

STATE MASTER GARDENER ADVISORY BOARD BY-LAWS

Mission Statement:

The Mission of the University of Minnesota Extension Service Master Gardener Program is to support county Master Gardener programs by providing horticulturally trained volunteers to educate the public with research based information on the best practices in consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship.

The Master Gardener Program will provide an environment for its volunteers that is friendly and supportive so their training, experience and enthusiasm will produce maximum benefits to their communities.

Purpose:

The purpose of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board is to provide consensual advice and constructive input to the State Master Gardener Office in order that the State Master Gardener Office can formulate governing policies for the Master Gardener Program. These policies should conform to those of the University of Minnesota Extension Service and should be subject to approval by the State Master Gardener Advisory Board.

Each member of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board shall act as an ambassador for the Master Gardener Program by promoting its mission whenever possible. Particular attention should be directed toward communicating this mission to local, county, district, and state officials in order to assure the continuance and effectiveness of the Master Gardener Program throughout the entire state.

Membership:

- a) The State Master Gardener Advisory Board will be based on 12 Master Gardener representatives: 6 representatives from the 13 county “metro” area: Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Kanabec, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Stearns, Washington, Wright; and 6 representatives from the other 74 counties. The 13 “metro” counties represent half the population of MG in the state. We will encourage and try to have the 6 reps from the 74 counties to be 3 from north of Interstate 94 and 3 from south of I94.
- b) The following Extension staff shall serve as members: the State Master Gardener Coordinator, a member of the Yard & Garden Program, and Extension county or regional staff including one Technical Advisor/Educator and one Program Coordinator, if possible.

Non-voting Members:

- a) State Master Gardener Program Secretary
- b) Guests

Application for Membership:

Master Gardeners who wish to be considered for membership on the State Master Gardener Advisory Board must submit a written application including a history of their MG volunteer work, why they want to be on the Board and their vision for the MG program. Only individuals will be considered for membership, couples, co-members or alternates will not be considered. Each application must also include a letter of recommendation from the Extension Staff responsible for the Master Gardener program in the county in which the applicant is an active member. This may be a County, Regional or District staff member, or a local MG president/chair.

Applications for membership are solicited in the July and October State Master Gardener Newsletter. Applications and recommendations should be sent to the Board Vice-Chair. Applications are voted on at the Board's January meeting. New members are invited to attend the April Board meeting as guests and take office at the June Board meeting.

Terms of Assignment:

Members (excluding the State coordinator, secretary) will serve for a three (3) year term. Approximately one-third (1/3) of the Master Gardeners will be replaced each year, thus maintaining continuity for conducting business. Yearly terms of assignment will be June 1st through May 31st.

Any member of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board who misses two consecutive meetings (except in the case of inclement weather) may be dropped from the Board.

After an absence of one year from the Advisory Board, Master Gardeners may apply for another term.

Inclement Weather:

If an Advisory Board meeting will be cancelled due to inclement weather, the decision to do so will be made by the afternoon of the day prior to the meeting. There will be a voice mail message on the Program Secretary's phone and on the phone of the State MG Coordinator. The Program Secretary will make a reasonable effort to provide e-mail notification as well.

Credit Hours:

Time spent at scheduled/special meetings will count toward Master Gardener volunteer hours. Time spent outside the scheduled/special meetings, on assigned projects/special assignments/research, etc. will count toward volunteer hours, subject to county approval.

Meetings:

The State Master Gardener Advisory Board will meet four (4) times annually: January, April, June and September (usually with the Annual State Conference). Additional special meetings may be called as deemed necessary and appropriate.

A quorum defined as 51% of the current Board membership is necessary for conducting Board business. If all positions on the Board are filled, (16) then 9 members will need to be present for a quorum, if only 15 members are currently on the Board, then 8 members constitute a quorum, etc.

A simple majority, 51% of the members present, will constitute a majority to pass a motion.

Officers:

Any voting MG member of the Advisory Board may nominate or be nominated for the offices of Advisory Board Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.

Advisory Board Chairperson: The State Master Gardener Advisory Board Chairperson will be nominated and voted for annually at the April State Master Gardener Advisory Board meeting. Term of assignment will be for one (1) year, not to exceed two (2) consecutive terms.

Duties/Responsibilities:

- 1) To announce to all board members the time, date and location of all scheduled and/or special meetings.
- 2) Prepare and distribute for mailing (after review with State Master Gardener Coordinator) the program agenda including date/time and location.
- 3) Preside at all scheduled/special meetings of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board; beginning and ending on time.
- 4) Be a contact spokesperson for the Master Gardener Program of the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

- 5) Assign subcommittee/teams as necessary and maintain board functions and responsibilities.
- 6) Check all details ahead of scheduled/special meetings (agenda, items, projects, facilities, etc.).
- 7) Prepare and follow scheduled order of business.
- 8) Relay to the appropriate subcommittees/teams related and pertinent information as received through the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.
- 9) Review minutes of meetings before publication.

Advisory Board Vice-Chairperson: The State Master Gardener Advisory Board Vice-Chair will be elected annually at the April meeting of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board. Term of assignment will be for one (1) year, not to exceed two (2) consecutive terms. The Vice-Chair does not automatically succeed the Advisory Board Chairperson.

Duties/Responsibilities:

- 1) Assume the duties/responsibilities of the Advisory Board Chairperson in his/her absence.
- 2) Oversee the board member application process.
 - a) Write announcement for the summer/fall State Master Gardener Newsletter requesting applications for board membership.
 - b) Answer Master Gardener and Extension staff questions concerning the application process and board member duties, and explain what should be included in the application.
 - c) Receive applications and letters of recommendation.
 - d) Distribute copies of all new Board applications and recommendations to members prior to the January board meeting for voting on new members.
 - e) Lead discussion on board applications and oversee the voting process at the first board meeting of the year.
 - c) Write and send letters of acceptance or regret to all who applied and notify those who wrote recommendations of the outcome.

- d) Copy the State Master Gardener office on all correspondence to prospective applicants/members.

Secretary: The Secretary of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board is the State Program Secretary and shall:

- 1) Record all activities of the scheduled/special meetings of the Advisory Board.
- 2) Distribute meeting minutes to all board members.
- 3) Other duties/responsibilities as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Sub-Committee/Teams:

Members assigned to sub-committees/teams must be Minnesota Master Gardeners or staff of the University of Minnesota but need not be members of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board and shall:

- 1) Assume assignment and initiate follow-through to a termination point.
- 2) Report, periodically, to the Board at scheduled/special meetings, if requested.
- 3) On final completion of assignment, initiate a detailed after-action report for submission to the Advisory Board Chairperson, and State Master Gardener Coordinator.