

# Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws

## Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Victoria County Master Gardener Association.

## Article II. Mission

This organization shall be a non-profit, 501(c)3, educational, literary and charitable association of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service\* formerly known as the Texas Cooperative Extension. This organization will not be affiliated with any commercial enterprises. Its objective shall be:

To increase knowledge of gardening to its members and the general public.

To support and assist the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service\* by providing the community with information on good gardening practices through news articles, clinics, presentations at garden clubs, schools and other community groups and by telephone contacts.

To assist Master Gardener Interns and Trainees in fulfilling their volunteer commitment.

## Article III. Membership

### Section 1.

Membership classifications shall include:

- (A.) Texas Master Gardeners, certified by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service\*, The Texas A&M University System;
- (B.) Master Gardener Interns, who have completed the Master Gardener Educational Training Course; and
- (C.) Master Gardener Trainees, who are currently enrolled in the Master Gardener Educational Training Course.

### Section 2.

Voting members shall be the Texas Master Gardeners and Master Gardener Interns.

### Section 3.

Non-voting membership shall be extended to trainees in the Master Gardener Educational Training Course. Non-voting members will be accepted into voting membership upon completion of the Master Gardener Educational Training Course, providing all dues and fees have been paid in full.

### Section 4.

To maintain good standing and voting privileges, each member must have paid dues for the current year and fulfilled required hours.

### Section 5.

Dues for members of this organization shall be \$2.00 state, and \$10.00 local per year, payable annually for the following year by December 1st. New memberships during the year are to be paid within thirty days of membership.

### Section 6.

Life membership may be granted to those members who elect to pay a one-time, non-refundable fee of \$150.00. Members must complete re-certification requirements each year to maintain membership.

---

\*Name change effective August 12, 2012

# **Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws**

## Section 7.

Failure to pay dues on a timely basis or loss of certification may result in loss of membership in the association.

## Section 8.

Members must maintain their certification through re-certification each year to retain membership in the association. Re-certification will include a minimum of six (6) additional hours of training and twenty-one (21) additional hours of Extension Service volunteer work of which fifteen (15) shall be at, for or with the Victoria Educational Gardens (VEG). All members must be approved through the required Youth Protection Standards background check which is renewed every three years.

## Section 9.

Members who have not fulfilled required hours for the past year that want to be re-certified shall submit a written request for re-certification setting out deficits in hours to the County Extension Agent. Former members who have not been members for the past year, but who have left the Association in good standing, having achieved the required hours for their last year of membership, may submit a written request for re-certification to the County Extension Agent. Upon approval by the County Extension Agent and the member paying his or her dues, the member shall complete the stipulated hours as set out by the County Extension Agent, prior to the end of the following November, and shall be re-certified at the following December meeting if all deficit requirements are met, in addition to attaining the usual required hours for the current year. Hours required for former members who left the Association in good standing, who have petitioned to return to the Association, are equivalent to the usual hours required for the current one year period, as set out in Article III, Section 8. During the period of time above set out, voting privileges are suspended. Members are discouraged from applying for Recertification (R) status for more than one year in succession; and the Association reserves the right to deny such application. President Elect shall maintain records of any deficit hours required and achieved by a member in Recertification status.

## Section 10.

All approved training and volunteer community service hours must be recorded and submitted monthly for compilation by the monthly meeting date following the approved activity.

## Section 11.

Upon written application to the Victoria County Extension Agent and subsequent approval, Distinguished Master Gardener status will be given to those members with at least five years Active membership as a Master Gardener in Victoria County Master Gardener Association and whose years of service to Victoria County Master Gardener Association plus their age add up to 85. They will be required to attend at least 2 general meetings and pay yearly dues. Their hours will be only what they can physically do.

## Section 12.

The Executive Board may declare a member Emeritus status in accordance with State requirements. No dues, nor hour requirements are necessary for Emeritus status.

# Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws

## Article IV. Board of Directors

### Section 1.

The Board of Directors shall be the Executive Committee.

## Article V. General Membership Meetings

### Section 1.

Meetings will be held monthly.

### Section 2.

The November meeting shall be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing officers and State Directors, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise.

### Section 3.

Special meetings may be called if the need arises at the discretion of the Executive Committee (See Article X, Section 1). Such special meetings shall be announced to members by phone, mail or e-mail at least 3 days prior to the meeting date.

## Article VI. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this organization shall run from December 1 to November 30 of the following year.

## Article VII. Officers, State Directors and State Alternates

### Section 1.

Officers of this organization shall be:

- President
- President-Elect
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Treasurer-Elect

### Section 2.

The nominating committee shall nominate officers and a slate of candidates shall be presented in October.

### Section 3.

Officers shall be elected by secret ballot at the annual November meeting, shall be installed at the December meeting and shall assume their duties upon installation.

### Section 4.

The President-Elect shall serve for one (1) year and then succeed to the President's office for one (1) year.

### Section 5.

The Treasurer-Elect shall serve two (2) years and then succeed to the Treasurer's office. The Treasurer shall also serve for two (2) years.

## **Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws**

### Section 6.

The term for officers shall be for one year. No officer shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive years in the same capacity. President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Treasurer-Elect may not be re-elected to the same office for a consecutive term.

### Section 7.

All nominees for office must be active members in good standing who are either certified Master Gardeners or Master Gardener Interns having completed fifty (50) hours of volunteer service by the October meeting.

### Section 8.

There shall be two (2) State Directors and two (2) State Alternates who will represent the Victoria County Master Gardener Association at Texas Master Gardener Association meetings and events. One (1) State Director and one (1) State Alternate shall be elected at the annual meeting every year.

## **Article VIII. Duties of Officers**

### Section 1.

The President shall: Preside at all meetings of the organization; appoint a chairman of each standing committee and any special committees; appoint a Parliamentarian, as needed; be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; work with the Treasurer on the budget; set the agenda for upcoming meetings and see that they are mailed to the membership in a timely manner prior to meetings.

### Section 2.

The President-elect shall: Assist the President; attend committee meetings at the President's request; become the President at the expiration of the current President's term of office. The President-elect shall also administer to the calculation and timely keeping of all volunteer, project and other hours ensuring their accuracy and proper credit. A current list will be available to all members on a monthly basis.

### Section 3.

The Vice President shall: Preside at meetings in the absence of the President; chair the By-Laws committee; be responsible for reserving the meeting room, ordering the necessary furnishings, and ensuring meeting set-up is ready.

### Section 4.

The Secretary shall: Take care of all necessary correspondence; keep a current list of members' names and addresses; record and publish the minutes of each meeting.

### Section 5.

The Treasurer shall: Receive all dues and monies for the association; keep an exact accounting of all dues, other income, bank deposits, disbursements and other financial matters; pay all bills upon receipt of a written statement and purchase proof; make a monthly financial report to the membership; present the financial records for audit annually; develop an annual budget to be approved by the Executive Committee (See Article X, Section 1).

### Section 6.

The Treasurer-Elect shall: Work in conjunction with the Treasurer and become the Treasurer at the expiration of the current Treasurer's term of office.

# Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws

## Article IX. Committees

### Section 1.

The Standing Committee Chairmen shall be appointed by the President and announced at the January meeting. The Nominating Committee Chairman and members shall be appointed by the President by such time that a slate of officers can be presented at the October meeting.

### Section 2.

The Standing Committees, if applicable, and duties of each are:

- A. Educational Enrichment Program  
This committee shall consist of at least one member who is responsible for arranging for monthly meetings and educational enrichment programs, seminars, and field trips.
  
- B. Volunteer Coordination/Speakers Bureau  
This committee shall consist of at least one member with the Extension Agent as an advisor; will keep current a list of members' expertise; will compile a list of suitable Extension Service approved volunteer opportunities and coordinate approved volunteer opportunities with members' expertise.
  
- C. Publicity  
This committee shall consist of at least one member who will keep the association news current and available in the community. A committee member will serve in the role of a historian and keep a journal of news releases, clippings, and appropriate photos of events.
  
- D. Membership  
This committee shall consist of at least one member who will keep contact with each new Master Gardener class, and encourage non-voting members to become members upon certification.
  
- E. Nominating  
This committee shall consist of a chairman and two members who are not currently serving on the Executive Committee and they will provide a slate of candidates for offices at the October meeting. The nominating committee chairman is not a voting member of the Executive Committee.
  
- F. Audit  
This committee shall consist of a chairman and two members who are not currently serving on the Executive Committee; they will audit the financial records annually in November in the presence of the Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect and President. The audit committee chairman is not a voting member of the Executive Committee.

## **Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws**

- G. Information/Technology  
This committee shall consist of at least one member who will act as the webmaster and communicate with members via e-mail, U.S. mail or telephone.
- H. Victoria Educational Gardens (VEG)  
This committee shall consist of a chairman and at least two members; is responsible for the overall management of the VEG including planning and budgeting for additional mini-gardens within the VEG; and for keeping records of operations and volunteer schedules.
- I. Other Committees  
Other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President as the Executive Committee or Association from time to time as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the Association.

### **Article X. Executive Committee**

#### Section 1.

This committee shall consist of the President (who will serve as Chairman), President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect, and the immediate Past-President who serves as ex-officio member, State Directors, and all Standing Committee Chairmen. All Executive Committee members shall be certified Master Gardeners who have paid their dues for the current year. Each Executive Committee member has only one vote even if serving in multiple voting capacities. The chairmen of the nominating and audit committees are not voting members of the Executive Committee.

#### Section 2.

An Extension Agent will serve as advisor to the Executive Committee.

#### Section 3.

This committee shall meet monthly or as necessary and shall keep appropriate agendas and record of the minutes.

#### Section 4.

The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Association between its business meetings, fix the hour and place of meetings, make recommendations to the Association, and perform such other duties as specified in these By-Laws. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the orders of the Association, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Association.

#### Section 5.

In the event a vacancy occurs for an officer, a person approved by a majority vote of this committee shall fill such a vacancy for the remainder of the term of office. For a vacancy in the office of President-Elect and Treasurer-Elect, the decision of the Executive Committee must be ratified by the voting membership. A vacancy for a Standing Committee chairman shall be appointed by the President.

#### Section 6.

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee membership.

# Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws

## Article XI. Training Program Requirements

### Section 1.

The Victoria County Master Gardener Program shall be the course that commences in August of each year and requires a minimum of fifty (50) classroom/training hours. Trainees must “make-up” missed sessions with the approval of the Extension Agent. After being trained and to become a Master Gardener, the trainees must volunteer fifty (50) hours of approved service, of which at least 20 hours must be devoted to VEG, 10 hours for approved projects, eight (8) hours will be assisting with telephone calls at the Victoria County Texas AgriLife Extension Service office with the remainder in any of these categories. The fifty (50) volunteer service hours must be finalized by December 1 of the following calendar year.

### Section 2.

Graduation for each Victoria County Master Gardener Program will be held in the month of December at the end of the calendar year of approved service to the community.

## Article XII. Project Selection

### Section 1.

The voting membership of the Victoria County Master Gardener Association, shall select a project or projects based upon applications received.

Applications shall be accepted from the public, reviewed by the Executive Committee, and presented to the membership for approval.

Members will select projects, which best meet the mission and objectives of the Victoria County Master Gardener Association.

## Article XIII. Parliamentary Authority

Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern the association in all cases in which they are applicable when not inconsistent with the By-Laws of this association.

## Article XIV. General Membership Voting

### Section 1.

A quorum shall consist of one-third of the voting membership.

### Section 2.

Election voting shall be by secret ballot.

## Article XV. Amendments

### Section 1.

These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present.

### Section 2.

Notice of all proposed amendments to the By-Laws must be presented in writing at one regular meeting and a copy mailed or e-mailed to members not present. Proposed amendments will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

# Victoria County Master Gardener Association By-Laws

## Article XVI. Dissolution

### Section 1.

In the event of dissolution of the non-profit corporation, its Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all its liabilities, distribute any assets remaining to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.)