

St. Clair County Chapter of the Michigan Master Gardener Association

BY-LAWS

Adopted: April 21, 2009

ARTICLE I-NAME

SECTION 1. The name of this organization shall be the St. Clair County Chapter of the Michigan Master Gardener Association (SCCCMMGA).

ARTICLE II-AFFILIATION

SECTION 1. The Chapter shall be a separate, unincorporated, non-profit related organization of Michigan State University under the oversight of the Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) St. Clair County Master Gardener Program. All Chapter activities shall be consistent with the policies of Michigan State University, St. Clair County MSUE and the Michigan Master Gardener Program.

ARTICLE III-PURPOSE

SECTION 1. The purpose of the Chapter is to bring together active Master Gardener volunteers to serve as an educational resource to MSUE St. Clair County in their common goal of providing horticultural education to the citizens within the community. It will provide its members with up-to-date horticulture information through a variety of educational programs and activities.

ARTICLE IV-MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Full Membership: Individuals who have successfully completed the Michigan Master Gardener course, the initial volunteer requirement, and those who have received certification through the Michigan Master Gardener Program are eligible for full membership with full voting privileges upon payment of annual dues. To remain eligible for membership, the Master Gardener must annually complete the current state recertification requirements.

Provisional Membership: Individuals who have successfully completed the Michigan Master Gardener course, but have not completed the initial volunteer requirement are eligible for provisional membership. Upon receiving Master Gardener certification as outlined in the Michigan Master Gardener Certification Policy, a provisional member shall be eligible for full membership, which includes full voting privileges.

Social Membership: This membership applies to people who are not certified Master Gardeners or to whom the provisional membership does not apply, but wish to attend meetings and programs. Social members can not vote in Chapter elections or vote on Chapter issues. Due to liability issues, social members cannot participate in Master Gardener projects. Social membership dues shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Honorary Membership: Individuals who have been certified Master Gardeners and active Association members for 10 years or more, but are no longer able to meet the volunteer requirements due to age or physical limitations are eligible for lifetime honorary membership as determined by the Executive Committee. Honorary members do have full voting privileges, but are not required to pay dues.

SECTION 2. Annual dues are non-refundable and must be paid to the Treasurer by the February membership meeting. The Executive Committee, subject to approval of the Chapter, shall set the amount of dues at a level that will not inappropriately limit membership.

SECTION 3. Membership will be terminated under the following circumstances:

Full members of the Chapter must complete the annual minimum requirements for recertification as outlined in the Michigan Master Gardener Certification Policy. If these requirements are not met, the Master Gardener's membership will be terminated.

Provisional members shall be terminated if the member does not complete the requirements for Master Gardener certification within the time limit as outlined in the Michigan Master Gardener Certification Policy.

Members who have not paid their dues by the February membership meeting shall be given 30 days written notice to pay. If dues are not paid within the 30 days, membership will be terminated. Reinstatement will occur upon payment of one full year's dues.

Members who wish to resign may notify the Executive Committee in writing. Their membership will be terminated upon receipt of notification.

ARTICLE V-OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The officers of the Chapter shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate past ex-officio President and MSUE Advisor (Master Gardener Coordinator). These officers shall make up the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2. The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected by the general membership for a minimum of a two-year term or a maximum of 2 terms (4 years total). The MSUE Advisor is not elected. The MSUE employed Master Gardener Coordinator shall fill the position of MSUE Advisor. In the event this

position does not exist in the county, the County Extension Director will serve as the Advisor.

Elected officers are expected to attend all Executive Committee and general membership meetings. During their term of office, each officer will maintain a record of their activities to be passed on to their successor.

SECTION 3. Any full voting member of the Chapter may run for an elected office. Nominations of officers shall take place at the October meeting. Election of officers shall take place at the November meeting. New officers' terms will begin January 1st.

SECTION 4. The Executive Committee shall appoint a person to fill any office that becomes vacant during the year. This appointee shall fulfill the responsibilities of the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE VI-DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

SECTION 1. President - The President will preside over meetings of the general membership and the Executive Committee. The President will oversee the enforcement of the by-laws and policies as adopted by the Chapter membership.

SECTION 2. Vice President - In the absence of the President, Secretary, or Treasurer, the Vice President shall assume the duties of said office. The Vice President may oversee all committees.

SECTION 3. Secretary - The Secretary shall take minutes of all Executive Committee and Chapter general meetings. At each meeting, the secretary will provide written copies of the minutes of the previous meeting. A copy of all minutes will be kept on file in the MSUE St. Clair County office. The secretary shall be responsible for maintaining complete records of all Chapter minutes, attendance and correspondence.

SECTION 4. Treasurer - The Treasurer will be responsible for managing all Chapter income, expenses and bank account(s) according to the policies and procedures outlined in the MSU Extension Financial Accountability Guidelines. The Treasurer is responsible for collecting dues and maintaining the membership roster. A financial report shall be prepared and read and approved at each meeting. An annual financial report will be prepared, audited and submitted to the MSUE office.

SECTION 5. Advisor – The MSUE Advisor will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member. The Advisor is responsible for assuring the Chapter carries out its stated purpose in accordance with the educational mission and policies of MSU, St. Clair County MSUE and the Michigan Master Gardener Program. The MSUE Advisor shall exercise oversight and may override decisions of the Chapter when these policies are not adhered to. The Advisor is the liaison between the Chapter and MSUE.

ARTICLE VII-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. The Executive Committee will be responsible for maintaining a simple and open standard of accountability. The committee shall:

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- Meet prior to general membership meetings as needed.
- Prepare the agenda for general membership meetings.
- Approve non-budgeted financial transactions without full membership approval up to and including \$300.00.
- Prepare a proposed budget for the general membership.
- Be responsible for securing annual audit of the Chapter's financial records.

ARTICLE VIII- MEETINGS

SECTION 1. General meetings of the Chapter shall be held the third Tuesday of each month unless otherwise ordered by the Chapter or the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX - FINANCES

SECTION 1. The Treasurer is responsible for managing all Chapter income, expenses and bank account(s) according to the policies and procedures outlined in the MSU Extension Financial Accountability Guidebook.

SECTION 2. Michigan State University guidelines require the Chapter to keep the MSUE county office apprised of the Chapter's financial status. This will be done on a monthly basis via the monthly Treasurer's report and annually via the audited annual financial report.

SECTION 3. All Chapter funds shall be kept in a FDIC financial institution.

SECTION 4. The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30. The Executive Committee shall prepare a proposed budget that must be approved by a majority vote of the members present at the Chapter's May or June meeting.

SECTION 5. No part of the funds of the Chapter shall inure to the benefit of any member, donor, or private interest in its activities. This means that all expenditures are for educational programs or activities or in direct support of same.

SECTION 6. In the event the Chapter is dissolved, all its assets shall be turned over to the MSUE County office to be used only for continuing consumer horticulture and home gardening outreach and educational programming.

ARTICLE X – GOVERNANCE

- SECTION 1. Meetings will be conducted using Roberts Rules of Order.
- SECTION 2. Excluding state-mandated requirements, the by-laws of the Chapter may be amended or repealed by a 2/3 vote of the members present. Notice of the suggested change must be made at the previous meeting and printed in either the chapter newsletter, the minutes of the previous meeting, or a special mailing. Notice shall be distributed at least seven days before the proposed vote.
- SECTION 3. A quorum shall be 20% of the full voting membership, including at least two executive board members, with the exception being a vote on amendments to the by-laws.
- SECTION 4. Dissolution of Association: In the event of the dissolution of the St. Clair County Chapter of the Michigan Master Gardener Association, any funds remaining in the account after payment of all expenses of dissolution and all debts, shall be given to the MSUE in St. Clair County, a tax exempt organization under the IRC 501C (3). In the event the said organization does not exist or is no longer qualified as a tax exempt organization, the remaining funds shall be paid to one or more organizations qualified under Section 501C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or similar provision of an amended code, chosen by the Executive Committee. Any funds from dissolution will be donated with the understanding that the funds will be used preferably for the maintenance and continuance of the SSCCMMGA gardening and/or educational projects.

Membership is open to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status.