

**Bylaws of  
Lee County Master Gardeners Association (LCMGA)  
Adopted 11/3/2021**

**Article I – NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Section 1 – Name:** The name of the organization shall be the **Lee County Master Gardeners Association**, hereafter referred to as the Association or the LCMGA.

**Mission Statement**

“The Alabama Master Gardener Program is an educational program provided and administered by the County offices of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). It is a program to train and certify individuals who, in turn, volunteer their expertise and services in support of the Cooperative Extension effort related to the horticultural Sciences.”<sup>1</sup>

**Section 2 – Purpose:** the **Lee County Master Gardeners Association** is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes.

The purposes of this organization shall be as follows:

- To enhance and supplement the ACES Home Horticulture Program (Master Gardener Program).
- To help support ACES volunteerism among interns and certified Lee County Master Gardeners.
- To promote continuing service and educational opportunities for Master Gardeners.
- To advise, educate, and disseminate research-based horticulture related information to residents of Alabama.
- To promote fellowship with people interested in horticulture.
- To advise, educate, and lead projects that benefit the public.
- To cooperate and affiliate with other organizations whose purposes are consistent with and beneficial to the LCMGA.

**Section 3 – Authority:** The Association shall be non-profit, and no dividends shall be distributed to its members or officers as income, but it may pay compensation in a reasonable amount to its officers and members for services rendered to the Association that are in conformity with its purposes and powers. All assets of the Association shall be devoted to and expended only for the purposes for which the Association is organized. The Association is established as a 501 (c) (3), a Non-Profit Association under the Non-Profit Corporation Law of Alabama.<sup>2</sup>

- The Authority of the Association shall be vested in its members and be exercised through its Board of Directors.
- The Extension Service Agent designated as Master Gardener Coordinator shall be a member of the Board of Directors.
- The Association shall follow the rules and guidance set forth in the Articles of Incorporation of the State Association known as Alabama Master Gardeners, Inc.
- The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern Association meetings in all cases unless otherwise stated.

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<sup>1</sup> Alabama Master Gardeners Association, Inc. (AMGA) Local Association’s Handbook, June 2019

<sup>2</sup> Articles of Organization LCMGA, 9 June 2010

#### **Section 4 – Fiduciary Responsibility:**

- The Treasurer is authorized to pay and reimburse budgeted expenses.
- In case of non-budgeted expenses occurring between meetings of the membership such as considerations for one-time expenses/special requests, fundraising activities or expenses related to workshop presentations, a simple majority of the Board may authorize expenditures up to \$500. The President may authorize expenditures up to \$100.

### **Article II – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1 – Classes of Membership:** There are seven classes of Membership in the Master Gardeners: Active, Provisional, Lifetime, Associate, Patron, Honorary and Friends of Master Gardeners. Members may hold more than one class of membership

- a) **Active** – These are individuals who have successfully completed an approved Cooperative Extension System Master Gardener Training Program and have also fulfilled the program’s volunteer service requirements. Active members must pay annual dues and meet annual service requirements. They are eligible to vote and hold office.
- b) **Provisional** – Graduates of the ACES MG Training Program will become eligible for Active membership when they complete their volunteer service requirements. Provisional members do not hold office, nor vote.
- c) **Lifetime** – Lifetime members are members who expect to remain members of the Association and who choose to make a one-time payment of dues to the Lee County Master Gardener Association (local), and/or the Alabama Master Gardener Association (AMGA). Lifetime dues for LCMGA are \$100 and are \$150 for AMGA.
- d) **Associate** – Alabama Cooperative Extension System employees who work in an office that offers the Program may apply for membership. Associate members pay no dues and do not vote.
- e) **Patron** - Persons, organizations, or businesses who contribute finances or services to the Association may be designated as patron members by the Board of Directors. They pay no dues and do not vote.
- f) **Honorary** – Individuals who have rendered outstanding contributions to the Program or to the Association may be given honorary memberships by the Board of Directors. Honorary members pay no dues and do not vote.
- g) **Friends of Master Gardeners** – Anyone who is interested in being involved with LCMGA programs, activities, or becoming a Master Gardener but is not currently able to take the classes and fulfill all the volunteer requirements. Participation is entirely flexible and voluntary. Friends pay annual dues. They do not hold office or vote.

**Section 2 - Dues** for the succeeding year shall be paid to the Membership Coordinator by December 15<sup>th</sup> of the calendar year.

### **Article III - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section 1** - The governing Board and management of the Association shall be vested in a Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the Board) composed of the eight elected officers, State Advisory Council Member, immediate past President, Chair of the Garden Tour or designee, and the Extension Master Gardener Coordinator, (a total of twelve members), who will all have voice and vote. The Officers of the Association shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary,

Corresponding Secretary, Program Coordinator, Media Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, and Treasurer (who will serve without bond). In case of a tie vote, the Treasurer shall carry the tie-breaking vote.

#### **Section 2 – Biennial Elections of Officers/Directors**

- Elections of Officers shall be at the November meeting by majority vote of those members in attendance.
- A three-member Nominating Committee comprised of one Board member and two voting non-Board, members, appointed by the President shall select candidates for office. The Nominating Committee shall submit a slate of Officers/Directors at the October meeting. The nominating committee shall acquire consent of the nominees. Voting shall take place at the November meeting with additional nominations accepted from the floor at that time with consent of the nominee.
- Officers shall serve for two years beginning in January and may be re-elected.

**Section 3 - Vacancies** may be filled temporarily by the Board to serve until the end of the original term.

**Section 4 -** The Board shall meet quarterly or as needed at a time and place suitable to a majority of the Board, with seven (7) days' notice from the President at such time and place as shall be fixed in such notice.

- Association members may attend and speak at Board meetings by making a written request to the President.
- Minutes of Board meetings are disseminated to the membership and available at general meetings.
- If a board decision is required between meetings, a vote may be taken via email at the discretion of the President and shall be recorded as a roll call vote.

**Section 5 -** The Board shall make, amend, adopt, establish, and enforce Bylaws, rules and regulations for the control and government of the Association. Proposed amendments shall be brought before the Board in writing by any member or committee chair for consideration and deliberation. Amendments shall be presented in writing by the Board to the membership and shall be subject to the final approval of a 2/3 majority of the members present at the next general membership meeting.

**Section 6 -** The Board shall have the power to elect **ex-officio** members, to serve at the discretion of the Board. The ex-officio members shall have voice but not vote in the affairs of the Board, but may be a voting member of the Association.

**Section 7-** The Lee County Master Gardeners Training class shall select one class member to serve as an Ex-Officio, nonvoting member of the Board for a two year term.

**Section 8 -** A simple majority of the Board members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

#### **Article IV – ELECTED OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

The elected Officers shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Program Coordinator, Media Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, and Treasurer. When necessary, one person may occupy more than one officer position but have a single vote only. The

elected officers will be members of the Board with power to vote.

a. The **President** shall

- Be the chief executive officer of the Association and have general charge of the business of the Association.
- Preside at all meetings of the Board and all general membership meetings.
- Appoint all committees and be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Chair the Projects Committee.
- Maintain copies of all-important papers or records of the Association that are kept by the Secretary.

b. The **Vice-President** shall

- In the absence or disability of the President, conduct all duties of the President.
- Assist Provisional Members in achieving Active status.
- Assist the Association in finding qualifying projects for the annual volunteer hours' requirement.
- Conduct an annual Bylaws review and present revisions to the Board.
- Chair the Special Grants Committee.
- Be custodian and maintain an inventory of LCMGA property located at the Lee County Extension Office.

c. The **Secretary** shall:

- Be custodian of all books, papers and records of the Association, except as otherwise directed by the Board, and provide a second copy of all important papers and records of the Association to the President for his/her use and safekeeping in case the originals are lost or destroyed.
- Maintain Association records and act as Secretary of the meetings of the Board and of the general membership.
- Obtain updated databases from Membership Coordinator (name, address, phone, and email) for LCMGA active members, Friends of Master Gardeners, intern classes and other general contacts.

d. The **Corresponding Secretary** shall

- Email information (meeting agendas, minutes, workshops, conferences, newsletters, etc.) to the appropriate group(s), as requested by the President.
- Provide electronic copies of agendas, minutes and announcements through *New Weeds*.

e. The **Treasurer** shall:

- Keep an accurate account of the receipts and disbursements and submit a report thereof to the Board at regular meetings and to the general membership at membership meetings.
- Have general charge of the funds of the Association and pay them out as authorized by the Board.
- Work with the Budget Committee to prepare the annual budget for the Board in July.
- Email the budget in August to the membership for review and comment prior to the vote at the September meeting. Provide comments to the Board.
- Present a budget presentation to the membership at the September general meeting.
- File annual tax returns.

f. The **Program Coordinator** shall:

- Reserve meeting locations for monthly meetings of the membership.

- Provide Continuing Education Unit (CEU) training opportunities to the Association.
    - Plan meeting programs and introduce speakers at meetings.
    - Plan field trips for the membership.
  - Plan, schedule, and implement workshops for the public or LCMGA members, utilizing the support of appropriate committees as necessary.
  - Plan two annual non-meeting events for membership; these gatherings will replace the regular business meeting during those months.
- g. The **Media Coordinator** shall:
- Assist with public contact by providing information to newspapers, periodicals, radio stations, the LCMGA website coordinator, and social media, to publicize LCMGA activities.
  - Work with the Program Coordinator and the Corresponding Secretary to distribute information about LCMGA CEU and public training opportunities.
- h. The **Membership Coordinator** shall:
- Maintain an up-to-date database of members including Friends, containing name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and the year of graduation from the MG course.
  - Maintain an updated member list on the LCMGA website.
  - Work closely with the Secretary and Treasurer to ensure continuity of updated records.
  - Provide membership report and updated list for AMGA in December.
  - Develop plans for recruitment and retention of Master Gardeners and Friends, utilizing the support of appropriate committees as necessary.
  - Develop plans for contacting Master Gardeners who do not renew their memberships to encourage renewals.
  - Serve as a liaison between LCMGA and interns/provisional members, utilizing the support of appropriate committees as necessary. These activities include organizing the mentor program and coordinating lunch presentations.
- i. The **State Advisory Council (AC) member** shall:
- Serve as a link between LCMGA and AMGA and relay AC meeting information to other LCMGA Officers and members.
  - Keep LCMGA informed of AMGA activities.
  - Serve or identify members to serve on AMGA standing and special committees.
  - Be appointed by the President.
- j. The **Immediate Past President** serves as an advisor to the Board and is a voting member.

## **Article V - GENERAL MEETINGS**

**Section 1** - The general membership of the Association shall **meet monthly** at such date, time and place as may be fixed by the Board, although meetings may be added or deleted as events dictate. Four meetings per year will be held in a suitable location in Opelika, if possible. Notice thereof, stating the time and place of meeting shall be delivered to each member no less than seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting.

**Section 2 - Special meetings** may be called at any time by the President, by a majority of the Board, or upon written requests of a majority of the members of the Association. Notice of the special meeting shall be delivered to each member no less than seven (7) days prior to the date of such meeting. No business may be transacted at a special meeting other than that stated in the

**Section 3** – Those Active members present at a regular or special meeting of LCMGA represent a quorum and shall conduct general business. Decisions will be based on a simple majority of Active members present.

**Section 4** – Active members of the LCMGA are authorized to vote.

#### Article VI – COMMITTEES

**Section 1** - The Association standing committees will be: Budget Committee, Projects Committee, Special Grants Committee, and Caring Committee.

**Section 2** - The President or the Board has the authority to appoint additional committees as needed.

**Section 3** - The Projects Committee initiated in 2012 is chaired by the President and includes three non-Board, voting members. The committee is charged by the LCMGA Board to evaluate proposed projects requiring more than 100 work hours or financial resource support to determine suitability for a long-term commitment by the Association. The Board has approved the procedures for review.

**Section 4** - The Special Grants Committee initiated in 2016 is chaired by the Vice President. The committee is charged by the LCMGA Board to solicit, receive, and evaluate proposals for special budgeted grants. The committee shall follow guidelines established by the Board.

#### Article VII – CERTIFICATION

These LCMGA Bylaws are approved by the Board (President):

Linda Nowlin  
Signature

11/10/2021  
Date

Linda Nowlin  
Print Name

These Bylaws are reviewed and concurred (Lee County Extension Agent):

Dani Carroll  
Signature

11/10/2021  
Date

dani carroll Dani Carroll  
Print Name