

COMMUNITY GARDEN AT MITCHELL PARK

'DRAFT' BY-LAWS

April 24, 2009

Article I – Name and Structure

The name of this organization shall be "Mitchell Park Community Garden Committee" (MPCGC). This association is formed as an activity committee of the Mitchell Park West Neighborhood Association.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of MPCGC is to promote, create, and maintain community and home gardening in Mitchell Park, and to encourage community involvement in the betterment of the community, while providing members with the joys of gardening.

Article III – Membership and Dues

1. A membership is for a single household.
2. Membership shall be available to any household that agrees to subscribe to the By-Laws of MPCGC.
3. Memberships shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each year, but members may join at any time during the year. Rental fees are \$(insert agreed amount here) per year, prorated monthly, and are to be paid by December 31 for continuing members. Additional parcels may be rented at a reduced rate of \$(insert agreed amount here) per year, also eligible to be prorated. A thirty day grace period is granted on membership renewal. If rental fees and completed membership forms are not received by the end of the grace period, then the member shall lose their membership and all Mitchell Park Community Garden privileges.
4. Each membership shall be entitled to one vote in matters concerning revisions to the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, or other issues put before the general membership of MPCGC for approval.

Article IV – Elections and Officers

1. Elections of Directors shall be held annually in April's general meeting by secret ballot, with each membership having one vote for each elected office.
2. A member who wishes to hold a Director position may submit a nomination form to the current Board of Directors. Nomination forms shall be sent out on March 1st to all members. Nomination forms can be presented at the March or April general meeting. The deadline for submitting nominations is the April general meeting.
3. The Board of Directors (Directors) shall consist of a maximum of seven Directors. Directors shall include the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and up to three additional positions as deemed necessary by the Directors. The members shall individually elect the Directors from the membership of MPCGC.
4. Directors shall perform the duties usually connected with such offices and shall perform other duties as the Directors may specify.
5. Vacancies in any seat shall be filled for the un-expired term by appointment of the Directors within thirty days.
6. Directors may establish and abolish standing and special committees.

Article V – Meetings

1. General meetings shall be held monthly according to a schedule at a place and time determined by the Directors.

2. Directors shall hold a Board Meeting within two weeks prior to any regularly scheduled general meeting.
3. Official decisions shall require only a simple majority of the Directors present, at any board meeting, as long as a quorum of a majority of the Directors is present.
4. At general meetings, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the members present. When the place and time of a general meeting is announced to the members with at least three weeks prior notice, no fixed quorum is required. When less than three weeks notice is given, a quorum shall consist of at least one-third of the eligible voting membership.

Article VI – Amendments

These By-Laws and the Rules and Regulations of the Mitchell Park Community Garden may be amended at any general meeting, when approved by two thirds of the members present. Prior to the vote, notice of the changes, along with a written copy of the changes, shall be given to the members. This must be done a minimum of two weeks before the meeting that precedes the meeting at which the vote is taken. The changes will be read to the members at both of these meetings.

No amendment of the By-Laws shall become effective until two weeks after ratification by the Board of Trustees of the Community Foundation for Mitchell Park. Amendments to the Rules and Regulation of the Mitchell Park Community Garden are subject to approval of the Park District.

Article VII – Standing Rules

1. All checks disbursed by the Treasurer shall require two signatures: President and Treasurer or other persons authorized by the Board.
2. All expenses shall be pre-approved by the Directors. Receipts shall be submitted for any reimbursement.
3. An auditor appointed by the President shall audit the accounts of the Mitchell Park Community Garden annually or whenever directed by a majority vote of the Directors.
4. All records of the MPCGC shall be available to the Community of Mitchell Park.

Other ideas to include in the aforementioned by-laws:

Gardening hours will be dawn to dusk on Monday through Saturday and 1PM to dusk on Sundays.

Plots must have at least three planted rows by May 15 (weather permitting) of the year or be forfeited to someone on the waiting list.

Plot holders must attend a meeting at the beginning of the year (April 2, 2009 at the YMCA at 7:00 PM) and at the end of the growing season (around Oct. 31, 2009).

Only plants listed under rules and regulations will be approved for planting.

Plot holders promise to devote at least 1-2 hours per week to their own plots and to the overall community garden throughout the growing season.

All paths and plots must be kept free of trash, weeds, etc., by the plot holders. Compost piles will be marked and available for plot holders.

No stealing of anything is permitted. Should it become known that you have taken anything: vegetables, tools, hose, plants or anything else, you will lose your plot immediately.

Crops must be harvested once they are mature. If you do not feel you can use all of harvest, items will be given away or sold for the food pantry at the local farmer's market on each Saturday during the growing season. Please let your garden coordinator know if you have more than you can use.

If you want someone to work your plot or pick your vegetables when you are sick or away, give that person a signed note.

All plots will be inspected three times during the growing season. Plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do not meet the rules and regulations will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of the plot.

Participants are encouraged to give a small portion of their harvest or of their time to the food pantry.

Any rules to be added to these by-laws must be approved by a majority of the participating gardeners.

All participants must sign the RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LEGAL LIABILITY form.

Any conflicts among gardeners will be referred by the coordinators of the garden.

"We the undersigned members of the (name) garden group hereby agree to hold harmless (name owner) from and against any damage, loss, liability, claim, demand, suit, cost and expense directly or indirectly resulting from, arising out of or in connection with the use of the (name) garden by the garden group, its successors, assigns, employees, agents and invites.

I understand all these rules and regulations and promise to follow them.

Signature of the Gardener_____

Date _____

Signature of the Coordinator_____

Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and Memo of Understanding will be returned to applicant once application is approved before the date meeting at the garden