

Dear Members:

The committee to revise the site rules and bylaws of Sunshine Community Garden and the Community Garden Initiative of Central Texas met over a period of several months and has produced two documents that will be presented to the membership to be voted upon. Following is a summary of the changes to to the Site Rules and some of our reasoning behind these changes. Generally the revisions were to clarify our roles on this property so generously offered to us by TSBVI. We are allowed to garden here now but must keep in mind that we need to remain the best of neighbors to the school and the most desired of options available for the use of this land.

The committee and members of the Board will be holding meetings in order for members to ask questions. The meetings will be announced in the Weeder and will be held at the Garden. We want to offer a variety of methods for members to voice their concerns and for the committee to clarify the changes if necessary.

Bylaw amendments can only be adopted after a vote of the entire membership. Revised Site Rules are in effect after the Board of Directors voted to adopt them but these changes need to be ratified to remain in effect past our annual meeting on May 31.

When these changes are presented to the members, there will be a series of points on which to vote yes or no.

The site rules were rearranged but cover the same topics. The first revision was the description of our garden as being obligated to TSBVI, to abide by their rules and to be mindful of our neighbors, our fellow gardeners.

Two other changes to make the documents more uniform were to always refer to us as members rather than gardeners. Also, when the phrase "forfeiture of the plot" was used, we changed it to read "termination of membership." These are not changes in meaning but rather clarifications and some uniformity.

In the body of the Site Rules, you will find some items starred. At the end of the document, it is noted that those items are mandated by our agreement with TSBVI. Those starred items will not be considered in the voting process but will become part of the Site Rules independent of the outcome on the other issues.

The following items are presented to be voted upon:

1. Maximum to be assigned: 400 square feet. We follow that now since we always have so many on the waiting list. This is to make it official.
2. Quarter plot fees: Year long renewal fee decreased to \$35 from \$40. This reflects the year renewal fee already offered to those members with half or full plots.

3. Service hour requirement: The change is to increase the number of hours and also to count maintenance of the common area as counting toward the required service hours. Members assigned a full plot would have their requirements increased to 8 hours per season, half plot and quarter plot increased to 4 hours per season. These two points are linked and the membership will be able to vote yes or no on these changes.

4. TSBVI service hour requirement: Change to work the one hour/plot or be charged \$50 for that hour. Presently, the Site Rules state that this hour is not optional but must be served. This change is a way to encourage each member to do their hour dedicated to TSBVI but if there is some reason it cannot be done, the member will be charged this additional fee instead of having their membership terminated.

5. Plot compliance: Added to the definition that a member is responsible for maintaining two feet beyond the member's plot as part of staying in compliance. This keeps the immediate area around each of our plots under our control but also mandates that we keep it trimmed, free of obstacles and debris.

6. Procedure when a plot is out of compliance: Changes were made to simplify and clarify the process. The President will send an email, a letter and a certified letter all on the same day to the member assigned the non-compliant plot. That notification will explain that the member has 21 days to bring the plot into compliance or have their membership terminated. This eliminates a second letter notifying the member of the termination and also eliminates an additional 10 days before the plot can be reassigned. We have a long waiting list and the additional 10 days can now be time that the plot is worked.

Please understand that this process will only start after the member has been contacted about the condition of the assigned plot. A member will not be surprised if he/she receives this email/letter/certified letter.

7. Rules: Again, we will not be voting on the starred items. Changes include the addition of e-cigarettes to the prohibited items. Number 4 under Rules is from the agreement with TSBVI. It is there to make it mandatory that our garden is not used for storage but rather a garden.

Number 9 deals with watering. Unattended watering will still be allowed if the member is using soaker hoses left at low pressure for up to 3 hours at a time. Neither water sprinklers nor water timers will be allowed. Water sprinklers allow for more evaporation than other methods of watering.

This item will be up for a vote before the Board and Membership.

8. Common Areas: We redefined the common area. If the vote passes to "increase the service hours/count work in the common area as service hours" then this new definition will go into effect as well. The common areas are **anything** not assigned to a member. That includes the buildings and the flower gardens we all enjoy to name just two.

Those are the major changes and the ones we are to vote to accept or not. We apologize for the length of this letter but it is important that you know the committee worked long and hard to make some changes that would benefit all at the garden. Please join us at the meetings to discuss the changes before the vote. They will be well advertised.

Thank you

Bylaws and Site Rules Revisions Committee.