all members a list of Active and Alumni members.

Section 5. Vacancies among officers except for the position of president will be filled by the president from the general membership with the concurrence of the Executive Board.

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1. Executive Board Meetings

- A. The Executive Board consists of the president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and the immediate past president and the delegate(s) to the MGANJ. The Executive Board shall meet in January and a minimum of four (4) additional times to discuss planning and the budget. Only members present at a meeting may vote. A quorum consists of a simple majority of the

entire Executive Board.

- B. The Executive Board shall be empowered to transact any necessary business between meetings and act in emergencies which do not run contrary to the bylaws of the MGAPC or entail expenditures. Any non-budgeted expenses of \$100 (one hundred dollars) or more must be approved by the membership at a general meeting.
- C. Guests may be invited to address specific business, however, only members of the Executive Board shall be allowed to vote.

Section 2. General Meetings:

- A. General meetings shall be scheduled at least eight (8) times a year. The schedule of dates and times for the year to be set by the Executive Board before January 31.
- B. A quorum shall consist of twelve (12) Active members including 3 (three) members of the Executive Board. All members may debate, but only Active members present at a meeting may vote. Decisions may be made by a majority vote of active members attending a meeting.
- C. Robert's Rules of Order shall guide procedures for all General and Executive Board meetings. If an issue arises not addressed in these bylaws, Robert's Rules will apply.

Article V: Committees

Designation of Committees: Committees will be established by the president with the approval of the Executive Board for a specific purpose or long-term goals. At minimum the following committees shall be appointed annually:

- A. Nominating Committee in September.
- B. Auditing Committee shall be established in January to audit the financial records of the previous year.
- C. Awards Committee shall be established in May to select members for recognition by the Master Gardener Association of New Jersey at the Fall Conference and the MGAPC at the December meeting.

Article VI: Finances

The financial accounts of the MGAPC shall be separate from all other RCE funds.

Article VII: Bylaws Amendment Procedure

Section 1. Only active members may propose amendments to the bylaws. The proposed change will be presented in writing to the General Membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. If accepted at this meeting by a simple majority vote, then proceed to Section 2

Section 2. All members will receive written notice of the proposed change. The notice will state the wording of the proposed Amendment and will state the date of the General Meeting at which it will be voted upon. The notice must be mailed at least 15 days prior to the meeting date at which it will be voted upon.

Section 3. Passage of the proposed amendment will be by an affirmative vote of 2/3 (two-thirds) of the Active membership at the designated General meeting.

Section 4: Every five years the president will appoint a committee to review the bylaws.

Article VIII: Role of the RCE Master Gardener Program Coordinator

The role of the RCE Master Gardener Program Coordinator shall be the instruction and certification of RCE Master Gardeners in Training and as an expert in horticultural matters.

Article IX: Dissolution of the Association

In the event that the MGAPC ceases to function and dissolves itself, all assets after obligations and expenses of the MGAPC have been satisfied, shall be transferred only to a not-for-profit organization with shared horticultural purposes.

These bylaws have been adopted on this _____ day of _____ in the year 2010 by the membership of the Master Gardener Association of Passaic County.

President

Recording Secretary