



Constitution & Bylaws

PATIO PLANTERS, GARDEN CLUB OF THE VIEUX CARRE

PURPOSES:

Patio Planters members shall strive to achieve the following purposes in a spirit of service, informal fun and friendliness. Controversial matters such as politics, etc., are to be avoided.

1. Promoting certain civic events conducive to the welfare and beautification of the Vieux Carré, mainly from a horticultural point of view. The primary civic event sponsored shall be "Caroling in Jackson Square."
2. Meeting regularly throughout the year for the friendly exchange of ideas concerning the special problems of gardening in patios and on balconies.
3. Exchange of plants.
4. Mutual assistance in executing patio and balcony garden projects.
5. Providing charitable donations and services to Board-designated projects and service organizations of the Vieux Carré.

MEETINGS:

1. General Membership meetings, announcements of which must be mailed to all qualified members at least ten days in advance, shall be held the first Wednesday of each month, unless the Board votes to eliminate or re-schedule any particular meeting from the schedule. No quorum is required to conduct business at a General Meeting.
2. Board meetings shall be held:
 - a. As required in the month of February and at least every two months thereafter.
 - b. At the discretion of the President
 - c. By the request of a majority of the Board or
 - d. At the insistence of a majority of the membership present at a General Meeting.
3. A quorum, consisting of a majority of the Board Members or their proxies, is required to conduct business at a Board Meeting.
4. The highest officer present assumes the Chair at meetings. The Chair does not vote except at annual elections, but may cast a deciding vote in the event of a tie.

MEMBERSHIP AND QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Regular Membership is restricted to:
 - a. Residents of the Vieux Carré
 - b. Non-residents of the Vieux Carré who own or rent property in the Vieux Carré
 - c. Former members who have moved out of the Vieux Carré but maintained uninterrupted interest and membership in Patio Planters
2. An applicant becomes a Regular Member, subject to approval of a majority of the Board, upon completing the membership application and submitting the same with membership dues to the Membership Chair or Secretary
3. Honorary Membership may be conferred on special benefactors of Patio Planters for one year with no membership fee required, provided that the Board gives assent by majority vote
4. Friends of Patio Planters are those who maintain an interest in supporting the goals and activities of Patio Planters, but, by virtue of their place of residence, do not meet regular membership qualifications. These subscribing supporters will receive all the benefits of Patio Planters Regular Membership, but they shall be neither voting members, nor eligible to serve on the Board. Membership to the Friends of Patio Planters may be approved, upon application and payment of regular dues to the Membership Chair, by a majority vote of the Board at a Board meeting.

THE BOARD:

The Board shall consist of nine members. All are eligible to vote at Board meetings, except for certain restrictions placed on the Chair, as stated in Meetings, part 4.

1. Seven shall be elected
2. One shall be appointed by the President
3. The immediate past President shall serve as a member of the Board for the single term following his/her presidency

ELECTION OF THE BOARD:

The seven Board members to be elected shall be chosen annually at the General Meeting in February by secret ballot, as follows:

1. The President shall choose a committee of three non-Board members, subject to Board confirmation, to nominate candidates for the Board. That committee shall announce those candidates for the Board at the General Meeting in January. If at least seven nominations are not announced, the Chair of the meeting shall supply the additional names to bring the number to seven. The Chair shall also call for nominations from the floor.
2. A nominee's spouse may not also be a candidate for the Board in the same year.
3. Notice for the February meeting, including a ballot containing the names of all candidates must be mailed to all qualified members so that they may come to the meeting prepared to elect seven Board members by a single secret ballot. Members may submit ballots by mail as directed in the February meeting notice, or may vote by secret ballot in person at the meeting. Ballots submitted by mail but not received by the date of the February meeting will be considered invalid and will not be counted.

4. A special committee of three non-Board members, appointed by the President, shall tabulate the votes in a room apart while the February Meeting is in progress and announce the results at the end of the meeting.
5. The seven candidates receiving the most votes shall be declared elected to the Board. The newly elected Board shall assume authority immediately after the February General Meeting. Within ten days after the election, the past President shall call a Board meeting, at which meeting the new Board shall elect from among themselves a President, Vice-President, a Treasurer and a Secretary, listed in order of rank. The new President shall name the single appointee to the Board prior to the next General Meeting in March. The new roster must be made known to the members in the announcement for the March General Meeting.

DUTIES OF THE BOARD:

The Board shall have the following powers:

1. To make decisions on matters of policy.
2. To plan programs for meetings and special projects and events in harmony with the organization's purposes.
3. To adopt an annual budget and methods of raising funds as needed.
4. To authorize expenditures. Funds must be kept in bank accounts for Patio Planters with the provision that checks drawn shall be required to have the signature of at least two of the four elected officers.
5. The President shall appoint Chairs of committees, subject to the confirmation of the Board, including Membership Chair and Program Chair, which latter two must be Board members. Other Chairs need not be members of the Board.
6. If a vacancy occurs in the office of the President, the Vice-President becomes President and the Board shall promptly elect a new Vice-President from the Board or membership-at-large for the unexpired term of the predecessor. As other vacancies occur on the Board, the President shall promptly appoint new officers or members of the Board, subject to the confirmation of the Board, for the unexpired terms.

METHOD OF AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS:

There are two requisites for amending this instrument:

1. Approval by two-thirds of the Board, and
2. Approval by two-thirds of the members present at a Regular Meeting.

It is further required that copies of the proposed changes be mailed to all qualified members ten days in advance of said meeting.