

**AMGA State Advisory Council  
Standard Operating Procedures  
As Amended  
January 2021**

The operating procedures of the Advisory Council (AC) will be in accordance with mandates set by the Bylaws of the Alabama Master Gardeners Association (AMGA).

**Objectives and Responsibilities:**

- The primary objective of the AC is to serve as a communications link among the local Master Gardeners associations (LMGA), as well as between the LMGAs, the AMGA Board of Directors (AMGA BOD), and the State Master Gardener Program Coordinator (coordinator). The exchange of information, ideas, concerns, and solutions will occur on a regular basis and may be initiated by any one of these groups.
- Specific responsibilities of the AC will include providing a list of potential candidates for the AMGA BOD to the AMGA Nominating Committee and assisting in identifying MGs for AMGA standing and special committees.
- The AMGA BOD may ask the AC to perform other duties as needed.

**Membership, Election of Officers, and Terms of Office:**

- Each LMGA identifies one member to serve as its AC Representative (AC rep). A term of no less than two years is recommended. Each LMGA is encouraged to identify an Alternate Representative to regularly attend meetings. All AC Reps and Alternates must be members of AMGA.
- A voluntary nominating committee will be formed at the third meeting of the election year, and elections will be held at the fourth meeting of that year. Self-nomination for all positions is encouraged. AC Reps will receive the proposed slate via e-mail no later than two weeks prior to the election date. Nominations may be accepted from the floor at the time of the election provided the individual being nominated has agreed prior to the nomination. Vote will be by show of hands unless there are nominations from the floor, in which case, vote will be by

secret ballot. Should the vote be taken over an electronic meeting space, the Representatives will vote by chat or roll call and the secretary will record the votes with assistance if needed.

- Officers will serve a two-year term beginning January 1 following their election and will serve no more than one term in the same position. In the event of an appointment to fill a vacant office, three consecutive AC meetings will be considered equal to a complete year.

### **Organizational Structure, Duties, and Meetings:**

The elected officers of the AC will be Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Chair will appoint a Parliamentarian. All must be AMGA members and active participants of the AMGA Advisory Council. The Chair should not represent his/her local association; therefore, that association will identify another AC Rep for voting privileges from their LMGA.

#### **The Chair Will:**

- schedule a physical or electronic meeting space, notify AC Reps of location, and preside at all meetings,
- attend AMGA BOD meetings and report to the AC on any actions from the latest meeting that have not been reported in Pathways and will not be addressed by any guests,
- prepare meeting agendas focusing on LMGA issues and concerns and distribute them to all AC Reps at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Any invited guests (e.g. AMGA BOD rep, AMGA committee chairs, coordinator) will be scheduled to briefly report during the last portion of the meeting,
- if the vice-chair or secretary is unable to complete a term, the chair will appoint another AC rep to fill the unexpired term.

#### **The Vice chair Will:**

- within two weeks of the meeting, contact any AC Reps who did not attend a quarterly meeting,
- preside at meetings and attend AMGA BOD meetings in the absence of the chair,

- oversee special projects as requested by the chair,
- if the chair is unable to complete a term, the vice-chair will assume the duties of the chair for the unexpired term and will appoint another AC rep to fill the unexpired term of the vice-chair.

#### **The Secretary Will:**

- record proceedings of meetings and maintain a list of LMGA AC Reps in attendance at each meeting,
- provide a copy of the attendance list to the vice-chair within one week of the meeting,
- distribute draft minutes of meetings to the AMGA website within one week. Upon a vote of approval of the minutes at the following Advisory Council meeting, the secretary will contact the AMGA website team to move the draft minutes to Approved Minutes.
- maintain a current Master List of AC Reps, Alternate Reps, and local association presidents and provide this list annually to AC Reps and AMGA BOD.

#### **The Parliamentarian will:**

- be familiar with Robert's Rules of Order,
- provide advice to chair and other members of the AC,
- help maintain order during meetings.

#### **AC Representatives (AC Reps) Will:**

- be encouraged to hold a 2-year term as their LMGA's AC Rep bring pertinent and updated LMGA information (form attached) to the AC
- regularly attend meetings,
- share during each AC meeting local concerns, activities, etc. with other AC Reps in forums designed to encourage open, easy communication,
- report proceedings of meetings to their local association,
- notify and update the change of contact information of the AC Reps and Alternate Reps to the AC Secretary

- should the LMGA Rep or its' Alternate Rep not be able to attend a meeting, the AC Rep should seek a substitute for their LMGA for the appropriate meeting and inform the secretary of the substitution.
- encourage members of their LMGA to attend AC meetings as guests to promote a wider understanding of the function and operation of the AC. Each elected officer will pass along all lists and records of the office to his/her successor.

### **Meetings, Quorum, and Voting:**

Meetings will be scheduled quarterly, generally on the first Tuesday\*\* of February, May, August, and November, at an easily accessible, central location. Guests may attend an AC meeting with voice but no vote. Advisory Council Representatives present will form the quorum at any meeting, and a simple majority will carry the vote. Proxy or absentee votes will not be accepted. Each LMGA has only one vote, and only the MG identified as the Advisory Council Representative by that LMGA, or the official Alternate Representative in the Representative's absence, will be able to vote unless a substitute has been designated and reported to the Secretary. Substitutes reported to the Secretary at any time prior to a vote being taken may vote. The chair votes only in the event of a tie.

Should the vote be taken over an electronic meeting space, the Representatives will vote by chat or roll call and the secretary will record the votes.

### **Amendments**

This SOP may be amended at any meeting by a majority vote of those AC Representatives present provided written notice of the proposed amendment(s) has been sent out to the Representatives two weeks in advance of the meeting. This SOP was approved by the Advisory Council Representatives at the quarterly meeting on November 3, 2020 and is in effect as of January 1, 2021, for AMGA members and active participants of the AMGA Advisory Council.

\*\*The first Tuesday of the month is sometimes an election year. Master Gardeners who volunteer at the polls are commended. However, the Advisory

Council meeting dates will stay the same and Representatives who cannot attend are encouraged to send their Alternate Representative or other substitute.