

By-Laws for Athens Area Master Gardener Association

Revised: February, 2010

Article I

Name

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Athens Area Master Gardener Association, referred to as AAMGA. This organization was founded in Athens-Clarke County, Georgia as a non-profit organization dedicated to service in the community and surrounding area.

Section 2. The AAMGA shall use the address of the Athens-Clarke County Extension Office as the official address of the organization. All written communications for the AAMGA shall be directed to this address.

Article II

Purpose

Section 1. The purposes of this organization are: to provide information to the gardening public through the media, presentations at community meetings, schools, and other activities as indicated; to assist the Athens-Clarke County Extension Office, the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, and to assist the State Botanical Garden of Georgia on an "as needed" basis as it relates to horticultural practices; also to assist Master Gardeners in fulfilling their annual commitment of volunteer hours and to advance the members' horticultural education through meetings and educational activities.

Article III

Membership

Section 1. Any person who has completed the Master Gardener training program is eligible for membership. This includes all certified Master Gardeners and Master Gardener interns.

Section 2. A certified Master Gardener is one who has completed the classroom training sessions and satisfactorily fulfilled his/her volunteer service as required by the Georgia Master Gardener Program. The initial year of service shall consist of fifty (50) volunteer hours. Each year thereafter twenty-five (25) volunteer hours are required to maintain certification, and it is recommended that at least one-half of the hours in subsequent years be through participation in AAMGA projects.

Section 3. A Master Gardener intern, one who is in the process of becoming certified by serving the required hours of volunteer time, is eligible for membership during the first year after completion of the training program. This is a non-voting membership and is offered only for one year until the intern is certified as a Master Gardener after serving the required hours of volunteer time. A grace period may be allowed as a result of special circumstances. After certification as a Master Gardener, the intern is eligible for full membership as stated in Section 2 of the article.

Section 4. Friends of **AAMGA** may join the association by paying an annual membership fee in an amount to be set by the Executive Board. They will be considered non-voting members and shall not be eligible to hold any office.

Section 5. The membership year shall begin on January 1st. Annual membership dues are due on or before January 1st for the upcoming year. Any member whose dues are not paid by the last day of February shall be dropped from the membership roll. Members so dropped may be reinstated during the membership year by payment of the dues. Dues are non-refundable.

Section 6. Dues shall be determined annually by the Executive Board.

Article IV

Meetings

Section 1. It shall be the policy of the AAMGA to conduct regular monthly general membership meetings. A regular meeting date and time shall be decided upon by the majority vote of the membership. Notice of all meetings shall be sent to all members no less than 14 days prior to the meeting date.

Section 2. The April meeting shall include the transaction of all business properly brought before it and shall include the installation of officers.

Section 3. Additional meetings of the AAMGA may be called any time by the President or by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Notice of such meetings shall be provided to the membership by the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the date.

Article V

Voting and Quorum

Section 1. Only certified Master Gardeners holding membership in good standing shall be entitled to vote on items brought before the membership. No voting by proxy shall be permitted.

Section 2. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at the March meeting. Officers will assume duties on April 1st.

Section 3. Amendments to the Bylaws shall require a majority vote of the members present. Proposed amendments shall be circulated no less than 14 days prior to being presented for a vote at a regular general membership meeting. Results of the vote shall be certified by the Executive Board, and if passed, become part of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI

Executive Board and Leadership Council

Section 1: The elected officers, also known as the Executive Board of AAMGA, are Certified Master Gardeners and shall consist of: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President. In addition, the County Extension Agent shall be a non-voting member of the board. If any officer resigns or is unable to fulfill his/her term of office, the officers shall appoint a member of the AAMGA to fulfill said term of office. The Executive Board will have the authority to appoint any member to serve on the EB as deemed appropriate for the enhancement of the association.

Section 2: The Leadership Council shall consist of all the Committee Chairpersons.

Section 3: All business of the AAMGA will be conducted by the Executive Board at a scheduled meeting of said Board. The Leadership Council shall meet with the Executive Board at least once during each calendar quarter. The President shall schedule the meeting and notify the Secretary and each member of the Board as to the time and location of the meeting at least five days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 4: The Executive Board will appoint a person to audit the Treasurer's records and the audit review will be presented to the Board at the last board meeting prior to the annual March meeting. The President will report the audit at the March general membership meeting. A copy of the audit shall be available during the meeting for inspection by the members.

Section 5: AAMGA officers will serve one-year terms and be eligible for re-election.

Section 6: The Executive Board shall have the power to recommend expulsion of any member of AAMGA for just cause. Written notice of the meeting to consider expulsion shall be given to said member at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The notice of pending expulsion shall specifically state the nature of the charges and shall advise said member of his/her right to appear in person to defend himself/herself. A two-thirds vote in favor of expulsion by active members present is required for expulsion.

ARTICLE VII

Officers and Duties

Section 1: The President shall preside at all membership meetings of the AAMGA and at all AAMGA Executive Board meetings. The President shall coordinate with the officers and committee chairs all activities of AAMGA. The President will be responsible for notifying the members of the Executive Board and the Leadership Council of meeting times and places.

Section 2: The Vice-President shall assist the President in the operation of AAMGA and shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice-President will also serve on the Program Committee.

Section 3: The Secretary shall record minutes of all AAMGA general membership and Executive Board meetings and communicate said minutes to membership. The Secretary shall also be responsible for all Board and Association correspondence.

Section 4: The Treasurer shall collect all monies and pay all bills, maintain a detailed record of the source and disbursement of said funds and file any and all financial reports as required by law.

Section 5: Past Presidents shall be considered Honorary Board members and may be called upon for their expertise.

Article VIII

Committees

Section 1. Committees shall be appointed as necessary by the President and approved by the Executive Board. All members in good standing may serve on committees. Committees whose functions extend beyond the AAMGA year shall be reappointed by the incoming President.

Section 2. Committee Types: The following committees, but not limited to such, shall be appointed to carry out the objectives of the AAMGA. All committee chairs will report directly to the President. The committee calendar will run from April to March or be appointed on an as needed basis.

- A. Program Committee
- B. Membership Committee
- C. By-Laws Committee
- D. Budget Committee
- E. Audit Committee
- F. Nominating Committee
- G. Public Relations/Publicity Committee
- H. Projects Review Committee
- I. Hospitality Committee

Section 3. Committee Functions and Membership

- A. Program Committee: Shall consist of at least two (2) members. The Vice President will serve as a member of the committee. The committee shall plan and arrange all membership meetings and programs and prepare advance announcements of programs for the newsletter.
- B. Membership Committee: The committee shall be responsible for soliciting membership and collecting annual dues. The committee will maintain an accurate membership list and publish this list once a year, no later than March 15th. Members who have not paid their dues by the last day of February will be dropped from the current list.
- C. By-laws Committee: Shall consist of at least four (4) members. The Vice-President shall be a member. The committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to amend the by-laws as necessary.
- D. Budget Committee: Shall consist of three to five (3-5) members. The Treasurer and President shall be members. This committee shall be charged with making a budget to reflect all current project funding and administrative costs. They shall also review any new projects funding after receiving a formal request in writing with project information and costs provided. The budget shall be presented to the Executive Board for final approval.

- E. **Audit Committee:** The Audit Committee shall consist of at least two (2) members and be appointed by the Executive Board. The audit shall be completed by the end of the fourth quarter. The audit shall be presented to the Executive Board before the March meeting.
- F. **Nominating Committee:** Shall consist of at least three (3) members, two of whom are appointed by the Executive Board. One of those appointed shall be designated chairperson. The chairperson shall call a meeting of the committee prior to March in order to provide a slate of candidates whose names shall be presented at the March meeting. The slate of officers shall consist of members who have been active in AAMGA for at least one (1) year.

Nominees must agree to the nomination before being presented to the membership. Additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor at the March meeting with the consent of the nominee before being nominated. The President shall conduct the election. If there are no nominations from the floor, the slate presented by the Nominating Committee shall be accepted.
- G. **Public Relations/Publicity Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for the media affairs and communications with the community at large. They shall promote AAMGA through news articles, web sites, radio, TV, The Scoop and any other trade publications. They shall work closely with the Secretary and shall act in the role of historian by keeping a scrapbook of current events and projects, pictures, newspaper articles and any other related materials.
- H. **Projects Review Committee:** Shall review proposed projects based on the stated purpose of AAMGA and present their findings to the Executive Board for authorization. This committee shall conduct meetings as necessary to consider and review projects and shall receive Board approval for projects.
- I. **Hospitality Committee:** The Hospitality Committee shall provide refreshments at meetings and other events as deemed appropriate. They shall be reimbursed for receipted expenditures. There will be a specific budget in place.

Article IX

Parliamentary Authority

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the business of the AAMGA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the association may adopt.

Article X

Dissolution

AAMGA shall not engage in any business or other enterprise with a view to making a profit. Upon the dissolution of the AAMGA, any remaining assets, after the payment of all just debts of AAMGA shall be distributed to bona fide teaching, research, and Extension Horticulture Departments in the State of Georgia for the purpose of furthering the horticulture industry.

Article XI

Waiver of Responsibility

All meetings, exhibitions, and field trips attended by members or guests are at their sole discretion and AAMGA assumes no responsibility for personal injury or the loss or damage of any property or plant material.

Article XII

Revisions and Amendments to Bylaws

Proposed amendments or revisions to the Bylaws shall be publicized at any regular general membership meeting or at a special general meeting, **or by email or regular mail at least 14 days prior to a regular meeting.** Voting on proposed changes shall be held at the next meeting. A majority vote of the members present is required for passage. **Results of the final vote shall be certified by the Executive Board before being published in the next monthly newsletter and distributed in writing to the membership.**