

BYLAWS
BLUEBONNET MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be The Bluebonnet Master Gardener Association, hereafter referred to as the “BMGA”.

Article II. Objectives and Organization

The BMGA shall be a voluntary, nonprofit, educational, literary and charitable association to support Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Texas Master Gardener Association. The BMGA shall not be affiliated with any commercial enterprises.

Section 1. Objectives

- A. To increase knowledge of gardening to its members and the general public.
- B. To support and assist the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension by providing the four-county community (Austin, Colorado, Fayette and Washington) with information on good gardening practices through news articles, clinics, presentations at garden clubs, schools and other community groups and by telephone and email contact.

Section 2. Organization

The BMGA is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Classes of Members

The BMGA shall have four (4) classes of members. The qualifications and rights of the members of each class shall be as follows:

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A. Active Members in Good Standing

(1) Shall have completed the Master Gardener course of instruction, fifty (50) volunteer service hours and be certified by the Texas A&M Agri Life Extension, The Texas A&M University System.

(2) Shall have paid their dues by the 31st of January of the current year..

(3) Shall have maintained their certification through recertification every year. Recertification shall include 10 (ten) hours of approved CEUs and 20 (twenty) volunteer hours. The BMGA requirements of education and volunteer hours must include the minimum number of hours established by the TMGA and may require more hours.

B. Interns

Are enrolled in or have completed the instruction course provided by the Texas A&M Agri Life Extension of The Texas A&M University System, but have not completed their required volunteer service hours.

(2) Shall be non-voting participants in the BMGA.

(3). Interns will be considered to be members in good standing when they have met the requirements for certification.

C. Honorary Membership

(1) Shall be awarded at the discretion of the Board of Directors to non Master Gardeners who have shared their talents for the benefit of the BMGA.

(2) Shall pay no dues and may not vote.

D. Emeritus Memberships

Shall be awarded in accordance with the Texas Master Gardener Association's policies.

Section 2. Dues

A. Shall be set by the Board of Directors and ratified by the membership.

B. Shall be paid annually by the 31st January of the current year.

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Section 3. Loss of Membership

- A. Failure to meet the membership requirements as specified in Article III, Section 1, A, shall result in loss of membership.
- B. Termination of membership requires action by the Board of Directors and the Texas A & M Agri Life Extension Agent advisor.

Section 4. Leave of Absence

- A. The Board of Directors may approve a temporary leave of absence due to extraordinary circumstances.
- B. Attendance, training and volunteer service requirements shall be suspended for the duration of the leave of absence.
- C. Dues, voting privileges and newsletters shall not be suspended.

Article IV. Membership Meetings

Section 1. Membership Meetings

Membership meetings shall be held monthly, at a time and place approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Special Meetings

The Executive Committee may call special meetings at their discretion as the need arises. The Executive Committee shall announce special meetings to the members of the BMGA by phone, or email at least three days before the meeting date.

Article V. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the BMGA will run from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the BMGA shall be:

- President
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

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Section 2 Qualifications of Officers

All candidates for officer must have been re-certified prior to the year of service.

Section 3. Election of Officers

Officers shall be elected by the membership. In the event that there is more than one candidate for an office, the election will be by secret ballot. Installation will be at the regular November meeting of the BMGA and elected officers will be installed at the December meeting and assume their duties upon installation.

Section 4. Term of Office

The term of office is one year. Officers are limited to serve a total of two consecutive terms in any one position.

Section 5. Officer Vacancies

Except for the President, vacancies in office occurring during the year shall be filled for the remainder of the term by election by the membership. The election shall take place at the meeting following the vacancy. Nominations of candidates may be made from the floor.

Article VII. Duties of Officers

Section 1. President

The President shall:

- A. Preside at all meetings of the BMGA.
- B. Appoint the chair of each standing committee and any special committees
- C. Work with the Treasurer to develop an annual budget
- D. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating and Audit Committees.
- E. Create and dissolve special committees as determined by the Board of Directors.
- F. Assist the County Extension Agent/Master Gardner Coordinator, (CEA/MG Coordinator) in completing the Charter Agreement form by January 31st and retained in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office.

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Section 2. 1st Vice President

The 1st Vice President shall:

- A. Assist the President
- B. Serve as the executive advisor to the Education Committee.
- C. Assume the office of the President if it becomes vacated.
- D. Preside at meetings in the absence of the President.

Section 3. 2nd Vice President

The 2nd Vice President shall:

- A. Serve as the executive advisor to the Hospitality Committee and the Awards committee..
- B. Be responsible for an annual review of the Bylaws and the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Section 4. Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- A. Record the minutes of each meeting and read or distribute the minutes of each previous meeting.
- B. Keep a record of attendance at meetings
- C. Be responsible for all correspondence outside of BMGA.
- C. Serve as executive advisor to the Communications Committee.

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Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- A. Receive all dues and monies for the BMGA, subject to the procedures established by the Board of Directors.
- B. Keep an exact account of all dues, other income, bank deposits, disbursements, and other financial matters.
- C. Pay all bills upon receipt of a written statement and purchase proof, subject to the procedures established by the Board of Directors.
- D. Present a written monthly financial report to the Board of Directors and will issue a summary on request by a member in good standing.
- E. Present the financial records to the audit committee within 30 days after the end of the fiscal year. Present audit results when completed to the Board of Directors.
- F. Develop an annual budget to be approved by the Board of Directors.
- G. Complete IRS form 990N (electronic postcard) by the 15th of May.

Article VIII. Executive Committee

Section 1. Makeup of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, who will serve as chair, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the most immediate active Past President who shall serve as a non-voting, ex-officio advisor and parliamentarian.

Section 2. Executive Committee Advisor

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent of Austin Co shall serve as advisor to the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee shall meet on call of the President or any four other members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has authority to make decisions on matters requiring immediate attention.

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Article IX. Board of Directors

Section 1. Makeup of Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the Executive Committee and the Chair of each Standing Committee. (Article X, Section 2)

Section 2. Board of Directors Advisor

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent shall serve as advisor to the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Board of Directors Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet monthly unless decided otherwise by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Duties of the Board of Directors are:

- A. To be responsible for the direction and operation of the BMGA including approval of all disbursements of the annual budget.
- B. To establish detailed financial procedures and accountability.
- C. To appoint two Directors and two alternates to the Texas Master Gardener Association meetings. Attendees should provide a report to the board. The directors and alternates shall be non-voting members of the Board of Directors.
- D. To promulgate Policy and Procedures for the conduct of the business of the Executive Committee and Standing Committees. The Policy and Procedures may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

Article X. Committees

Section 1. Appointment of Standing Committees

The President shall appoint all chairs of the Standing Committees subject to approval by a majority of the Executive Committee. The President may not appoint any member of the Executive Committee to chair a committee so long as a member in good standing, who is not a member of the Executive Committee, is willing to serve. All committee chairs shall operate as outlined in Policy and Procedures.

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Section 2. Standing Committees

The Standing Committees shall include:

Hospitality Committee
Education Committee
Communication Committee
Gardens Committee
Fund Raising Committee
Volunteer Coordination Committee
Awards Committee

Section 3. Select Committees

A. The New Class Committee

- (1) Shall consist of coordinators assigned by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent advisor and additional members as needed.
- (2) Shall be responsible for the Master Gardener Classes, working in concert with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent advisor to plan, schedule, and conduct the Master Gardener classes.
- (3) Shall be responsible for Intern recognition programs in the BMGA.

B. The Nominating Committee

- (1) The chair shall be appointed by the President.
- (2) Shall consist of a chair and two members selected by the chair who are not currently serving on the Executive Committee and are members in good standing.
- (3) Shall provide to the members a slate of candidates for offices at the October membership meeting of the BMGA.
- (4) Nominees shall be accepted from the floor at the October meeting. Prior consent from the nominees is required.
- (5) The names of the nominees shall be published to the membership during the first week in November.
- (6) All nominees for office must be members in good standing with the BMGA.

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- C. The Election Committee
- (1) Shall consist of the Treasurer and the Volunteer Coordination Committee Chair.
 - (2) Shall compile a list of members in good standing for the nomination and election of officers and present the list to the nominating committee no later than the September Board meeting.
 - (3) Shall distribute a printed ballot in the event that a secret ballot is required at the November meeting to members in good standing, count the ballots and tabulate the votes.

Section 4. Special Committees (Non Standing)

- A. Special committees shall be formed as needed by the Board of Directors
- B. Chairs shall be appointed by the President.
- C. Audit Committee

Article XI. Elections and Voting

Section 1. Quorum

A quorum on issues at membership meetings shall consist of 25% of the members in good standing. When two-thirds (2/3) of the members are not present at a membership meeting, or do not respond to an absentee ballot request, the Board shall consider the absent members to authorize the Board to cast their proxy vote in a manner which the Board feels would be most beneficial to the BMGA.

A quorum of the Board of Directors meetings shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of its members.

Article XII. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised will govern the BMGA in all cases in which they are applicable and consistent with the Bylaws of the BMGA. The Parliamentarian shall be familiar with these rules and shall rule on their interpretation when called upon.

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Article XIII Amendments

Section 1. Notice of Amendments

Notice of all amendments proposed to the Bylaws shall be presented in writing at one membership meeting and a copy shall be available at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Offices. Proposed amendments shall be voted on at the following membership meeting.

Section 2. Vote on Amendments

A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members in good standing may amend these Bylaws. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members in good standing that are present at the general membership meeting where the Bylaws are being considered, may amend these Bylaws. Absentee ballots, that conform to the procedures established by the Board of Directors, may also be counted.

Section 3. Effective Date of Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws shall take effect immediately upon approval by a two-thirds vote of the members in good standing.

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Article XIV Dissolution of Association

In the event of dissolution of the BMGA by termination of its existence or by operation of law, should it have ownership or be entitled to ownership of any funds or property of any sort, real, personal, or mixed, such funds or property or rights thereto shall be transferred and sent over to an exempt organization qualified as exempt under the provisions of Section 501 (c) (3), of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended from time to time, which is engaged in activities substantially similar to the purposes of this Association. In no event shall such assets, receivables or property of any sort be transferred to private ownership.