

# JOHNSON COUNTY IOWA MASTER GARDENERS

## Bylaws



**NAME.** The name of this organization shall be the Johnson County Master Gardeners (JCMG). This local group is an integral part of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and Iowa Master Gardeners and is affiliated with Johnson County Extension and Outreach. JCMG are governed by the Johnson County Extension Council and ISU Extension and Outreach and abide by the policies and procedures established by those entities. The official address of JCMG: 3109 Old Highway 218 S., Iowa City, IA 52246.

**PURPOSE.** The purpose of JCMG is to use research-based horticulture and gardening knowledge and practices to educate people and coordinate projects that promote healthy communities. The Master Gardener program is an educational and volunteer service organization of the Iowa State University (ISU) College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and ISU Extension and Outreach. Through the Iowa Master Gardener program, interested volunteers receive training in horticulture and environmental topics of special value to home gardeners.

After completion of the training, JCMG share their time, knowledge, and service on approved projects within Johnson County. Through leadership, instruction and hands-on assistance provided by Master Gardeners, the broad resources of Iowa State University are extended to benefit citizens in Johnson County and enhance the quality of life in our community.

JCMG bylaws follow the Iowa State University (ISU) Master Gardener (MG) volunteer manual and define additional requirements and expectations that may differ from and exceed the ISU MG volunteer manual.

[https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/files/page/files/20180921\\_mg\\_volunteer\\_manual.pdf](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/files/page/files/20180921_mg_volunteer_manual.pdf) Johnson County Extension and Outreach:

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/page/about-extension> Iowa Extension Council Association <https://www.iaextensionrourils.org/>

**MEMBERSHIP.** Any resident of Iowa may apply to the Master Gardener Program. Master Gardener participants must understand and accept responsibility for their actions, words, and deeds when volunteering on behalf of ISU and ISU Extension. JCMG are subject to a background check as required by ISU policy.

**STEERING COMMITTEE.** The Steering Committee shall support and supervise the business affairs, budget and activities of the JCMG. The JCMG steering committee is made up of current project coordinators and officers. Project coordinators are automatically designated to serve on the steering committee and encouraged to attend meetings and submit brief project updates. Each Steering Committee member has one vote. The meetings are open, and all Master Gardeners are welcome. As a public entity, JCMG meetings follow Iowa's Open Meetings Laws.

**MEETINGS.** MG shall meet monthly except for July & December. Absentee or proxy voting is not permitted at these meetings. The chair or vice chair may call special meetings. In addition, two meetings of the entire membership shall be held to foster social interaction and a cooperative relationship among JCMG.

- A social gathering for the entire membership shall be held each fall near the completion of the gardening season to plan for the upcoming year.
- An annual membership spring award meeting and potluck shall be held every year to recognize MG interns who have met the requirements to be a JCMG, acknowledge JCMG milestones, present the budget, introduce officers and consider other additional business. Officers, interns, and awards will be published in the *Thymes* newsletter following the spring annual meeting including a referring note to the public minutes for budget items.

**ELECTRONIC MEETING PARTICIPATION.** Routine business may be conducted by e-mail, telephone conference call, video conferencing or other electronic means acceptable to the steering committee in lieu of a face-to-face meeting.

**QUORUM AND VOTING:** Members present at a steering committee meeting may conduct routine business. For single item expenditures of more than \$500, budget approval, officer election, or bylaws amendments a quorum—consisting of 50% or more of the members with voting privileges—MUST be in attendance (in person or video conferencing). A majority vote of the quorum is required for a motion to be approved. (See Appendix B.2)

**PROJECT COORDINATORS/STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS.** Votes of the steering committee are based on the rule of democracy — one person, one vote. Master Gardeners who serve as a project coordinator for more than one project will have one vote only. (See Appendix B.2)

**OFFICER ELECTION AND TERMS.** The officers of the JCMG shall include a chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and past chair. The vice chair shall assume the role of chair following completion of their term. The chair shall serve as past chair for a term of two years following their term as chair. Officers shall be steering committee voting members; chair and vice chair shall serve a two-year term in their position; the treasurer and secretary may serve indefinitely. Officers who have completed a two-year term are not eligible to serve as an officer in that position again for a two-year period of time. An Extension employee may serve as secretary without voting privileges. Officer terms follow the calendar year, January to December and shall be announced at the annual Awards Recognition spring meeting.

**NOMINATIONS.** Officer candidate(s) will complete an application outlining skills and interests and shall be voted on by the Steering Committee. The vice chair shall succeed the chair at the end of the chair's term. Nominations for vice chair may come from the chair, steering committee members, Master Gardener volunteers, or self-nominations. The steering committee shall vote to approve the nomination. In the event a vice chair is not nominated by March, the steering committee will nominate a MG and vote on the nomination. (See Appendix B.3)

In the event the chair is unable to complete their term, the vice chair shall assume the position and a replacement vice chair will be nominated and elected at the next scheduled steering committee meeting. If the vice chair is unable to complete their term, including transitioning to the chair, the steering committee shall vote to fill the vacant position at the next scheduled meeting.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and past chair shall constitute the executive committee. The executive committee may transact business of an emergency nature or business delegated to it by the steering committee and shall report to the steering committee on all actions taken between regular meetings of the steering committee. The chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer may accrue service credit hours to accomplish duties of their positions. Extension staff has authority as representative of the Johnson County Extension Council to provide advice on decisions based on policy and procedures.

**TREASURER.** The treasurer must possess accounting skills. The treasurer shall perform such duties as customarily pertain to the position; arrange for an annual audit or examination of the books; present an annual report at the annual meeting; and, at the direction of the steering committee, maintain deposits and expenses in authorized financial institutions. The treasurer or treasurer's designee shall monitor the financial state of the budget and shall oversee the financial operations of any income-generating project, following established cash handling procedures for income-generating events (e.g., sales or donation generating events). The treasurer shall coordinate planning to prepare an annual operating budget. The treasurer will report financial information to the executive committee, steering committee and project coordinators in a timely fashion and may accrue service credit hours to perform all duties related to the position.

**BUDGET.** The budget shall be prepared annually by the treasurer and members of the executive committee. The proposed budget for the next fiscal year shall be approved by the steering committee in advance of the annual spring awards meeting.

**VOLUNTEER PROJECTS.** The focus of all Master Gardener projects is education and service. Projects receive the support of ISU Extension and Outreach and the Johnson County Extension Council. Project selection is based on community need, geographic considerations that ensure access across Johnson County, availability of volunteers and educational impact. The opportunities for Master Gardener involvement are as varied as the individuals who are trained.

**PROJECT COORDINATORS AND CO-COORDINATORS.** Project coordinators oversee all aspects of their respective project including recruiting volunteers to maintain the approved primary project. Coordinators may recruit a co-coordinator(s) to assist and be available when the project coordinator is absent. The co-coordinator may assume duties as coordinator if the coordinator decides to end their service.

Coordinators are responsible for compiling a list of activities performed in a typical year, which shall be maintained online at JCMG members-only page. Coordinators should submit a project work schedule to post on the JCMG Volunteer Opportunities calendar published in the *Thymes*. As project coordinators change (Appendix B.2 STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS) member listing will be updated, which does not require a change in bylaws.

Project coordinators must adhere to a project budget and provide a written list of expenses for the upcoming year. They may qualify for reimbursement according to the annual planned budget (see Reimbursement Form, Appendix A). Project coordinators must submit an annual report. A Template (Appendix D) is available.

Coordinators are strongly encouraged to attend all steering committee meetings and provide updates. Coordinators are required to attend a minimum of two steering committee meetings each year a) to justify a budget and b) give a final annual project report.

Project coordinators determine at their discretion if they wish to step down except for a steering committee vote of no confidence should there be a lack of leadership for their project. If a project coordinator isn't available, the project will be declared inactive and dropped from the listing of approved primary projects and notification will be sent to appropriate parties.

**REPORTING:** Project coordinators shall submit an annual report to the Steering Committee (Appendix D) by December 31 to ensure appropriate reporting to the Iowa State University Master Gardeners.

**FISCAL YEAR.** The JCMG fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

**CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION.** Following completion of the ISU Master Gardener Training classes and successfully passing a post-instruction exam the volunteer becomes a JCMG intern. During the internship, the JCMG intern must complete 40 volunteer service hours, at least 20 hours must be for MG approved primary project(s) (see Appendix B.1 Approved (Core) Projects) The volunteer receives a certificate, an official Master Gardener name badge and lapel pin with Iowa Master Gardener logo. Active status is valid for one calendar year. In subsequent years to maintain active status, JCMG must complete 20 hours of volunteer service with at least 10 hours on approved (core) projects. JCMG who have not maintained active status as a Master Gardener must complete the required continuing education (10 hours) and volunteer service hours by the end of the calendar year to be reinstated.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION.** Johnson County Master Gardeners shall offer education programming during the winter months to provide continuing education (CE) training opportunities for local JCMG to meet certification requirements. JCMG are required to complete 10 continuing education hours each year. Educational opportunities to complete this requirement may include in-person presentations, webinars, online tutorials, and videos. Education sources must be considered reputable, and research based. Refer to ISU Master Gardener Volunteer Manual for further details. Registration expense associated with CE training will be paid by individual JCMG unless other prior arrangements are made. JCMG may request assistance for CE registration.

**NONDISCRIMINATION JUSTICE STATEMENT.** In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, and American Sign Language) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling 866-632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or (2) Fax: 833-256-1665 or 202-690-7442; or (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**AMENDMENTS.** These bylaws shall be reviewed every three years by a committee of three JCMGs appointed by consensus of the Executive Committee. At least two of the three members should be MGs who actively attend Steering Committee meetings. The third member should be a MG selected from outside the Steering Committee membership. The bylaws may be amended at any time by a majority vote of a steering committee quorum provided the proposed amendments were submitted to members in writing at least two weeks in advance of an annual or membership meeting.

## APPENDIX A — REIMBURSEMENT FORM

### ITEMIZED STATEMENT OF EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_



Receipt Date	Vendor	Cost	Account Line	Project Line	Summary of Items
	<b>TOTAL:</b>				

#### Account Lines:

Master Gardener General	Master Gardener Plum Grove	Master Gardener Butterfly House	Master Gardener Growing Together Grant
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#### Project Lines:

Yard & Garden Information	Firefighters' Memorial	Solon Public Library
Butterfly House	Plant Sale & Flea Market	Speakers Bureau
Coralville Historical School House	Hortline	Thymes Newsletter
Ecumenical Towers	Hospice Garden /Willow Creek Park	Plum Grove-Gardens
Demonstration Garden	Classes/Training	Plum Grove-Heritage Party
Downtown City Gardens	Oaknoll Gardens	Plum Grove-Tomato Taste
Fair Grounds Rain Garden	Social Events	Other: Specify
Fair Grounds Flower Beds		

\*Use multiple lines for receipts that reflect different account or project lines. \*Items listed on the receipt are Master Gardener items only. No personal items may be included. Please ask for a separate receipt for JCMG items at time of check out. \*A receipt is required. No handwritten notes will be accepted except from vendors (i.e. farmer's markets) of which a name, phone number, date, & signature is required. \* Reimbursement requests are subject to rejection if proper documentation is not provided.

## **APPENDIX B.1 — APPROVED (CORE) PROJECTS**

- 1876 Coralville Schoolhouse Gardens
- Yard & Garden Information
- Butterfly House
- Demonstration Garden
- Downtown City Gardens
- Ecumenical Towers
- Fairgrounds Flower Gardens
- Fairgrounds Rain Garden
- Firefighters Memorial
- Hortline
- Oaknoll Gardens
- Plant Sale & Flea Market (event)
- Plum Grove Gardens
  - Plum Grove Taste of the Heritage Garden (event)
  - Plum Grove Taste of Heirloom Tomatoes (event)
- Solon Public Library
- Speakers Bureau
- Steering Committee
  - Scarecrow Contest (event)
  - Buckets of Flowers (event)
- Thymes Newsletter
- Willow Creek Hospice Garden

### **Other Projects in Consideration with review of past minutes**

- JCMG Memorial Garden at Extension Office (“other” project) 2014

## **Appendix B.2 — STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (reviewed annually)**

Quorum & majority vote, no individual gets more than one vote, Projects can only have 2 voting members (primary coordinator & secondary coordinator) with exception Plum Grove has 3 garden project leaders & the 2 Plum Grove Events fall as subcommittee of that project and are under Plum Grove.

1. Doug Geraets - Past Chair (2024-2026)
2. Jackie Wellborn - Chair (2024-2026), Yard & Garden Information
3. Melissa Close - Vice Chair (2024-2026)
4. Barb Robinson - Secretary
5. Jean Holzhammer - Treasurer
6. Melissa Serenda - Thymes
7. Beth Fisher - Social Events
8. Karen Martinek - Coralville Schoolhouse
9. Linda Schreiber - Downtown City Gardens
10. Mary Starry - Hortline
11. Melanie Hauptert - Willow Creek Park Hospice Garden
12. Megan Garrels - Speakers Bureau
13. Barb Schintler - Firefighters Memorial
14. Lavon Yeggy - Rain Garden, Plum Grove Wildflower Garden
15. Vickie Siefers - Oaknoll Retirement Residence
16. Emil Rinderspacher - Plant Sale & Flea Market
17. Kay Mohling - Yard & Garden Information
18. Michael Hesseltine - Ecumenical Towers
19. John Weeg - Ecumenical Towers
20. Mike Murphy - Butterfly House
21. Carolyn Murphy - Butterfly House, Plum Grove Grandma's Flower Garden
22. Darlene Clausen - Plant Sale & Flea Market, Plum Grove Vegetable Garden
23. Chris Sedrel - Demo Garden, Fairground Gardens
24. Laurie Roehl - Demo Garden, Fairground Gardens
25. Kathy Erenberger – Solon Public Library

JCMG - The membership of steering committee is fluid based on active project coordinators.  
Appendix B.2 will be updated as necessary.



## **APPENDIX B.3 — JCMG Vice-Chair Candidate Application for Consideration**

### JCMG Vice-Chair Candidate

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

JCMG Training Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your involvement with JCMG and JCMG projects:

Any previous experience with organization or board committees? Please summarize:

## **APPENDIX C — Johnson County Master Gardeners Approved Primary Project Application Process**

### **Approved primary project application, requirements, and evaluation.**

Master Gardeners may submit a request to the Johnson County Master Gardener Steering Committee to review a project to become an approved primary project by submitting a project application and description of the project before the end of the calendar year.

Project must be documented as active for a minimum of 2 years, have regularly scheduled workdays, and multiple JCMG volunteer member involvement.

JCMG Steering Committee will report the results of an approved application to the members at the annual awards recognition meeting held during the spring months. This announcement will provide opportunities for JCMG volunteer signup.

JCMG Steering Committee members are responsible for reviewing the list of approved primary projects annually throughout the calendar year.

Project coordinators(s) are responsible for completing an annual project report (see Appendix D).

Project Name:

Presented by:

Provisional Approval Date:

Anticipated Project Effective Date:

**APPENDIX C continued: Johnson County Master Gardeners Approved Primary Project**

Application Name of Project:

Name(s) of Project Coordinator(s):

What is the project's minimum requirement and expectations, i.e., planning, supplies?

What resources are provided by the project's partners, i.e., funding, supplies?

Average number of JCMG involved with this project:

Provide a description of need or value this project and any partners involved: include community need, educational impact, and number of JCMG volunteers.

Provide a list of project activities occurring throughout the calendar year.

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Project Coordinator

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Date

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Date reviewed by JCMG Steering Committee

JCMG Steering Committee comment summary:

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## APPENDIX C continued: Johnson County Master Gardeners Approved Primary Project

### JCMG Project Coordinator Description & Responsibilities

JCMG Project Coordinators are essential to establish and maintain effective volunteer projects which serve the community and provide opportunities for community education.

Approved projects have been reviewed by the JCMG steering committee (SC) and usually reside on property owned and/or maintained by a governmental entity or operated by an active nonprofit organization.

Responsibilities of Project coordinators:

1. Develop plans for project including short and long-term plans and submit to SC.
2. Maintain good working relationship with Project clients and keep them informed of plans, scheduled work, and any issues that may arise.
3. Develop project budget with list of estimated expenses for the coming year and submit to SC.
4. Organize work including establishing a project calendar, work schedule and work routines.
5. Optional: recruit a volunteer to serve as co-coordinator who can help lead project activities as needed.
6. Communicate with volunteers.
  - a. Regularly communicate with volunteers by email about work sessions and status of project.
  - b. Maintain a list of MGs who are interested in your project including new trainees and current MGs who have signed up on [SignUpGenius](#).
  - c. Post project work schedule on JCMG Volunteer Opportunities calendar.
7. Submit reports to Steering Committee
  - a. Submit monthly project updates during the active growing season which become part of SC minutes and may be published in the *Thymes*.
  - b. Submit end-of-year report to Steering Committee including expenditures.
8. Attend SC meetings; at a minimum coordinators are expected to attend two meetings to: 1) present a project budget at October meeting, and, 2) give a final annual project report at January meeting.

## **APPENDIX D: Johnson County Master Gardener Project Coordinator Annual Report**

Report Name of Project:

Name(s) of Project Coordinator(s):

Provide a brief statement of the project:

Number and names of Master Gardeners involved:

Please include a description of project impact:

Provide a summary of project activities conducted throughout the calendar year and the results of the project (include information about project success(es) and or partner(s).

Statement of what you consider the greatest success of this project:

What are the needs to help this project continue? What changes would you consider making for the future?

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Project Coordinator

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Date

## **APPENDIX E: JCMG Steering Committee meeting calendar.**

Black = Organizational Items   Red = Preparation Items   Blue = Event

### **January**

- Prep for annual spring awards meeting and Potluck (publicize date and alternate date in advance)  
Report budget, announce officers, discuss interim volunteers and Master Gardener service.
- Prep for Plant Sale/Flea Market - meeting
- Prep for Plum Grove Gardens Seed Selection - meeting date
- Prep for Demonstration Garden Seed Selection - meeting date

### **February**

- Review approved primary applications.
- Annual spring Awards Meeting & Potluck
- Annual Reports & Past Year Summary Notes; Roster; Project Hours Summary, JCMG State Rank, Project Report Yearly Summary (Extension staff responsibility)
- Prep for Seed Share (March)
- Prep for Continuing Education Sunday (March)
- Prep for Plant Sale & Flea Market
- Demonstration Garden Seed Selection meeting
- Plum Grove Gardens Seed Selection meeting

### **March**

- Continuing Education
- Kirkwood Scholarship Request
- Seed Share
- Prep for Plant Sale & Flea Market
- Prep for project clean-up days in April

### **April**

- Prep for JC Fair; project schedules, 4-H County Fair Award Sponsorships & Fair book Section review (July)
- Spring garden clean up
- Prep for Plant Sale & Flea Market
- Prep for Taste of the Heritage Garden (Plum Grove planning meeting set date for meeting in May)

### **May**

- Taste of Heritage Garden at Plum Grove menu planning meeting
- Plant Sale & Flea Market

### **June**

- Prep for Tomato Taste

**July — no steering committee meeting —**

- Johnson County 4-H & FFA Fair
- Taste of Plum Grove
- Prep for Fall Harvest meeting & Potluck (September or October)

**August**

- Tomato Taste
- Final Plant Sale Financial report

**September**

- Plan fundraising for next calendar year.
- Finalize dates for MG activities in the coming year, create a JCMG Events Calendar on the JCMG Members page.
- Fall Harvest Social & Potluck (September or October)

**October**

- Nominate steering committee officers.
- Develop fiscal budget with project coordinators.
- Review Bylaws

**November**

- Approve fiscal budget.
- Approve steering committee officers.
- MG project review
- Reporting hours reminder

**December — no steering committee meeting**

- Project Coordinator reports due.