



**SANDOVAL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
BYLAWS**
New Mexico State University
Sandoval County Extension
P. O. Box 400 Bernalillo, NM 87004



The Sandoval County Master Gardeners, hereafter SCMG, is a volunteer, non-discriminatory, educational association operating under the standards, values, and direction of the Sandoval County Cooperative Extension Service to provide educational enrichment for both its members and the general public by teaching the most reliable, current, research-based safe gardening information.

Article I – Objective

The objective of SCMG shall be to train and develop a cadre of Master Gardeners, hereafter MGs, who will provide area residents with research-based, horticultural information, including pesticide use and safety, as developed and approved by New Mexico State University, hereafter NMSU.

Article II – Membership

SCMG follows the membership and minimum training requirements of NMSU under the guidance of the Sandoval County Extension Agent, hereafter Agent, and the Board of Directors.

Membership shall be limited to those who have successfully:

- Completed the minimum training as set by NMSU and reflected in SCMG policy.
- Performed the required volunteer service hours and continuing education in the current year as set by NMSU and reflected in SCMG policy unless exempt as listed below.
- Paid the current dues unless exempt as listed below.
- Fulfilled any additional requirements established by the SCMG Board.

Membership Designations

- Veteran Master Gardener: Active member meeting all of the above requirements.
- Associate Member: Master Gardener on approved leave of absence for two years or less and exempt from annual volunteer service and continuing education during that time.
- Honorary Member: Master Gardener who has completed a minimum of ten years (or five hundred service hours) and is no longer able to meet the annual volunteer service hours and continuing education due to hardship or disability. Honorary status can only be granted by the Agent upon recommendation by the Board following the guidelines set forth in the SCMG Policy. Exempt from annual volunteer service, continuing education, and dues.
- Life Member: Master Gardener who has fifteen years of service or more and exempt from annual volunteer service and continuing education, and dues.

Article III Membership Meetings

Meetings of the membership, held at the discretion of Agent and SCMG Coordinator, shall be called at least once a year. One meeting held approximately at the end of the operational year shall be called the Annual Meeting. A notice of two-weeks shall be given for any SCMG meeting.

The purpose of every membership meeting shall be stated in the notice thereof and no business shall be transacted except such as is specified in the notice.

To approve specified business, except for Bylaw changes as specified in Article VII, and election ballot results at a meeting the following must be met:

- A quorum shall be thirty percent of the total membership. Absentee ballots will be included in meeting the quorum requirement.
- One vote per member.
- A majority vote of members present including absentee ballots shall govern in all membership voting matters.

A MG who is unable to attend a meeting at which a planned vote will be taken, and for which a ballot is provided, may send or hand-in an absentee ballot to the Extension office secretary or have a SCMG deliver the ballot to the meeting. The absentee ballot, to be signed and dated by the MG, must clearly indicate the specific vote(s) presented on the ballot.

Article IV – Board of Directors

SCMG shall be governed by a Board of Directors composed of four officers: Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer; seven At-Large members; and two ex officio members: the immediate Past Coordinator and Agent.

- A quorum to approve Board business is a majority of Board members
- A majority vote of Board members present at a meeting shall govern in all voting matters.

Board meetings shall be called by Agent or the Coordinator, with at least one meeting held each year before the annual meeting of the SCMG, to review the budget proposed for the subsequent year and to appoint the nominating committee; and one meeting in December, to receive the annual audit of SCMG finances.

The Board of Directors shall determine policies and provide broad direction of the programs of SCMG.

- Policies include such matters as:
 - Establishing the operating year.

- Levying dues.
- Verifying that training and volunteer hours meet NMSU requirements.
- The Board may amend current policies and establish additional policies as may be deemed by the Board to be in the best interest of SCMG.
- To provide broad leadership for SCMG programs, the Board performs the following:
 - Calls meetings of the membership.
 - Oversees the intern training course, advanced veteran courses, and all other approved volunteer projects.
 - Approves all volunteer activities in which the members interact with the general public.

Article V – Elected Board of Directors, Term limits, and Duties

The elected members of the Board consist of the four Officers and seven At Large members. These members shall be elected from a ballot presented by a nominating committee at the annual meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the annual meeting. All nominees must have agreed beforehand to serve. In case of a tie vote, Agent and the Past Coordinator shall make a final decision. Nominations are open to all members, except as restricted below.

- **Coordinator** – The coordinator of SCMG serves a two-year term. After a two year absence, a previous Coordinator may be re-elected. The Coordinator chairs meetings of the Board and SCMG, and carries out all other duties ascribed to the Coordinator as indicated in the SCMG Policy.
- **Assistant Coordinator** – The Assistant Coordinator serves a two-year term. After a two-year absence, a previous Assistant Coordinator may be re-elected. The Assistant Coordinator performs those duties requested by the Coordinator, serves as Coordinator when the Coordinator is unavailable, is primarily responsible for administering the MG Training class, and carries out all other duties ascribed to the Assistant Coordinator as indicated in the SCMG Policy.
- **Treasurer** – The Treasurer serves a two-year term. After at least a two-year absence, a previous Treasurer may be re-elected. The Treasurer collects, records, and disburses all monies; prepares for the Board a tentative budget for the subsequent year based on the previous year’s financial records; provides records for an annual audit, and carries out all other duties ascribed to the Treasurer as assigned by the Board.
- **Secretary** – The Secretary serves a two-year term. After at least a two-year absence, a previous Secretary may be re-elected. The Secretary Records minutes of SCMG meetings for all members; maintains attendance records of SCMG meetings; assists the Coordinator as requested; and carries out all other duties ascribed to the Secretary as assigned by the Board.

- **At- Large Board Members** – Seven (7) At-Large members shall serve a two-year term, however to maintain Board continuity, it is desired that no more than four At-Large members are elected in any given year and three At-Large members are retained. To maintain this ratio, the Board may elect to offer one-year At-Large terms as necessary. After at least a two-year absence, previous At-Large Board members may be re-elected. The At-Large Board members serve as representatives to SCMG, attend Board meetings, chair committees at the request of the Board; assist officers of the Board as needed, and carry out all other duties ascribed to the At-Large member as assigned by the Board.
- **Resignation from a Board Position:** In the event that any elected member of the SCMG Board resigns her/his position prior to the end of the service term, for whatever reason, the Coordinator shall appoint, with the approval of a majority of the Board, a MG to serve in the vacated seat on the Board until the next regular election, at which time the MG membership shall elect someone to the position. A person appointed to fill the vacancy pro tem may subsequently be elected to that post. If the vacated seat is that of an At-Large member in the first year of a 2-year term, the newly elected person shall serve for one year, to complete the term of service.
- **Replacement for Unsatisfactory Service:** Should the membership of the SCMG consider the performance of any elected Board member to be unsatisfactory, the members may request that the Board of Directors and Agent replace that officer. A two- thirds majority of the Membership is required for this action.

Other Positions: All other positions, such as the publicity coordinator, the editor of the newsletter, and the chairs of service or activity committees, shall be filled by volunteers for these posts. Serving in any of the positions does not prevent a person from also being elected as an Officer or an At-Large member of the Board.

Article VI – Support Services and Financial Management

Support services required by the SCMG, and especially by any officer, such as copies of the minutes of meetings, MG lists, mailings, class lists, news notes, information for classes, and routine mailings, may be provided by the Extension Administrative Secretary (EAS) within the time constraints and operating budget of the Extension Office. A copy of the bylaws shall be available to all MG interns and all MGs currently in the program. A copy of the bylaws shall be retained by Agent, the Coordinator, and the Assistant Coordinator for their use as well as for review by any member of SCMG who so requests.

Budget, Checking Account and Dues: SCMG fiscal year is the same as the operating year. The Treasurer shall submit a proposed annual budget to the Board at the beginning of the fiscal year for approval. The checking account is administered by the Treasurer who is authorized to write checks in accordance with the adopted SCMG budget. In the Treasurer’s absence the Coordinator or one other Board member is authorized to write checks.

- SCMG membership dues shall be paid annually by October 15. Annual membership dues shall become delinquent after December 15 of the fiscal year. The Treasurer maintains the roster of members and the status of dues payments.

- The amount of membership dues shall be determined by the Board after all members have been notified that the issue will be voted on.

Article VII – Changing Bylaws

Changes in these bylaws may be made by the membership of the SCMG. Proposed changes shall be distributed to the members at least 30 days before taking a vote on them.

No other bylaw changes shall be made except such as is proposed in the distribution.

To amend bylaws the following must be met:

- A quorum for voting shall be two-thirds of the total membership. Absentee ballots will be included in meeting the quorum requirement.
- One vote per member.
- Two-thirds of the membership present, including absentee ballot results, must vote in favor of the proposed changes.

A MG who is unable to attend a meeting called to vote on proposed Bylaw changes, and for which a ballot is provided, may send or hand-in an absentee ballot to the Extension office secretary or have a SCMG deliver the ballot to the meeting. The absentee ballot, to be signed and dated by the MG, must clearly indicate the specific vote(s) presented on the ballot. MG absentee ballots may be included in meeting quorum and voting requirements for the specific absentee ballot votes only.

The Board, at its discretion, may choose to ask members to vote on proposed bylaw changes by return mail or secure electronic voting, rather than calling a meeting to consider them. All returned ballots must be verified for name and address of the member.

To amend bylaws by return ballot the following must be met:

- Total ballots received shall be two-thirds of the membership.
- One ballot per member.
- Two-thirds of the returned ballots are in favor of the proposed changes.

Article VIII – Dissolving SCMG

In the event SCMG is dissolved, any funds or other assets, along with a copy of the records, shall be supplied to NMSU. These funds are to be used as a scholarship for an NMSU student in Horticulture.

Adopted: 11 August 2015