



HAGERSTOWN COMMUNITY GARDEN ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

Article I Name and Mission

Name

The Name of the organization is “Hagerstown Community Garden Association”. This Association is a community partnership between Hagerstown gardeners and the City of Hagerstown, MD. The garden will be located at 513 South Potomac Street, Hagerstown, MD.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Hagerstown Community Garden Association is to provide and maintain organic garden plots within the City of Hagerstown and to provide the community with the opportunity and means to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Article II Purpose

The Purpose of the Hagerstown Community Garden Association is:

- To provide the means for plot holders to grow organic produce, herbs and flowers as a source of food and enjoyment.
- To provide opportunities for community building.
- To encourage sustainable gardens as a means of preserving our earth.

Article III Membership

Membership

Membership is available to any individual, household or group that resides in the City of Hagerstown and who:

- Rents a plot in the Community Garden to plant and grow vegetables, herbs or flowers.
- Pays annual dues no later than Feb. 1st (returning members) and February 15th (new members).
- Agrees to abide by the Garden Rules established by the Operating Committee
- Membership shall run from March 1st to December 31st each garden year.
- Each member shall be entitled to one vote in matters concerning revisions to the By-Laws, Garden Rules and/or other issues put before the general membership for approval.
- Membership may be terminated and garden plot forfeited if a plot has been abandoned or the plot holder(s) violates the terms and conditions outline in the Application and Garden Rules.

Article IV Structure

Structure

The organizational structure of the Hagerstown Community Garden Association is comprised of an Operating Committee and Plot Coordinators.

Operating Committee:

The Operating Committee shall consist of a maximum of five (5) leaders, plus a representative of the City of Hagerstown. The Operating Committee shall insure that the Mission and Purposes of Community Garden are realized and that the Gardens bring tangible benefits to the community.

Duties of the Operating Committee include;

- To assure the smooth operation of the Hagerstown Community Garden.
- To promote the Community Garden and raise awareness of the benefits of healthy food.
- To develop a yearly schedule of garden events and maintenance requirements.
- To determine plot assignments based on receipt of plot rental fees.
- To determine and implement decisions regarding termination of membership and/or plot forfeiture.

Leaders shall include a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and two (2) at-large members.

Leader Duties

- The Chairperson shall be the community liaison for the Association and shall prepare the agenda and preside over all meetings.
- The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in his or her duties and shall serve in their place when the Chairperson is absent.
- The Secretary shall prepare and distribute the minutes of the Associations' meetings. The Secretary shall also notify the membership of meetings and events. The Secretary shall also maintain membership and plot assignment lists in coordination with the City of Hagerstown. The City of Hagerstown shall act as Treasurer and collect and retain all plot rental funds and disburse funds according the requests of the Operating Committee as appropriate.

At Operating Committee meetings, decisions shall require only a simple majority of the members present. Leaders may establish and abolish standing or special committees. Failure to attend three (3) Operating Committee meetings with no explanation shall indicate the Leaders' resignation and the seat declared vacant. Vacancies shall be filled for the un-expired term by appointment of the Operating Committee within thirty days.

Terms of Office:

Leaders shall be elected for a one year terms. The first election shall be held in November, 2015.

Plot Coordinators

Plot Coordinators shall consist of up to three (3) gardeners who rent plots chosen by other plot holders that garden in nearby plots. Plot Coordinators must know the Associations' Garden Rules and be willing to help assure that the Garden is kept clean and safe.

Duties of the Plot Coordinators include;

- Assist the Co-Leaders in scheduling garden work days.
- Work cooperatively with Co-Leaders to address and resolve issues and concerns.

Article V Meetings and Elections

General Membership Meetings

There shall be at least two Association membership meetings held annually. A Spring meeting shall be held to welcome new members, provide an orientation on Garden Rules and Association by-laws and to provide tours of the garden and assigned plots. An annual meeting will be held at the end of the garden year for Operating Committee elections and a Spring meeting to plan and organize the membership for the upcoming season.

Special meetings may be called at any time with at least two (2) weeks prior notice to Members. Leaders shall hold an Operating Committee meeting within two (2) weeks prior to any General Membership meeting.

Elections

Leaders shall be elected at the annual fall meeting of the Hagerstown Garden Association. Any member may nominate another Association member as a Leader. Nominations must be submitted to the Operating Committee two (2) weeks prior to the fall meeting. After the fall elections, newly elected Operating Committee Leaders will select a chairperson, vice-chair and secretary.

Each Member shall be entitled to one vote in annual elections and in matters concerning revisions to the By-laws, Garden Rules and/or other issues put before the general membership for approval.

Voting

At General Membership meetings, decisions shall require only a simple majority of the members present. At Operating Committee meetings, official decisions shall require only a majority vote of the Leaders.

Article VI Amendments

These By-laws and the Garden Rules of the Hagerstown Community Garden may be amended at any general meeting, when approved by two thirds of the Members present. Prior to the voting, notice of the changes, along with a written copy of the changes, shall be given to the Members.

Article VII Equal Access

The Hagerstown Community Garden Association is committed to a policy that all persons shall have equal access to the Gardens' plots, programs and events.

The Garden Association encourages persons with disabilities to participate in Garden activities. Plots for handicapped individuals are available.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____