

# **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE MONONGALIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ORGANIZATION**

## **Article I – Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Monongalia County Master Gardener Organization, hereinafter referred to as the “Organization.”

## **Article II – Purpose**

The purposes for which the Organization is formed shall be:

- To enhance and supplement the consumer horticulture programs of the West Virginia University Extension Service, hereinafter referred to as the WVU Extension Service or the Extension Service;
- To provide information on horticultural practices and techniques to educational and community groups;
- To improve Master Gardeners’ knowledge and interest in horticulture and related activities;
- To provide opportunities for Master Gardeners to meet and associate with others with similar interests;
- To undertake horticulture-based projects with the people of Monongalia County, WV, that supports the mission of the WVU Extension Service, which is to form learning partnerships with the people of West Virginia and to enable them to improve their lives and communities.

## **Article III – Basic Policies**

**Section 1:** The Organization shall be nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan.

**Section 2:** The Organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, handicap, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin in its programs and activities.

**Section 3:** Individuals completing the required educational training and volunteer hours shall hold the title “Certified Master Gardener” but may not monetarily profit from that title.

**Section 4:** A member may not officially represent or voice an opinion of the Organization, unless specifically authorized to do so.

**Section 5:** Expenditures of over \$100.00 require approval of the Organization as a group; expenditures of less than \$100.00 may be approved by the Executive Committee. All checks shall require two signatures: those of the Treasurer and any one of the other officers.

**Section 6:** A report is required from each committee/committee official at each regularly scheduled meeting.

#### **Article IV – Membership**

Membership in the Organization is granted to certified Master Gardeners, and to those working to become certified, and who choose to join the Association and participate in the activities of the Organization.

Affiliates membership in the Association may be granted: an Associate or Honorary, non-voting membership by the Organization based on support to the Association and to the Master Gardener Program.

##### **Section 1: Certification Status:**

The following categories of certification are recognized by the Organization:

- Student: Individual currently taking the 30 hours of assigned coursework to attain certification
- Provisional: has completed the 30 hours of coursework towards certification.
- Certified:
  - Has completed the coursework and volunteer hours for initial certification during the allotted time period, and
  - For subsequent years, has met the annual re-certification requirements.

Not certified: has failed to meet the initial certification requirements or recertification requirements.

##### **Section 2: Classes of membership:**

Provisional: Provisional, nonvoting membership is automatically granted to anyone in a Provisional Certification status.

Active: Active membership is granted to all Certified Master Gardeners who have attended at least one meeting per quarter or four meetings per year and

paid their annual dues to the Organization. Active members may vote and hold office.

*Inactive:* Inactive, nonvoting membership may be granted to any former member not currently Certified, or not current in dues or meeting attendance.

*Affiliate memberships:*

*Associate:* Associate, nonvoting membership may be granted to all employees of the WVU Extension Service and individuals who provide exceptional service to the Organization and the Master Gardener Program, as determined by the Organization.

*Honorary:* Honorary membership is approved by the Organization and granted to individuals for their teaching and leadership commitment to the Master Gardener Program. Honorary members may attain active membership status at any time by completing the initial 30 hours of volunteer service and then completing re-certification requirements.

*Master Gardeners Certified in Other States:* The membership status of individuals who were certified in another state shall be considered on a case by case basis.

**Section 3: Annual dues** for active members shall be established by the Organization and are payable on or before the annual meeting.

## **Article V – Officers**

**Section 1: Officers and General Duties.** Officers of the Organization shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer and shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by these bylaws.

**Section 2: Election of Officers.** Elections shall be held at the annual June meeting of the Organization. Officers shall be elected from candidates chosen from the active membership. In addition to the candidates presented by the Nominating Committee, candidates may be nominated from the floor before the election. Election shall be by written ballot and officers shall be elected by a majority of the active members voting at the meeting.

**Section 3: Term of Office.** An officer shall serve for one year, but may be elected for a second consecutive term. The term of office shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which the officer is elected. No officer shall serve more than two consecutive years in the same office.

**Section 4: Specific Duties:**

**President:** The President shall preside over all organizational meetings and Executive Committee meetings. As the chief executive officer, the President shall direct the activities of the Organization in such a manner as to achieve the stated purposes, serve as a member of the West Virginia State Master Gardener Association, and act as a liaison to the local community and Monongalia County, and has the authority to co-sign checks for the Organization.

**Vice-President:** The Vice-President shall become the presiding officer in the absence of the President and shall come to the meetings prepared for such. The Vice-President shall assist the President with the overall running of the Organization and has the authority to co-sign checks for the Organization.

**Secretary:** The Secretary shall make and keep an accurate and complete written record of the activities of the Organization's regular and special meetings, and Executive Committee meetings and place a hard copy of same in the Extension Office file. The Secretary shall, in coordination with the Extension Office, maintain an up-to-date address book with current information on each member of the Organization and has authority to co-sign checks for the Organization. The Secretary shall also distribute to the membership any proposed amendments to these bylaws, and shall send notice of the annual meeting at least 15 days prior to that meeting. If the Secretary is unable to attend a meeting, he or she shall find a replacement to keep the record for that meeting and has the authority to co-sign checks for the Organization.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall have charge of all funds of the Organization and must co-sign checks, keep accurate and complete records of all income and expenditures, and disburse funds only for such purposes as approved by the Organization. The Treasurer shall give an oral financial statement at each meeting and place a hard copy of the monthly financial statement and an end-of-year summation report in the Extension Office file. If the Treasurer is unable to attend a meeting, he or she shall provide a written financial statement to the officer who will preside at the meeting.

**Section 5: Replacement of Officers.** If an officer shall leave office for any reason, the Executive Committee shall appoint a successor to fulfill the remaining term of that officer.

**Article VI – Meetings**

**Section 1: Regular Meetings.** Regular meetings shall be held monthly.

**Section 2: Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the Organization shall be the June meeting. The Organization's membership shall elect officers at the annual meeting; therefore, notice of that annual meeting shall be sent at least 15 days prior to the meeting by the Secretary.

**Section 3: Special Meetings.** A special meeting may be called by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee and/or upon receipt of a written request from 10% of the active membership. The entire membership must be given notice.

**Section 4: Quorum.** A quorum at any meeting shall consist of the active members present.

### **Article VII – Representation to the West Virginia Master Gardener Board**

**Section 1. Representatives.** Two active members of the Organization shall be the representatives to the state West Virginia Master Gardener Association. The President of the Monongalia County Master Gardener Organization and one other active member, appointed by the President, shall represent the Organization.

**Section 2: Term of Service.** The representatives shall serve a term of one year and shall attend quarterly meetings. If a representative is unable to attend a meeting, he or she shall notify the State Association's secretary and name the alternative representative that will attend. If a representative shall fail to attend three consecutive meetings, that representative shall be replaced.

**Section 3: Responsibilities.** Representatives shall participate in the State Association meetings, and keep that Association informed about local Organizational activities, and keep the local Organization informed about the activities of the State Association.

### **Article VIII – Committees/Officials**

**Section 1: Committee Meetings.** The committee chair shall guide the committee in fulfillment of the purposes as stated in these bylaws. The time and place of meetings shall be determined by a majority of the committee members. A quorum shall consist of the members present. Each active or provisional member should serve on or participate in an approved committee, project, or activity.

## **Section 2: Standing Committees:**

**Executive Committee:** Membership shall consist of the officers of the Organization, immediate past-president of the Association, chairs of standing committees, officials, and the Extension Agent. It shall be chaired by the President or the Vice-President in the President's absence. The Executive Committee shall oversee the direction of the Organization, develop policy, and review the functioning of the other committees/officials. The Executive Committee shall be authorized to expend up to \$100.00 without approval of the Organization as a whole.

**Education Committee:** The Education chair and committee shall work with the Extension Agent to develop and revise (as needed) a syllabus for the initial Master Gardener educational training and shall locate and schedule experienced speakers to aid in teaching the approved courses.

**Program Official:** The Program Official shall work with the Extension Agent to plan and schedule the program portion of the Master Gardener Organization meetings. These programs shall be educational in nature and designed to aid active Master Gardeners in obtaining education hours for re-certification.

**Historian:** The Historian shall maintain a historical account of Organizational events with newspaper articles, photographs, flyers, and/or recordings. The historian shall promote the objectives of the Organization by providing public relations to the community/county.

## **Section 3: Special Committees:**

**Nominating Committee:** The Organization's President shall appoint a nominating committee chair who will then convene a committee composed of an odd number of active members. The President shall not serve on the nominating committee. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of nominees during the month of (mailed or e-mailed) May to be voted upon at the annual meeting in June. Candidates may also be nominated from the floor.

**By-laws Committee:** A by-laws committee will be appointed by the President to review by-laws every five years or when the need arises to make corrections that have been identified to stay current with the State Master Gardener Association or WVU Extension Service Policy.

## **Article IX – Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern meetings of the Organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules that the Organization may adopt.

### **Article X - Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year for the Organization is defined as July 1 through June 30th of the following year.

### **Article XI – Amendment Process**

These bylaws may be amended at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Organization. Any proposed amendments must be submitted in writing and read at a regularly scheduled meeting after which all active members shall be given notice of changes. The proposed amendments shall be read again at the next regularly scheduled meeting and voted on. A two-thirds vote of the active members present is required for an amendment to pass.

### **Article XII – Dissolution of the Organization**

Said Organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organization under section 501 © (3) of the International Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Three hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Upon dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 © (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of this

organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.