

Bylaws of the Oxford Community Garden Association  
Revisions approved 28 February 2011

I. NAME

***Oxford Community Garden Association***

II. ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 3122, Oxford, MS 38655

III. MISSION STATEMENT

***Our mission is to enhance the well-being and beauty of the community by assisting people in growing fresh produce, providing locally-grown food to people in need, increasing social interaction in the community, and creating an educational garden in an attractive setting.***

IV. GOALS

- A. Facilitate and encourage members of the Oxford, Lafayette, and University communities in growing healthy food for themselves and others.
- B. Provide a friendly environment for both new and experienced gardeners that fosters personal interactions, including the exchange of gardening knowledge, within the community.
- C. Provide fresh food to people in need, via the local food pantry or other means.
- D. Encourage sustainable practices by fostering an appreciation for locally grown food and teaching skills related to organic gardening through community outreach.
- E. Contribute to the community's beauty by creating an attractive, welcoming garden space.

V. OBJECTIVES

- A. Maintain at least 20 plots to be gardened by individuals or groups and 9 by children.
- B. Provide at least two workshops per year related to organic, sustainable gardening.
- C. Dedicate 5-10 % of plots to growing food for charitable donations.

VI. MEMBERSHIP

- A. General membership: open to anyone in the Oxford-Lafayette-University community interested in supporting the mission of the association. General membership annual dues will be set by the Board.

- B. Plottolders: individuals  $\geq 18$  years old with a signed contract for a plot in the Community Garden (hereafter, Garden) and with Garden dues and plot fees paid in full are Plottolders and are eligible to vote in Plottolder-only votes. The primary Plottolder assumes all responsibility for maintaining the plot in accordance with the Garden rules.
- C. Plot sharing. An individual plot may be *officially* shared with one secondary plottolder from a household other than that of the primary Plottolder. The secondary plottolder must be a Garden member, register with the Garden Committee for sharing the plot, and sign the garden rules annually. Assuming these conditions have been met, the secondary plottolder will have succession rights to the plot if the primary Plottolder gives up the plot. Secondary plottolders may not vote in Plottolder-only votes. Individuals from additional households may regularly contribute to gardening a plot if they are Garden members and sign the rules annually, but they will not have succession rights to the plot.

## VII. BOARD AND COMMITTEES

### A. Officers

1. Association Officers will include a President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary.
2. Officers may hold a particular office for up to three consecutive terms.

### B. Board

1. The Board will consist of at least four people: the officers, the Garden Manager, the Garden Assistant Manager, and one to two members-at-large.
2. All board member terms are one year.
3. The Garden Manager (GM) and Garden Assistant Manager (GAM) positions must be held by Plottolders.
4. If an officer or board member resigns, the Board may appoint a replacement to serve until the next election.
5. The GM and GAM may concurrently serve as President or Secretary of the Association.
6. The Board will establish the following year's Membership dues and plot fees by November 30.

### C. Roles

1. The President shall
  - a. convene and run regular meetings of the Association and the Board (see below)
  - b. support and help coordinate activities of the various committees,
  - c. be an *ex officio* member of all committees,

- d. serve as liaison between the Association and both the Oxford Park Commission (OPC) and City of Oxford,
- e. oversee any efforts to make major changes to the Garden or to add additional gardens.

2. The Treasurer shall

- a. be responsible for all incoming and outgoing funds,
- b. maintain the Association's financial records in proper and appropriate order,
- c. maintain a balanced checking account for the Association,
- d. provide quarterly and annual financial reports for Board meetings and for the annual Association business meeting.

3. The Secretary shall

- a. record and report minutes of Board and Association meetings and, when requested, Garden Member meetings,
- b. chair the Communications Committee (see below).

D. Standing Committees

1. The **Garden Committee** will be chaired by the GM and will include the GAM and up to four other plot-holders.

- a. The committee's responsibilities are to i) ensure that the garden runs smoothly, ii) minimize, and if necessary mediate, conflicts among gardeners, iii) be a first point of contact for Plot-holders and other garden users, and iv) strive to keep mulch and soil amendments available for use in Garden.
- b. The committee shall ensure that all plots are assigned by the end of February each year and that a waiting list is maintained, if necessary.
- c. The GM, with help from the committee, shall *ensure that Garden Rules are followed*.
- d. The GM, with help from the GAM, shall be responsible for contacting those who do not adhere to Garden Rules and for reassigning plots as necessary (details in Garden Rules).

The Garden Committee will:

- e. *arrange for maintenance of common areas* within the Garden fence.
- f. arrange to have any seasonal services (e.g., water service, portable toilet service) started and stopped at the appropriate times each year.
- g. arrange for maintenance of the composting system
- h. endeavor to obtain and maintain suitable bulk materials for composting and mulch to be used in the Garden.

2. The **Communications Committee** will be chaired by the Secretary and will
  - a. strive to obtain positive publicity for the Association and Garden
  - b. appropriately recognize those making financial or material contributions to the Association or Garden
  - c. maintain an Association website, if possible.
3. The **Landscaping Committee** will
  - a. arrange for design and maintenance of attractive landscaping near, but outside of, the Garden fence,
  - b. work with OPC and the City of Oxford Grounds Department, as necessary,
  - c. emphasize native plants, especially those that attract pollinators and other beneficial insects, and low maintenance plants that provide food or deter pests.
  - d. take care to not excessively shade any Garden plot.
4. The **Education Committee** will work to
  - a. find creative means to teach Members and others about organic gardening practices,
  - b. arrange at least two workshops or seminars per year related to organic gardening techniques,
  - c. establish and coordinate a garden mentoring program, if interest is adequate.
5. The **Community Harvest Committee** will
  - a. recruit community groups willing to grow produce for donation or
  - b. grow and harvest produce in community harvest plots,
  - c. if necessary, coordinate among groups sharing gardening of Community Harvest plots,
  - d. arrange for delivery of produce to The Pantry or other recipients.

E. Ad hoc committees

The two committees below may be needed until at least Fall 2011 and again if gardens are added or expanded.

1. The **Construction Committee** will
  - a. obtain estimates for costs of various structures needed/desired at the Garden,
  - b. arrange for construction of a Garden fence,
  - c. as funds and materials donations allow, arrange for construction or placement of the following: a tool shed, a covered area (both preferably with a “green roof” or means to collect rainwater runoff), compost bins,

one or more picnic tables, other benches in the garden, and a sandbox or play area.

d. work with community organizations to obtain assistance in building.

2. The **Fundraising Committee** will spearhead efforts to:

a. obtain funds for the garden via grants or community donations,

b. obtain donations of materials, plants, and seeds for use in and around the garden (working in coordination with the Landscaping and Construction Committees).

c. The committee chair will work with the Secretary and Treasurer to ensure that all donors are appropriately recognized and funds are properly accounted for.

## VIII. ASSOCIATION POLICIES

### A. Meetings

1. The Association will meet at least once per year for an annual business meeting in the Spring.

2. The Board will meet at least quarterly.

### B. Elections and Voting

1. Bylaws of the association may be approved, rescinded, or amended by a 2/3 vote of General members.

2. Officers and board members shall be elected by a simple majority of General members at the annual business meeting.

3. The Garden Manager and Garden Assistant Manager shall be elected by a majority of Plotters voting at the annual business meeting.

4. Garden rules shall be established and amended by a 2/3 vote of Plotters.

5. Voting at meetings is preferable, but votes may be conducted by email, provided that members without email access are given an opportunity to vote. Votes at meetings may be cast in person or by written proxy.

6. All majorities referred to above are majorities of those present, or voting by proxy, at meetings, or in the case of email votes, of those voting within 10 days of the call for a vote.

### C. Garden participation

1. One adult (the primary Plotholder) will assume primary responsibility for a plot by signing a Garden Contract in which they agree to abide by Garden rules and by paying annual Garden dues.
2. Children's plots will also be signed for by an adult who will assume ultimate responsibility for the plot.
3. Violation of the Garden Contract may result in the plot being reassigned to another individual.
4. Every person with access to the Garden must sign the Garden Rules annually.

### D. Chemical use

1. ***Organic gardening methods are strongly encouraged.***
2. Chemicals and fertilizers that are banned in the Garden Rules or by the Garden Committee may not be used in the Garden.
3. Chemicals may be applied only during calm weather and in such a manner that they remain within plot boundaries.
4. Chemically-treated lumber may not be used to construct raised beds or placed in contact with soil in plots or where produce is grown.
5. Paint containing lead is prohibited in the garden, and old paint must be tested for lead before being used in the garden.