WASHINGTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I
Name

The name of this organization shall be the Washington County Master Gardeners, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as WCMG.

ARTICLE II
Purpose

A. WCMG is a program of the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service.
B. The purpose of WCMG shall be:
   1. to stimulate an interest in plants and gardening;
   2. to encourage the beautification of Washington County;
   3. to support conservation of natural life and natural resources; and
   4. to encourage the training of additional Master Gardeners.
C. WCMG shall arrange community projects for the fulfillment of volunteer hours required of all MG members.

ARTICLE III
Membership

General Rule:
The WCMG program is open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other legally protected status and no form of discrimination will be tolerated.

Section 1: Classifications of Membership
A. Trainee:
   1. Trainees are those enrolled in the WCMG Training program.
   2. Upon completion of this training program a Trainee is to become an Active Member.
B. Active:
   1. Active members are those who have completed the WCMG Training program.
   2. Within the first year following their training, members shall complete forty (40) hours of volunteer service and twenty (20) hours of education beyond the WCMG Training program hours.
   3. To maintain the designation of Master Gardener after the first year, Active members, one year membership or more, must provide twenty (20) working hours and accrue twenty (20) learning hours per year and pay annual dues.
   4. If a new member’s annual working hours and education hours are not completed by the end of the first year, he or she shall not be considered an “active” Master Gardener and shall forfeit all privileges of membership. The WCMG Executive Committee, with approval of the Washington County Extension Agent, may make exceptions in unusual circumstances. The Membership Chair shall be informed immediately, by e-mail or letter, of a change in any member’s status.

Special Rule: At least one-half (50%) of all working hours shall be earned while participating in WCMG’s sanctioned project(s).
C. Leave of Absence:
1. A Leave of Absence may be requested by an Active Member in good standing who has completed one (1) year of membership.
2. Reasons for requesting a Leave of Absence shall be:
   a. for personal or family illness,
   b. for a family emergency, or
   c. job related.
3. The Leave of Absence form shall be submitted to the WCMG Membership Committee for a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The recommendation shall be reviewed by the WCMG Executive Committee and submitted to the Washington County Extension Agent for final determination.
4. The Leave of Absence form shall be submitted annually.
5. The form shall be filled out by the member or someone aware of the circumstances.
6. The WCMG Executive Committee Secretary shall notify the member and the Membership Chair as to the status of the approval or denial of the submitted request. The Secretary shall inform the Membership Chair of the decision within seven (7) days of the Executive Committee meeting.
7. The member shall:
   a. pay WCMG annual dues;
   b. not be responsible for any work or education hours for this year;
   c. not accrue WCMG years of service.
8. A Leave of Absence shall not be extended beyond three (3) years. A request at this time shall be submitted to the Washington County Extension Agent.

D. Transfer:
1. A Letter of Transfer shall be written by the transferee’s County Agent to the Washington County’s Extension Agent to verify they have completed MG Training and are a member in good standing.
2. The Letter of Transfer shall be submitted by the Washington County Extension Agent to the WCMG Chair of the Membership Committee for a recommendation to the Executive Committee.
3. The Transfer member shall pay WCMG dues.
4. Out-of-State Transfers shall attend the first available Arkansas MG Training.

E. Lifetime:
1. An Active Member for fifteen (15) years automatically receives a Lifetime Membership.
2. Lifetime recognition shall be held at the annual state MG meeting.
3. Member hours/years of service shall continue to accrue.
4. Benefits of a Lifetime Membership status include:
   a. Work and education hours are no longer required but are encouraged.
   b. Dues shall be waived.

F. Sustainer:
1. The Request for Sustainer Status form shall be submitted to the Chair of the Membership Committee for a recommendation to the WCMG Executive Committee before the end of the fiscal year.
2. Shall be an Active member in good standing for a minimum of seven (7) years.
4. Shall have no requirements of work hours or education hours.
5. Shall not hold office or vote.
6. May be active on a committee or a project.
7. Shall not accrue active years of MG service.
8. To return to Active Membership a completed Return to Program form shall be submitted for approval to the MG Executive Committee.
ARTICLE IV
Fiscal Policies

General Rule:
The books and accounts of the WCMG shall be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Section 1: Fiscal Year
The fiscal year for WCMG shall be the calendar year of January 1 through December 31.

Section 2: Check Signing
A. Checks may be signed by the WCMG Treasurer, President or President-Elect.
B. Checks above five hundred dollars ($500) shall require two (2) signatures.

Section 3: Dues
A. Dues for the Trainee’s first year are included in the WCMG Training Program fee.
B. The amount of annual dues shall be approved by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting.
C. Annual dues shall be due and payable by the first regular meeting in January.

Section 4: Finance
A. A Finance Committee shall be appointed by the President with the Treasurer as chair.
   a. An annual budget shall be prepared and submitted for review by the Treasurer to the Executive Committee.
   b. An annual budget shall be approved by the membership at the November meeting.
   c. A recommendation for the amount of annual dues will be made by the Finance Committee to the Executive Committee.
B. An Audit Committee shall be appointed by the President.
   a. The Audit Committee shall be made up of three (3) members from the general membership.
   b. The Treasurer is advisor only.
   c. The President shall appoint the chair.
   d. An annual audit shall be completed and presented to the Executive Committee for approval by March 31.
   e. The annual audit shall be approved by the membership.
C. Fund Raising
   a. Fund raising activities shall be in agreement with the objectives of WCMG.
   b. Fund raising activities shall be recommended by the WCMG Executive Committee and approved by the membership.
   c. An Ad Hoc Fund Raising Committee shall be appointed by the WCMG President and approved by the Executive Committee as the need arises.
D. Dissolution
   a. In the event of the dissolution of the WCMG, all of its assets shall be turned over directly to the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service.
   b. Net earnings of WCMG shall be used for the common good of the community and shall not be distributed to its members, officers or any individuals.

Exception: Reimbursement for goods and materials approved and purchased for use by WCMG.
ARTICLE V
Executive Committee

Section 1. Executive Committee
A. The WCMG Executive Committee shall conduct the business of the organization as directed by its bylaws and the membership.
B. The Executive Committee shall consist of: the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and three (3) Members-At-Large. The Immediate Past President and the Parliamentarian are ex-officio to the Executive Committee.
C. The Executive Committee meetings are open to all members.
D. The Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting.
E. One of the Members-At-Large shall be chosen from the most recent MG Training Class.
F. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for determining the committees needed to carry out the work of WCMG.
G. A minimum of four (4) members shall be present to conduct business. A majority vote passes.
H. The County Agent is the final authority in unresolved issues.

Section 2: Terms of Office
A. A term is one (1) calendar year.
B. No officer shall be elected to more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.
C. Members-At-Large shall serve one (1) term.

Section 3. Duties
A. The President shall:
   1. preside at meetings of WCMG and the Executive Committee;
   2. be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee;
   3. appoint the following:
      a. the chairs and members of all committees except the Nominations Committee;
      b. the chairs of all projects;
      c. a Parliamentarian; and
      d. an Archivist.
   4. be one of the three (3) authorized to endorse a check;
   5. be responsible for giving each new member a copy of the WCMG’s Volunteer Workbook including the bylaws;
   6. send a Letter of Termination to members who have not complied with membership requirements (hours/dues); and
   7. perform such other duties as the membership may direct.
B. The President-Elect shall:
   1. assume the duties of the President in the case of absence or disability;
   2. be responsible for programs;
   3. be one of three (3) authorized to endorse a check; and
   4. perform such other duties as the membership may direct.
C. The Secretary shall:
   1. take the minutes of all membership meetings and present them for approval at the next general meeting;
   2. take the minutes of all Executive Committee meetings and present them for approval at the next Executive meeting;
   3. write and send correspondence as needed;
   4. keep a record of general meeting attendance;
   5. be responsible for the current year’s minutes of WCMG;
   6. forward all original minutes to the Archivist at the end of the fiscal year; and
   7. perform such other duties as the membership may direct.
D. The Treasurer shall:
1. collect, record, hold and pay out all monies as directed by WCMG or the Executive Committee in accordance with the approved budget;
2. present a Financial Report for approval at each regular membership meeting;
3. prepare an annual budget for membership approval;
4. be the chair of the Finance Committee;
5. maintain an accurate list of paid members;
6. be one of three (3) authorized to endorse a check;
7. be responsible for the Treasurer’s reports for the current year;
8. forward all original records to the Archivist at the end of the fiscal year; and
9. perform such other duties as the membership may direct.

E. Members-At-Large shall:
1. be a member of the Executive Committee;
2. be assigned by the President to serve on a Standing Committee;
3. perform such other duties as the membership may direct.

F. The Immediate Past President shall be ex-officio to the Executive Committee.

G. The Parliamentarian shall:
1. be responsible for interpreting and clarifying the Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised during the general meetings and the Executive Committee meetings of WCMG.
2. be ex-officio to the Executive Committee.

H. The Archivist shall:
1. be responsible for gathering, organizing and maintaining all WCMG historical and legal records according to standard archival practices;
2. house the archives in the Washington County Extension Office.

ARTICLE VI
Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Nominations
A. The Nominations Committee:
1. The Nominations Committee shall consist of three (3) members appointed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, excluding the President, provided there is a minimum of four (4) members present.
2. One (1) of the Nominations Committee members shall be a past member of the Executive Committee.
3. No one on the Nominations Committee shall be nominated for election.
4. The Nominations Committee shall select its chair.

B. The Nominations Committee shall be appointed at least three (3) months before the elections are conducted at the Annual Business Meeting.

C. The slate of nominees for election to the Executive Committee shall be received by the members in writing at least ten (10) days prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

D. The consent of a member to be nominated shall be obtained before a nomination is made.

E. Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of elections.

Section 2. Elections
A. Elections shall take place at the Annual Business Meeting.
B. Elections shall be by Secret Ballot if there is more than one (1) nominee running for an office.
C. There must be a minimum of fifteen (15%) percent of the Active Members present to conduct business.
D. A passing vote is a majority of those present.
E. Proxy voting shall not be allowed.
F. New officers shall assume duties at the close of the regular December meeting.
G. A vacancy on the Executive Committee shall be filled by appointment by the remaining Executive Committee Members.

ARTICLE VII
Meetings

Section 1. General Meetings
A. The WCMG shall meet monthly.
B. Meeting date and time shall be set at the Annual Business Meeting.
C. A regular meeting of WCMG may be changed or cancelled by the Executive Committee. The membership shall be notified as soon as possible.
D. The Executive Committee may call extra meetings to meet the needs of the WCMG.
E. A passing vote is a majority of those present, provided there is a minimum of fifteen (15%) percent of the Active Membership present, with the exception of revisions to the bylaws. See Article IX, D.

Section 2. Executive Committee Meetings
A. An Executive Committee meeting shall be held at least one (1) week prior to the regular WCMG monthly meeting and is open to all members.
B. A passing vote is a majority of those present. A minimum of four (4) must be present to conduct business.

Section 3. Annual Business Meeting
A. The WCMG Annual Business Meeting shall be held at the regular monthly meeting in September.
B. The Annual Business Meeting agenda may include but not be limited to:
   1. Election of Executive Committee members.
   2. Bylaws Committee report.
   3. Approval of monthly meeting dates and time.
   4. Approval of annual dues.
   5. Review and approval of fiscal reports for submission to the County.
C. A passing vote is a majority of those present, provided there is a minimum of fifteen (15%) percent of the Active Membership present, with the exception of revisions to the bylaws. See Article IX, D.

ARTICLE VIII
Parliamentary Authority
A. The rules contained in Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the WCMG in all cases where they are applicable and consistent with these bylaws.
B. The Parliamentarian shall be the designated authority on parliamentary procedures at general meetings and Executive Committee Meetings

ARTICLE IX
Bylaws Review
A. The Bylaws Committee shall be appointed by the President.
B. The Bylaws Committee shall review the bylaws and the Policies and Procedures annually.
C. A report shall be presented at the Annual Business Meeting.
D. The bylaws may be amended/revised at any regular meeting:
   1. by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present;
   2. provided there is twenty-five (25%) percent of the Active Membership present; and
   3. provided that a copy of the proposed amendment/revision has been received by the membership at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.