

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
HANCOCK COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.
CONSTITUTION

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the “Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc.”

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, shall be to promote and teach good gardening practices and to provide volunteers to the Hancock County Extension of The Ohio State University.

Article III. Goals

- A.** Increase member’s knowledge of sound gardening practices
- B.** Provide sound horticultural information to the public which is based upon university research and proven cultural practices.

Article IV. Membership

Membership is as follows:

Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Trainee – those people presently enrolled in the course

Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Intern – those people who have successfully completed the training course (50 education hours) and are working toward certification (50 volunteer service hours)

Active Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) – those people who have been certified and annually complete 10 hours of advanced horticultural training and 20 hours of volunteer service to the community or organization.

Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Emeritus Status – those Master Gardener Volunteers who have remained active but due to specific reasons may be unable to fulfill re-certification requirements. This status shall be requested by the MGV, approved by a vote of the Executive Committee and retains full voting rights.

Article V. Hancock County Master Gardener Volunteer Governing Committee

Membership in the Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. governing committee shall consist of:

Officers – There will be four elected officers with each to serve a two-year term. Two will be elected each year. The officers will be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers comprise the Executive Committee.

Committee Chairs – Master Gardener Volunteers will be appointed to committee chairs by the Executive Committee and shall serve a two-year term.

There are no term limits.

Officers and Committee Chairs are expected to be present at the monthly meetings.

Standing Committees are as follows; other ad hoc committees may be created at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

- **Education**
- **Administration**
- **Teaching**
- **Service**
- **Social / Fundraising**

Article VI. Meetings

Master Gardener Volunteer meetings will be held monthly with the entire membership invited to attend. All Master Gardener Volunteers (including emeritus and interns) in attendance are eligible to vote.

Article VII. Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be made at a regular meeting with proposed changes presented and discussed and adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the attending MGVs at the next following meeting.

Article VIII. Dissolution

At such time officers and a volunteer coordinator are no longer available to lead the organization, meetings are not held, and the organization is not active, the Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. may be dissolved.

Records and materials are to be held and / or disposed by the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator, who shall use any remaining funds for the benefit of Extension Service programs in Hancock County.

Revised April 13, 2006

Revised November 2008

Revised November 2013

Revised October 2019

HANCOCK COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

BY-LAWS

Article I. Membership

Section 1.01 The Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. membership categories are as listed in the Constitution. All policies and guidelines established by The Ohio State University Extension are followed.

Trainees are those people presently enrolled in the course.

Interns are required to complete 50 volunteer service hours by the end of the following calendar year after completion of classes. Interns are required to complete 50 hours of education through initial training.

Active members have been certified and annually complete 10 hours of advanced horticultural training and 20 hours of volunteer service to the community or organization.

Inactive status may be granted to any Active Master Gardener Volunteer for up to three years. Members may be returned to active status after completing 10 hours of education. If inactive for more than three years, Member must complete the class training just like a new member.

Master Gardener Volunteer Emeritus may be conferred upon any Master Gardener Volunteer who has previously been active but for specific reasons may be unable to fulfill re-certification requirements during any year. The officers may award this status upon approval of the Executive Committee.

Article II. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be January 1st to December 31st.

Article III. Elections

Section 3.01 Officers shall be elected at the November meeting for a two-year term beginning in January of the following fiscal year. One half of the officers shall be elected annually. President and Treasurer are elected the same year (to take office in odd numbered years); Vice-President and Secretary are elected by alternate year (to take office in even numbered years). There are no term limits.

Section 3.02 Vacancies that occur during the year shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term.

Article IV. Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator

The Coordinator of the Hancock County Master Gardener Volunteer Program shall be the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator or designee, and both (if applicable) shall be ex-officio members of the Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. The Coordinator may also be a Master Gardener Volunteer.

Article V. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the four elected officers, and the ex-officio Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator and/or designee and Volunteer Coordinator. This committee shall meet at least twice annually. The Executive Committee shall recruit Committee Chairs, set direction of the overall organization, handle

appropriate business details, determine recognition levels for the annual awards, and in cooperation with the Committee Chairs reporting to officers, compose the governing committee that carries out the Purpose and Goals of the organization.

Article VI. Duties of the Officers

Section 6.01 The President shall coordinate operations and administration issues with the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator and Volunteer Coordinator, prepare the agenda for and preside at all regular meetings of the Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. and at all meetings of the Executive Committee.

President is the second authorized signor on Hancock County Master Gardeners, Inc. accounts.

Section 6.02 The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of that officer and shall serve as chairperson of the Nominating Committee.

Section 6.03 The Secretary shall keep the records of the proceedings of all regular member meetings and submit meeting minutes to the membership for review and approval. The Secretary shall e-mail or phone members as needed and shall send sympathy and get-well correspondence to members.

Section 6.04 The Treasurer shall receive and assure the accurate and safe accounting of all monies; present a Treasurer's report at all regular meetings; be authorized to sign checks along with the President; pay all bills; complete all State and Federal forms as needed.

Section 6.05 The duties of the Executive Committee shall be to advise and assist the President and Volunteer Coordinator in conducting the affairs of the organization; take care of any situations needing quick decisions.

Section 6.06 The Volunteer Coordinator reports to the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator, ensures compliance with OSU Extension policy, advises the Executive Committee, tracks members hours on the Volunteer Management System (VMS), and serves as liaison between the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator and the Master Gardener Volunteer organization. The Volunteer Coordinator, after consulting with the Executive Committee and Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator, shall determine the status of MGV members.

Article VII. Operating Committees

Chairs of Standing and Special Committees shall recruit project and program leaders who will then recruit operating committee members as needed. Chairs shall report their committee proposed new activities for Executive Committee approval. Operating committees may add, revise or remove projects and programs as needed without the overall vote of the members, but not without Executive Committee approval. Purpose and typical on-going projects and programs of Standing Committees are as follows:

Education Purpose is to create opportunities for MGVs to receive further education according to MGV Goals.

Examples are, but not required or limited to:

- Assisting the Hancock County OSU Extension Agricultural Educator with MGV Training Classes & Mentors
- Field Trips & Seminars
- Master Gardener Monthly Meeting Programs/Brown Bag Sessions

Administration Purpose is to ensure MGV program operates efficiently, continues effectively, and communicates activities and opportunities to MGVs and the community. Examples are, but not required or limited to:

- Membership & Apparel
- Newsletter & Social Media
- Calendar of Events
- Nominating Committee

Teaching Purpose is to present appropriate gardening information to the public according to MGV Goals.

Examples are, but not required or limited to:

- County Fair Booth
- Ask-A-Master Gardener
- Speaker's Bureau

Service Purpose is to provide horticultural education and service to the community through various programs and projects as approved. Examples are, but not required or limited to:

- OSU Extension Office Gardens
- Demonstration / Phenology Gardens
- Community Gardens
- Holiday Mugs of Joy

Social / Fundraising Purpose is to provide social events for the MGV members and organize fundraising for support of MGV activities. Examples are, but not required or limited to:

- Meeting Refreshments
- Plant Exchange
- Christmas Potluck Dinner/Summer Picnic
- Christmas Wreath Classes

Article VIII. Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at a Regular Meeting with proposed changes presented and discussed and adopted by a simple majority vote of the attending MGVs at the next following meeting.

Revised November 2013
Revised October 2019