**BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND PRIDE**

 ***COMMON GROUND NORTH RICHLAND HILLS COMMUNITY GARDEN***

5409 FM1938, North Richland Hills, TX 76180

**Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden By-Laws**

**Article I – Name and Mission Statement**

**Section 1.00, Name –**The name of this organization shall be “Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden”.

**Section 2.00, Mission Statement**

To build a sense of community and pride through collaborative gardening efforts that focus on

the principles of organic gardening and to act as a center for educating and encouraging others to participate in gardening communities wherever they live.

**Article II – Membership**

**Section 1.00, Definition –** A *member* is someone who has been granted rights to a particular plot(s) and who agrees to and abides by the rules and requirements of the Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden defined herein the By-Laws.

**Section 2.00, Prospective Members –** Membership is available on a first come first serve basis to the first **70** interested parties and is open to any City of North Richland Hills and surrounding area residents regardless of race, gender, national origin, color, religion, age, or sexual orientation. If all garden plots are occupied, prospective members’ names are placed on a waiting list. A prospective member of the Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden who has been offered a plot assignment must sign a gardening agreement and submit the associated membership dues to become a member.

**Section 3.00, Current Members –** A current member in good standing may retain the assigned plot and remain a member of the Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden the following year by signing the agreement and paying the required membership dues at time of plot registration.

**Section 4.00, Membership Sign up and Dues –** Memberships shall run from January through December of each year, but a member may join at any time during the year. Membership dues are $50.00 per year, are non-refundable, and are to be paid at time of registration.

**Section 5.00, Termination of Membership –** A **30** day grace period is granted on membership renewal. If membership dues and forms are not received by the end of the grace period, then the member shall lose their membership and all Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden privileges. Membership and plot privileges may be revoked by the Common Ground Executive Board for violation(s) of the rules established by the Common Ground Executive Board. If a member fails to fulfill their responsibilities or breaks membership rules, the Common Ground Executive Board will notify the member in writing with details outlining the infraction(s) and what actions are required to rectify the situation. Members will be given **30** days to rectify the situation.

If the member fails to rectify the situation, the Common Ground Executive Board will meet and discuss the situation and determine whether the member will be given further time to resolve the issue or whether their membership is to be terminated. A vote of 75% of the council members is required to terminate membership. If membership is terminated, the member’s garden plot will be given to the next person on the waiting list and all membership dues paid in that year will be forfeit.

**Section 6.00, Membership Guidelines –** Each Member is requested to attend at least four (4) work days per year. Work days will be established by the Common Ground Executive Board and published on the bulletin board and other established communication methods. Gardeners who cannot attend Saturday workdays should contact the garden coordinator to request a list of projects which can be completed at other times.

The Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden is an organic garden project. Organic fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides are used in the garden. A list will be provided of Organic Pesticides, Fertilizers and Disease Control options. Examples of organic amendments, pesticides and fertilizers include, but not limited to:

• Compost and compost teas

• Biodegradable detergents

• Seaweed meal or liquid

• Alfalfa meal

• Phosphate rock

• Blood meal

• Bone meal

• Greensand

• Sphagnum peat moss

• Calcium limestone flour

• Iron (chelated 10%)

• Epsom salt

• Fish meal and fish oils

• Vegetable oils

• Biodegradable soaps

• Thuricide

Others may be approved by the Common Ground Executive Board, as needed or requested.

**Article III – Governance**

**Section 1.00, Definition –** The Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Executive Board, is responsible for decisions regarding the membership and also current and future garden activities. The Common Ground Executive Board develops, interprets, and enforces the guidelines set forth herein the By-Laws.

Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden Members may be elected to the Executive Board. There are seven (7) Executive Board members which obtain additional responsibilities.

**Section 2.00, Election of Executive Board Members –**

The Executive Board will consist of seven (**7**) members who include: Garden Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Garden Treasurer, Garden Secretary, Garden Newsletter and website Editor, Garden Steward, and at large board member. Executive Board members will be elected by a majority vote of all Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden members and will serve for one (**2**) years with the exception of the garden coordinator who will serve a five (5) year term. Each family leasing a plot is part of the Common Ground Garden and will receive one vote per plot.

**Section 3.00, Responsibilities of Executive Board Members –**

Executive Board members will meet as quarterly to review reports on garden progress; discuss plans for improvement, issues that arise, requests for expending dues, and workday efforts. They will determine any new work projects or action items that are needed and notify members of any issues that need to be resolved.

Executive Board members are responsible for new projects/enhancements, work day project decisions, and actions regarding membership renewals, cancellations or additions. Additional responsibilities for each Executive Board member are listed below.

**Responsibility of Garden Coordinator**

The Garden Coordinator presides over all meetings of the Common Ground Executive Board and has the authority to sign legal documents and the authority to sign checks with a second signature on behalf of the organization.

Additional responsibilities include:

• Plan and conduct garden orientations for community gardeners, work projects, and general garden meetings

• Determine roles, responsibilities, expectations of garden organization, community gardeners

• Help Garden Steward plan and implement social events, garden gatherings, and work projects in the garden

• Determine calendar of events for coming year with Garden Steward Captain and Treasurer

• Responsible for all written records of the organization, notices of meetings, official correspondence.

**Responsibility of the Assistant Coordinator**

The Assistant Garden Coordinator will take over all responsibilities of the Garden Coordinator in his/her absence

Additional responsibilities include:

• Plan and conduct garden orientations for community gardeners, work projects, and general garden meetings

• Determine roles, responsibilities, expectations of garden organization, community gardeners

• Help Garden Steward plan and implement social events, garden gatherings, and work projects in the garden

• Determine calendar of events for coming year with Garden Steward Captain and Treasurer

• Responsible for all written records of the organization, notices of meetings, official correspondence.

**Responsibility of Treasurer**

The treasurer is responsible for all financial records; due receipts, deposits, and has the authority to sign checks with a second signature required on behalf of the organization.

**Responsibility of the Secretary**

The Secretary is responsible for agendas and minutes of the Common Ground Executive Board meetings.

**Responsibility of the Garden Steward**

 The Garden Steward is responsible to walk the garden periodically and check for plots which are in need of care or are out of compliance with garden rules.

Additional responsibilities include:

• Conduct routine clean-up/inspection rounds

• Address community gardeners concerns in a timely manner

• Act as a link between the Community Gardening Coordinator and other garden members

• Help Community Gardening Coordinator plan and implement social events, garden

 gatherings, and work projects in the garden

• Monitor the garden for signs of theft and/or vandalism

**Responsibility of Newsletter and Website Editor**

The Newsletter Editor is responsible for creating the gardens newsletters on a bi-monthly basis by collecting educational information and reporting upcoming events and awards.

**At-Large Member**

The at-large member brings forward new and innovative ideas toward the betterment of Common Ground Community Garden and makes recommendations on changes to policy and or procedure as communicated by other garden members.

**Section 4.00, Removing an Executive Board Member –**

In the event that an Executive Board member can no longer fulfill their responsibilities of their position, an interim Executive Board member will be elected by a majority vote of all Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden members and will serve for the remainder of the former Executive Board member’s two year term.

**Section 5.00 Meetings**

1. Any change in policy and procedure must be voted on and passed by quorum (as defined below) of the Board at a properly scheduled Board meeting, notice of which having been published at least ten (10) days prior to such meeting. Such notice shall include the mailing or electronic transmission (email) of the proposed changes to all Board members.
2. The Board shall meet as needed or when called into session to review financial reports; hear reports from, committee chairpersons, or other interested parties invited to address the organization; and take any necessary actions. A quorum of the Board shall be comprised of one (1) person more than one-half (1/2) of current Board membership.
3. At a regularly scheduled meeting held each November, the Garden Members shall elect the officers (Garden Coordinator, Assistant Garden Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Garden Steward, Newsletter Editor and at large member to serve from January 1 to December 31 of the following 2 years. If an officer, other than the Chairperson is unable to complete a term, the Board shall, within thirty (30) days, call for the election of a replacement to serve the unexpired term.
4. Board members shall serve without compensation except that out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed according to the policies and guidelines for expense reimbursement as established by the Board.
5. Minutes, including a financial report and a record of any actions shall be kept at each Board meeting. Board minutes shall be kept at a location agreed upon by board members.

**Article VI – General Standards of Conduct for Executive Board Members**

**Section 1.00**

1. The Board shall strictly adhere to the **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

2. Each Board member shall discharge his or her duties in good faith, with the care a prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances; and in a manner the Board member reasonably believes to be in the best interest of Common Ground.

**Article V – Operations**

**Section 1.00**.

1. The organization’s Fiscal Year shall be January 1 to December 31.
2. Board members elections shall be held at a regularly scheduled meeting each November.
3. An Annual Budget shall be prepared and the Board shall approve such Budget at its regularly scheduled meeting each November.
4. Funding shall consist of plot rental fees, grants, and donations.
5. The current edition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority governing meetings of the Board except as may otherwise be provided by law or these bylaws.

 **Article VI - Amendments**

**Section 1.00.** The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board. Proposed changes shall be submitted in writing and/or electronically (e-mail) to the Board at the previous regularly scheduled meeting or not less than thirty (30) days prior to any vote. Proxy voting shall be permitted.

**Article VII- Committees**

**Section 1.00**. The Board may, at its discretion, establish Standing and/or Ad-Hoc committees for the business purposes of Common Ground. The Board shall elect chairpersons for any authorized committees. The committee chairperson shall be responsible for recruiting persons to serve on the committee and for reporting meeting results to the Board. These chairpersons shall serve at the pleasure and direction of the Board.

**Article IV – Dissolution**

**Section 1.00, Disbursal of Assets –** If Common Ground North Richland Hills Community Garden should be dissolved, its property, funds, and other assets shall be transferred to the City of North Richland Hills, Texas.

**Revised 2021**