

Essex Garden Club Inc., Policies and Procedures Update

Board-Approved, 18Aug2023

NOTE: The Essex Garden Club is governed by its Bylaws (describing basic structure) and Policy and Procedures (describing implementation detail). To avoid redundancy, these documents intentionally do not include repetitive information but together provide Club members a comprehensive overview of how the Essex Garden Club functions as an organization.

I. MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS and RESPONSIBILITIES

A. NEW MEMBERS *(first two years in Club)*

During the first two years of membership, New Members shall receive all general Club notices and have all privileges of the Club as well as those of The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. New Members must meet all Active Member responsibilities with the additional specification that they must:

- 1) Volunteer for **two (2) Plant Digs** work shifts in both Year 1 and Year 2 of membership
- 2) Volunteer for **two (2) Divide and Pot** work shifts in both Year 1 and Year 2 of membership
- 3) Volunteer for **two (2)** of the three (3) work shifts for **Garlic Salt Production** in both Year 1 and Year 2 of membership

A. ACTIVE MEMBERS *(includes New Members and members in service for at least ten years)*

Active members are eligible to vote, serve as Board Officers, serve on and/or chair committees, and propose and second new members. They shall receive all general Club notices and have all privileges of the Club as well as those of The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. As Active Members, individuals assume responsibility for an array of Club activities, including the following:

- 1) Participate in ALL of the following Community Care and Enhancement (CCE) activities:
 - Fall Clean-Up (Town Parks)
 - Holiday Greens Gathering
 - Holiday Greens Members' Donations
 - Community Holiday Decorating Day
 - Spring Clean-Up (Town Parks)
 - Spring Planting of Annuals Activity
 - Summer Watering and Weeding Activity

- Library Flower Arrangement Delivery (Essex Library)

2) Serve on at least *ONE* Club Membership Standing Committee, as listed below.

- Camperships and Scholarships Committee
- Communications Committee
- Horticulture Committee
- Hospitality Committee
- Junior Activities
- Library Committee
- Membership Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Program Committee
- Publicity Committee (Includes Website)

3) Participate in at least *ONE* of the following Garlic Salt Production work shifts.

- Garlic Salt Production Shift #1 – Materials/Ingredients Preparation
- Garlic Salt Production Shift #2 – Mixing Dry Ingredients
- Garlic Salt Production Shift #3 - Bottling / Packaging Product

4) Participate in the Club annual May Market fundraiser, as follows:

- Participate in one (1) of the May Market committees.
- Participate in one or two (as assigned) work shifts at the Members' Plants retail sales location at May Market
- Donate the required number of "perky plants" (members' plants) for resale at the May Market
- Participate in one (1) of the "Plant Digs" teams assigned to collecting donated plants for May Market resale.
- Participate on one (1) shift for the "Divide and Pot" activity to prepare donated plants and members' plants for resale at May Market

C. SUSTAINING MEMBERS *(includes an unlimited number of members who have ten or more years of service)*

Sustaining Members are eligible to vote, serve as Board Officers, serve on and/or chair committees, and propose and second new members. They shall receive all general Club notices and have all privileges of the Club, as well as those of The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. Sustaining Members are invited and encouraged to participate in all Club activities. The following apply to this class:

- 1) A candidate for Sustaining Membership shall be one who has been an Active Member in *good standing* for ten or more years.
Transition Exception: *The Associate Member Classification shall expire. Members classified as "Associates" on 11Sep2023 (e.g., the day of updated P&P adoption), shall be automatically reassigned to the Sustaining Member Classification".*
- 2) A letter of intent requesting a change in membership classification must be submitted to the Membership Chair and the Club President. Subsequently, the Board shall approve the membership classification change request. When approved, the member will receive a written notice of approval to change his/her membership classification from the Membership Chair.
- 3) Sustaining Members shall continue to pay dues but are exempt from other responsibilities expected of Active Members.

D. **PAST PRESIDENTS:** This membership classification is unlimited and reserved for members who have served as the Club President. They shall receive all general Club notices and have all privileges of the Club, as well as those of The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. Past Presidents are encouraged to participate fully in all Club activities, including committee service or leadership, and member voting. Past Presidents may not serve on the Board.

E. **EMERITUS MEMBERS:** This membership classification is reserved for members with longevity of Club service. The intent of this classification is to honor, recognize, and show appreciation for the past service of these long-standing members. They are exempt from Club dues.

II. CLUB GOVERNANCE

A. **COMPOSITION and DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.** The comprehensive Essex Garden Club Board of Directors consists of the following positions:

1. Executive Committee including the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Recording Secretary; and the
2. Chairs of the Standing Committees including Club Services Chair, Communications Chair, Community Outreach Chair, Club Activities Chair, May Market Co-Chairs.

The following table summarizes the governing structure for the Essex Garden Club. Following the table is an explanation of the roles and responsibilities for leadership at all levels. **(NOTE: To recognize their time commitment and contribution to the Club, requirements for Library Flowers**

Delivery and Hospitality are waived for all Board members.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS		REPORTING STRUCTURE
Executive Committee	President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General oversight of all Club Chairs and Leads
	First Vice-President (Club Historian)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General oversight of Club Chairs and Leads, as assigned by the President when necessary
	Second Vice-President (Chair of Program Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Committee • Conservation Lead • Horticulture Lead
	Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Committee Members
	Assistant Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlic Salt Production Co-Leads
	Recording Secretary	N/A
Standing Committees	Membership Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Committee Lead
	Club Services Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality Committee Lead • Library Flowers Committee Lead
	Club Activities Chair	<u>Community Care and Enhancement Activities Leads:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Clean-Up Lead • Holiday Greens Gathering/Donating/Decorating Lead(s) • Spring Clean-Up Lead, • Spring Planting of Annuals Lead • Summer Watering and Weeding Lead
	Community Outreach Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior Activities Lead • Library Liaison Lead • Scholarships/Camperships Lead
	Communications Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Scheduler Pro (VSP) Lead Administrator • Publicity Lead • Social Media Lead • Webmaster Lead
	Independent Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominating Committee (<i>no reports</i>) • Parliamentarian (<i>no reports</i>) • May Market Co-Chairs (<i>Team Leads for May Market</i>)

B. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

a.i.1) The President

- a.i.1.a. Shall preside at all meetings of the Club, its Executive Committee, and its Board of Directors.
- a.i.1.b. Shall perform all other duties pertaining to the office;
- a.i.1.c. Shall be authorized to sign checks;
- a.i.1.d. Shall be an *ex-officio* member of all committees except the Nominating and Membership Committees; and
- a.i.1.e. Shall appoint the Chairs of the Standing Committees, and oversee Chairs and Leads when required.

a.i.2) The First Vice-President

- a.i.2.a. Shall perform all the duties of the President in his/her absence;
- a.i.2.b. Shall assist the President in his/her duties, and oversee Chairs and Leads when required.
- a.i.2.c. Shall also assume the position of Club Historian, maintaining a digital file of Club records, documents, publicity records, Club Bylaws, Club Policies and Procedures, Articles of Incorporation, and other Club administrative records; and
- a.i.2.d. Shall serve on the Budget Committee.

a.i.3) The Second Vice-President

- a.i.3.a. Shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of both the President and the First Vice-President.
- a.i.3.b. Shall be Chair of the Program Committee
- a.i.3.c. Shall oversee the Conservation and Horticulture Committees and serve as the direct report for the Leads of those committees.

a.i.4) The Recording Secretary

- a.i.4.a. Shall maintain the Club meeting minutes and file said minutes with the Club Historian annually.
- a.i.4.b. Shall take minutes for all Board of Directors meetings, all regular monthly club Business meetings, the Annual Meeting, and any Executive *Ad Hoc* Committee meetings; and
- a.i.4.c. Shall promptly submit a draft copy of the minutes to the President for review prior to distribution to members for approval at the next meeting of that body.

a.i.1) The Treasurer

- a) Shall be custodian of all bank accounts and serve as administrator of the Club's "Square" account for credit card purchases on sales days.
- b) Shall be authorized to sign checks and deposit them in the bank.
- c) Shall pay all approved invoices.
- d) Shall submit a written report at all Board of Directors meetings of the latest net worth sheet, as well as income and expenses statements.
- e) Shall Chair the Budget Committee, and in that capacity prepare a budget in consultation with a Budget Committee consisting of the President, First Vice-President, Assistant Treasurer, and a member-at-large chosen by the Treasurer. The budget will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- f) Shall maintain proper books and facilitate, on a yearly basis, a review of the books of the previous year by any two members of the Club who are not on the Executive

Committee. A report of said review shall be presented to the Board at the next General Business Meeting.

- g) Shall make all adjusting entries at year end (August 15th) and prepare a report for annual review;
- h) Shall inform the Board of Directors of financial matters, alerting officers, or committee chairs if the budget is being exceeded;
- i) Shall manage all matters pertaining to the Internal Revenue Service and the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services; and
- j) Shall send names, addresses and emails of new club members accepted throughout the fiscal year, accompanied by dues payments for those who join from January 1st through September 30th to the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut (FGCCT).

6) **The Assistant Treasurer**

- a) Shall be authorized to sign checks and deposit checks in the bank, and is an authorized representative of the Club's "Square" account for credit card purchases on sales days;
- b) Shall be familiar with the duties and reporting of the Treasurer, assisting as required;
- c) Shall perform the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence;
- d) Shall collect the annual dues from the membership;
- e) Shall review annually the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut roster of members and note additions, deletions, and correction and prepare an invoice for the Treasurer to send the appropriate dues payment along with the revised Club roster;
- f) Shall participate as appropriate in all May Market Treasurer activities, including post-May Market accounting;
- g) Shall serve as the primary interface with the Garlic Salt Leads to establish sales dates and maintain a monthly sales/distribution inventory spreadsheet for Treasurer reporting;
- h) Shall provide updated garlic salt accounting to the Treasurer to incorporate into monthly report;
- i) Is a member of the Budget Committee; and
- j) Shall manage insurance matters as approved by the Board of Directors.

C. DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- 1) The **Club Services Chair** shall be responsible for and/or oversee Club functions related to hospitality services/events, as well as general oversight of the Essex Library Flower Arrangement Activity. The following Committee Leads shall report to the Club Services Chair: Hospitality and Library Flower Arrangements Delivery.
- 2) The **Club Activities Chair** shall be responsible for the organization and implementation of all Club activities included in the Community Care and Enhancement (CCE) list of activities. The **Club Activities Chair** shall oversee the Leads for each of the following

Community Care and Enhancement Activities:

- a) Fall Clean-Up Activity Lead
 - b) Holiday Greens Gathering/Donations/Decorating Lead (one person)
 - c) Spring Clean-Up Activity Lead
 - d) Annual Plantings Activity Lead
 - e) Summer Watering and Weeding Activity Lead
- 3) The **Community Outreach Chair** shall be responsible for identifying activities, programs and projects related to the purposes of the Club. The following Committee Leads shall report to the Community Outreach Chair: Junior Liaison, Library Liaison and Scholarships/Camperships.
- 4) The **Communications Chair** shall gather information about Club activities and distribute it throughout the year as requested by the President and Standing Committee Chairs. His/her objective is to coordinate information sharing across Club emails, website, social media, and publicity. Leads of the Publicity and Social Media Committees, as well as the Webmaster and VSP Administrators, shall report to the Communications Chair.
- 5) The **Membership Committee Chair** shall play a critical role in the Club's efforts to recruit new members, maintain a robust program for facilitating the induction of new members, and assist with the transitioning of existing members to a different membership classification, when applicable. Specifically, the Membership Chair shall:
- a) Choose no more than four members for the committee, not to include members of the Executive Committee.
 - b) Coordinate all matters pertaining to membership.
 - c) Notify new members of their admission to the Club and keep the Board informed of all new member additions, changes, and profiles.
 - d) Maintain a list, in order of receipt, of prospective members, their membership sponsor and their post-acceptance Mentor.
 - e) Maintain a file of completed applications for future reference.
 - f) Convene an informal meeting with prospective members, their Membership Sponsors and at least one officer of the Club at which time the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures of the Club should be presented and reviewed with the candidate.

- g) Collaborate with the Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer to maintain a current membership roster and communicate membership information to the Webmaster and the Volunteer Scheduler Pro (VSP) Administrators.
- h) Inform the Board of all written requests for change in membership status. All such requests must be approved by the Board.
- i) Refer to the President all written requests by members to waive participation in specific activities. All such requests will be considered confidential and managed between the Membership Chair and the Club President.
- j) Assist with the selection and assignment of Mentors for new members and ensure that all Mentors are aware of their accountabilities, which shall include:
 - Providing guidance, advice, feedback, and support to the mentee (new member) as he/she acclimates to Club membership.
 - Serving as a resource to the mentee as he/she participates in Club activities throughout the first year of membership by helping him/her understand how to use the Club Website and the VSP scheduling system.
 - Encouraging the mentee to participate in the horticulture activities, including field trips, workshops, and “spotlight on horticulture” displays at EGC General Business Meetings.
 - Reaching out and contacting the mentee periodically to answer questions and introduce her/him to other Club members.
 - Accompanying the mentee to Club activities whenever possible to maintain a “personal, and welcoming experience” for the new member during the first year of membership.

e.D. DUTIES OF COMMITTEE LEADS

All Committee Leads shall select their own committee members and are encouraged to begin planning for their term of office as soon as they are appointed. Committee Leads shall submit a preliminary budget for planned activities prior to the Annual Budget Committee meeting. No committee shall exceed its budget without prior approval of the Board of Directors (BOD). Any expenditure from the category “Discretionary Fund” must have prior approval of the BOD. Each Lead shall keep a current written list of his/her committee’s duties so subsequent Leads are fully cognizant of their responsibilities.

COMMITTEE LEADS: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES *(Listed in alphabetical order.)*

- 1)** The **Conservation Committee Lead** shall foster an interest in all phases of conservation, both local and national, and present programs when requested. The Lead shall actively work for the preservation of the environment and shall keep Garden Club members informed of pending legislation and local issues. The Conservation Lead reports to the

Second Vice-President.

- 2) The Garlic Salt Committee Co-Leads** shall arrange and oversee the production and distribution of all garlic salt. The Co-Leads will arrange dates and place of production in coordination with the appropriate parties. The Co-Leads are responsible for purchasing the ingredients and materials used in production and delivering the garlic salt to be stored. Co-Leads will conduct physical inventories of filled jars and unused supplies at least three times a year: before new production, fiscal year-end and after May Market. The Garlic Salt Leads shall work with both the VSP Scheduling Administrator and the Webmaster to coordinate the publication of timely and accurate information. The Garlic Salt Production Co-Leads report to the Assistant Treasurer.
- 3) The Horticulture Committee Lead** shall stimulate an interest in horticulture and flower arranging, present pertinent workshops and arrange educational trips. The Lead shall also keep the membership informed of upcoming horticultural events and is responsible for the “Spotlight on Horticulture” topics and maintaining points for the President’s Award trophy (*section III.6, below*). The Lead may also designate a temporary project team to work on short-term horticultural projects on behalf of the Club, under the approval of the Board of Directors. The Horticulture Lead shall work with both the VSP Scheduling Administrator and the Webmaster to coordinate the publication of timely and accurate information. The Horticulture Lead reports to the Second Vice-President.
- 4) The Hospitality Committee Lead** shall consult with the President when making Hospitality assignments, guide monthly Hospitality Committee members and store the equipment. The Lead shall also be responsible for the September Annual Meeting, Year End Holiday party and the May Market party. The Hospitality Lead shall work with both the VSP Scheduling Administrator and the Webmaster to coordinate the publication of timely and accurate information. The Hospitality Lead reports to the Club Services Chair.
- 5) The Junior Activities Committee Lead** shall introduce subjects through the local schools and libraries pertaining to ecology, gardening and flower arranging with the objective of educating children to appreciate and care for the earth. The Junior Activities Lead reports to the Community Outreach Chair.
- 6) The Library Committee Lead** shall work with the staff of the Essex and Ivoryton Libraries to identify programs and projects for the general public that are related to the purpose of the Club. The Library Lead reports to the Community Outreach Chair.
- 7) The Library Flowers Lead** shall ensure the weekly installation of flower arrangements at the Essex Library. Member assignments shall be posted in a timely manner and conveyed on both the Club Website and through the Club’s Volunteer Scheduler Pro

(VSP) calendar. The Library Flowers Lead shall work with both the VSP Scheduling Administrator and the Webmaster to coordinate the publication of timely and accurate information. The Library Flowers Lead reports to the Club Services Lead.

- 8) The **Program Committee Lead** is responsible for the coordination and contracting of programs and venues for each monthly Business Meeting. For Board meetings, s/he shall reserve an appropriate venue. The Program Committee plans programs for the membership year based on identified interests (e.g., conservation, horticulture, floral design, etc...). The Program Lead shall work with both the VSP Scheduling Administrator and the Webmaster to coordinate the publication of timely and accurate information. The Program Lead reports to the Second Vice-President.

- 9) The **Publicity Committee Lead** shall manage all publicity and keep a record of all Club activities and shall hand these records over to the Historian at the end of the current President's term. The Publicity Lead reports to the Communications Chair.

- 10) The **Scholarship/Campership Committee Lead** shall be responsible for publicizing and awarding scholarships and camperships.

- a. **Scholarships** will be awarded to qualified college and graduate school applicants or continuing students who are residents of Centerbrook, Essex or Ivoryton, who are pursuing studies related to the environment. These students must have a "B" or better average and be accepted at an accredited two-year or four-year institution of higher learning. Fields of study may include environmental studies such as: Earth & Environmental Science, Ecology, Environmental Engineering, Environmental Humanities, Environmental Justice, Environmental Law & Public Policy, Environmental Toxicology, Forestry, Geology, Horticulture, Renewable Energy or Urban Ecology. Closely related subjects may also apply, including Agriculture, Natural Resources, Biology, Land Conservation, Landscape Design, Nursery Management, and other fields that the Committee deems appropriate from time to time. Additionally, students enrolled in programs focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) will also be considered, as these competencies are critical for combating the effects of climate change and preserving the planet. Applicants in any field of study or intended major may also apply, as long as the student has demonstrated commitment to contributing to, preserving and enhancing the environment and intends to use their educational experience to further develop that commitment. The Essex Garden Club, through its scholarship program, promotes and supports educational experiences to help the next generation appreciate and preserve our environment.

b. **Camperships** will be awarded to elementary and middle school students from Centerbrook, Essex and Ivoryton. Awardees will be selected by Essex school specialists to attend nature, conservation, and environmental camp at either the Incarnation Center, Essex Parks and Recreation Commission camp or other local camp, as deemed appropriate by committee members and approved by the Board of Directors.

11) The **Social Media Lead** shall be responsible for maintaining the Club's presence on Facebook and other media, as appropriate. The Social Media Lead reports to the Communications Chair.

12) The **Volunteer Scheduler Pro (VSP) Lead Administrator** shall be responsible for assisting the other VSP Administrators in maintaining the VSP membership database, developing and monitoring the seasonal quarterly electronic calendars for scheduling Club activities (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer), and overseeing all functions of the VSP database operations as assigned by the Lead VSP Administrator. There shall be four (4) Board-appointed VSP Administrators to ensure seamless implementation and monitoring of Club activities posted on the VSP calendar. The VSP Administrators shall coordinate management of the VSP database with the Webmaster's management of the Club website. The VSP Lead shall work with all activity Leads to achieve timely and accurate scheduling of Club events. The Lead VSP Administrator reports to the Club Activities Chair.

13) The **Website Committee Lead (Webmaster)** shall manage all content on the Club website, coordinating with all other committee Leads as needed to keep content current. The Webmaster reports to the Communications Chair collaborates with the Club Activities Chair and the Lead VSP Administrator.

E. INDEPENDENT COMMITTEES: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The **May Market Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs)** shall be responsible for the management of all May Market committees and delegation or execution of all non-committee responsibilities. This Committee is independent of specific oversight and interacts directly with the Treasurer for monetary needs. The Co-Chairs shall submit a preliminary budget for the following year's May Market prior to the annual budget committee meeting.

2) The **Nominating Committee Lead** shall choose no more than four club members who hold no elective offices, one of whom shall be a past President. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates to fill all elective offices. The slate shall be read to

the club by the Nominating Lead at the March General Business Meeting and voted on at the April General Business Meeting. The Nominating Lead shall notify the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut (FGCCT), Inc. of the incoming Officer Slate, including Officer contact information, by August 1st each year. The incoming Officer Slate shall be sent to the FGCCT Secretary.

- 3) The **Parliamentarian** shall assist the President with matters of parliamentary procedure following the current Roberts Rules of Order. S/he shall give procedural opinions when requested and shall interpret the Bylaws at Board of Director and General Business Meetings. The Board of Directors shall make rulings.

III. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

1) General Member Benefits: All classes of membership are entitled to enjoy the benefits of being a member, including all educational programs, field trips, workshops, general business meetings and programs, and special events. Note that while all programs accompanying General Business meetings are free to members, additional fees may apply to other events.

2) Membership Dues: Dues are payable upon approval of membership unless the member joins after April 1st. Thereafter, dues are payable annually by September 30th for the current fiscal year and shall be considered in arrears as of November 30th [*ref Bylaws VIII.2*]

3) Leave of Absence: Upon receipt of a written request for a leave of absence, the Executive Committee may grant leave in excess of three consecutive months up to one year. Any member taking a leave during their first two years of membership will be responsible for completing new member requirements upon their return. Membership dues are not affected by a leave of absence and are still payable by the established date.

4) A "Member in Good Standing" is defined as one who has: a) Dues paid to date; and b) Met all membership class requirements, per report of Activity Chairs/Leads and VSP.

5) "Spotlight on Horticulture": Participation in the monthly "Spotlight on Horticulture" is strongly recommended for all membership classifications.

6) President's Award: All members are eligible for the "President's Award" trophy, which is given annually to the member with the most participation points (e.g., in monthly Spotlight on Horticulture displays, field trips, workshops and flower shows accrued through the preceding year.

7) Active Member Waiver for Specific Activities: Active members needing to be excused for health and/or personal reasons from performing a required activity for Active Members shall seek to obtain a *special waiver* from the particular activity(ies) that would compromise his/her health or safety. Requests to obtain a waiver shall be made in writing to the Club President and shall be approved by the Executive Board. Waiver approval may be conditional on the Member agreeing to perform an alternate activity (for example, an additional assignment to donate Library Flowers or to serve on a Hospitality Team). Approved waivers shall be documented and tracked in the member's file in the VSP database (*Note: This is only a technical adjustment to the database in order to keep VSP from scheduling that member for waived activities*). All waivers will be reviewed on an annual basis, must be resubmitted for approval on an annual basis, and are entirely confidential.

IV. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

- 1) **Individuals or organizations requesting funds or services** from the Club shall do so in writing. Requests shall be submitted to the President for consideration by the Board of Directors.
- 2) The Club shall confine its **donations of funds or services** to support Club purposes, as stated in the Bylaws, Article II.
- 3) **Board meeting attendance** is limited to Officers, current Board Members, and to members or guests by invitation from the President.
- 4) **Agreements between the Club and other community organizations** must be presented in writing and approved by the Board of Directors. Copies of all final agreements shall be distributed to all involved parties.