

2024

Pitt Meadows Community Garden Society Constitution and Bylaws



Come and grow with us!

NAME: **Pitt Meadows Community Garden Society (PMCG Meadows Society Constitution)**

The name of the Society is: **Pitt Meadows Community Garden Society (PMCG)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Society is to develop The Pitt Meadows Community Garden (PMCG) for the membership under the City of Pitt Meadows.

In line with the goals of the Park, Recreation and Culture Department, the Pitt Meadows Community Garden will promote and support a healthy, safe, and sustainable community which enhances the health & well-being of individuals, families, and the Community as a whole by:

- Furnishing a valuable physical, social & recreational activity.
- Offering positive multi-generational & multi-cultural contacts.
- Contributing to food self-sufficiency and security.
- Enriching the aesthetic value of the community (e.g., beautifying the neighborhood).
- Protecting and using agricultural land.
- Allowing economical food production; and
- Strengthening our relationships to nature and to one another.

Affiliation and Membership

When you become a member (by renting a plot) of the Pitt Meadows Community Garden you have an opportunity and an obligation to be actively involved in the garden.

Membership is for a period of one year from January 1st to December 31st.

Renewal of plot rental is January 1st with a grace period for returning member to February 15th at which time the plot becomes "Available".

Meetings

The Annual General Meeting of the society shall be held in the month of *December* of each year. The society Board of Directors will determine the date, time, and location of the meeting. Fourteen (14) days' notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to each member. Notice will be sent to the last known e-mailing address of each member for the past year. The President will have sent to the last known e-mailing address of each member of the past year any proposed amendments to the Constitution and the agenda. The Treasurer will have sent to the last known e-mailing address of each member of the past year a copy of an interim financial report at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Extraordinary General Meetings may be convened at the discretion of the President. All members will be duly notified at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting date. The President, at the written request of 10% or more of the members, shall convene Extraordinary General Meetings within twenty-one (21) days after receipt of such written

request (which shall include any proposed amendments to the Constitution or Rules and Regulations), the society's Secretary shall give fourteen (14) days' notice of such a meeting to each member.

A quorum shall be a simple majority of the association's membership. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings. In case of conflict, the Constitution, Rules, and Regulations, of the association shall have precedence over Robert's Rules of Order. Each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote per contract. Voting shall be by the show of hands. In exceptional situations a request for a secret ballot may be requested by the membership or by the President. In such instances a simple majority (50% plus 1) vote will be required to decide the necessity to conduct a secret ballot. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

The order of business at all Society meetings shall be:

- a. Roll Call (Sign In)
- b. Minutes
- c. Executive Report
- d. Treasurer's Report
- e. Other Reports
- f. Correspondence
- g. Unfinished Business
- h. Consideration of Amendments to the Constitution
- i. Elections
- j. New Business
- k. Adjournment

Elections

1. The Directors shall be elected by a majority vote at the Annual General Meeting (Max of 10, Min of 5).
2. Persons nominated for elected positions to the Board of Directors of the society who are not present at the Annual General Meeting, must signify in writing, prior to their nomination, their willingness to stand for election.
3. A Director may be removed from office, at a General Meeting, on a motion supported by two-thirds of the association membership in good standing.
4. Any member of the Board of Directors absenting them self without cause from three (3) consecutive meetings or willfully neglecting his duties on the Board of Directors shall be deemed to have forfeited their office as a director of the society.
5. The Board of Directors may fill, on an interim basis, any vacancies that may occur on the society Board of Directors by reason of resignation or termination. An interim director shall hold office only until the next Annual General Meeting.
6. Life Members – Non-Voting (a) Life membership shall be available only to individuals who have rendered valuable service to the PMCG and have been accepted for Life Membership by recommendation of the Board of Directors to the members and acceptance by the voting members by resolution at a meeting of the members.

Powers of Executive

1. The elected Board of Directors of the society shall appoint a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, Maintenance Director, and directors at large will undertake various portfolios.
2. The Board of Directors shall have the power to suspend or expel any member who has neglected to pay its fees or who has not respected the by-laws and general rules of the Society. The decision of the Board of Directors may be appealed.
3. The Board of Directors may approve payment of expenses, relating to the Society's business, incurred by the Board of Directors or society delegates.
4. The Board of Directors may, from time to time, institute temporary rules and regulations covering specific cases not covered in the Constitution, Rules, and Regulations. However, the membership must ratify the temporary rules and regulations at the next Annual General Meeting.
5. For the purpose of carrying out the objectives of the association, the Board of Directors raise or secure the payment of money in such manner as they see fit.

Welcome

A Community Garden provides its members valuable physical, mental, multi-cultural, social, and recreational opportunities. We believe Community Gardens should be supported by government funding similar to arts groups, sporting venues or recreational parks. We ask all members to promote government support and funding for your Community Garden in any contacts you have with our elected officials or other decision makers.

The Pitt Meadows Community Garden Society (PMCG) welcomes both residents of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge. Our prominent location on South Bonson Road across from the athletic fields entices people to visit the garden. It has become a destination for pedestrians and cyclists alike. The PMCG works with the Pitt Meadows Parks, Recreation and Culture Department to make our garden a place of enjoyment now and in the future for the citizens of Pitt Meadows.

The garden site currently has space for about two hundred garden plots. There are also fifteen raised beds for persons with physical limitations. There is a wheelchair accessible washroom and tool sheds on site. We also have a greenhouse available with limited space to gardeners.

We are a community garden, with plots assigned individually to gardeners who have rights to what they grow with the exception of items listed in the Bylaws, as well as full responsibility for their garden plot and the garden as a whole. Our goal is to preserve and share the community garden for now and in the future, so that as many families as possible have an opportunity to garden in their little patch of soil. Collectively we take care of the land, improving and maintaining the garden for future gardeners and future generations.

When you become a member of the Pitt Meadows Community Garden you have an opportunity and an obligation to be actively involved in the garden.

GOALS

In line with the goals of the Park, Recreation and Culture Department, the Pitt Meadows Community Garden will promote and support a healthy, safe, and sustainable community which enhances the health & well-being of individuals, families, and the Community as a whole by:

- Furnishing a valuable physical, social & recreational activity
- Offering positive multi-generational & multi-cultural contacts
- Improving livability in the community
- Contributing to food self-sufficiency and security
- Enriching the aesthetic value of the community (e.g., beautifying the neighborhood)
- Protecting and using agricultural land
- Allowing economical food production
- Strengthening our relationships to nature and to one another

COMMITMENT

Our garden members & the Board of Directors are actively committed to the Community Garden's success. We will strive to promote Pitt Meadows & the Community Garden at every opportunity. We commit to participating in the on-going day-to-day maintenance, as well as long-term planning and development of the garden as a whole for the benefit of the community.

Our goal has always been to allow for more members of our community to be able to community garden. This goal is the reason for the support we have received from the City of Pitt Meadows in their donation of land and money. Please note there are a number of current garden members with two plots. These members were grandfathered in from the original garden site. Should any members with two plots vacate their plots will be separated into two individual plots. New members are not allowed to have two plots.

One garden plot is assigned for one residential address, with the approval of the Board Membership Director.

Plots may not be registered to someone "in name only" while a friend or relative actually uses the plot and does most or all of the work.

COMMUNITY GARDEN AGREEMENT

Gardeners can officially garden at PMCG after reading the current Rules and Bylaws, reading, and signing the current PMCG Agreement and paying the annual fees, and damage deposit (one-time only fee). If the plot rental is not being renewed and left in good condition, the damage deposit will be returned. However, if the plot is not free off all unwanted materials and cleared, the deposit will not be returned and put towards the cost of removing and disposing of unwanted materials and garbage.

MEMBERSHIP

Garden members elect a Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting in the Spring to provide supervision, organization of the volunteers and other administration duties.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Keep the Membership Director informed of any changes to your contact information.
- You must attend the annual Garden Orientation.
- All plots are to be enclosed with a border of wood or landscape blocks (15x8) at least 6 inches in height and if you wish to have a walk area in your plot, it can be filled with gravel or mulch. All enclosures must be wood. The plot enclosure becomes part of the plot and if you give up the plot the enclosure and soil must remain.
- Work on your plot by May 1st.
- Maintain your plot and perimeter and provide organic weed control throughout the growing season.
- Arrange for someone to look after your plot if you are away or unable to tend your plot.
- Maintain the common garden areas.
- Ten (10) hours of GM&I Hours that must be recorded by logging hours electronically by emailing: *garden@pmcg.ca*.
- Participate in work parties and other garden activities.
- Attend the Annual General Meeting.
- Must obey the speed limit (5 km/hr.) in the garden. If a member is reported they will be warned, and a second warning would be a ban from bringing in a vehicle into the garden.

We are a non-smoking Public Space - please refrain from smoking in our Community Garden.

PLOT RENEWAL

Plots are due for renewal January 1st from year to year provided the plots have been maintained the previous season, the member is in good standing and are renewed by the plot renewal deadline. *Membership renewal will be completed online and paid for by e-transfer.*

You must indicate your wish to have a greenhouse space by filling out the greenhouse section of the contract. **It is your responsibility to renew your garden membership. We will NOT be chasing you to renew your plot.**

Members that had greenhouse space the previous year will have first choice to keep that space if they are in good standing. Members that did not have space the previous year but would like one, will be added to a "waiting list ". There will be a draw of those members on the waiting list after February 15th, for any available spaces that become available.

If do not need your space after you have completed your seed growing, it can be used by some else, but you will still have first choice the following year.

The deadline for renewal with payment of fees is February 15th of the current year. Plots that have not been renewed by this date will be reassigned.

GARDEN MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT HOURS (GM&I)

1. All members are required to participate in the on-going development and maintenance of the Pitt Meadows Community Garden. We want to ensure that we get necessary work completed, that work is shared equally and not left up to a few members.
2. Your garden membership obligates you to assist in garden activities by offering ten (10 hours/year). Garden Maintenance & Improvement Hours (GM&I Hours) must be recorded by logging hours electronically by emailing: **garden@pmcg.ca**.
3. Members who cannot provide *GM&I Hours* to the garden will be levied a fee of \$50 (10 hours x \$5/hour) on next year's renewal date.
4. Routine work party schedules will be announced periodically during the year, emailed to members, and posted on the website. Members who sign up for a work party or other activity must personally ensure their work hours are recorded by logging hours electronically by emailing: **garden@pmcg.ca**.
5. *GM&I Hour* examples include:
 - distributing bulk materials around the garden - assisting those members with physical limitations
 - cleaning the garden's washroom building
 - maintaining garden tools & shed
 - planting, weeding, or watering – perimeter fence border, paths, around buildings, etc
 - community projects (i.e., building raised beds, painting tool shed, community events)

GREENHOUSE RULES

1. You must indicate you wish to have a greenhouse space by filing out the Greenhouse part of Contract.
2. You must attend a Greenhouse orientation each calendar year.
3. You must utilize your greenhouse space by April 15th, or your greenhouse space will be assigned to another interested garden member.
4. If your greenhouse space is left unattended, you will be contacted by the Board of Directors and your space may be reassigned to another interested garden member.
5. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
6. No outside soil or plants are to be brought inside the greenhouse. Use only soil that is provided for greenhouse. Unless plants are from a Garden Nursery.
7. All pots and flats should be thoroughly cleaned prior to bringing them inside greenhouse to avoid contamination.
8. Do not adjust any of the heaters or thermostats in the greenhouse. Be careful of the heater, as it can get very hot.
9. Do not spray water near the heater, electrical outlets, or lights.
10. All pots must fit into designated greenhouse space.
11. No pesticides are to be used inside the greenhouse.
12. In the warm summer months, the greenhouse doors are to be kept open during the day.
13. Be sure the lights are off, and door is locked if you are leaving the garden after 7 pm.

SHARING THE GARDEN

Your Community Garden membership allows you to use the garden's tools and equipment in the garden sheds in your assigned plot.

- You should not remove or use in any way the property, plants or produce on any other plot
- At the discretion of the Board of Directors, abandoned plots will have produce donated to the Food Bank

SECURITY

1. We want to provide a safe and secure environment for people using the garden and prevent theft & vandalism of garden plants & property. Members are issued with a key-pad code for the garden's buildings and padlocks.
2. Our garden is open to the public, but our washroom facilities and buildings are for member's use only. There are washrooms located in the Athletic Park for public use.
3. The tool shed and kitchen doors are to be locked at all times. We ask that you open keypad door locks for your children and that you do not leave them unattended in the garden's buildings. All Children are to be supervised while they are in the garden.

*** * PLEASE DO NOT GIVE OUT KEYPAD OR LOCK CODES * ***

PLANTING

1. Members are allowed to produce food, flowers, native and ornamental plants, edible berries, and food perennials.
2. We require all members to make every effort to keep their plots weed free and, together with fellow members, maintain a weed free path on all sides of your plot and periodically weed the flower beds and fence line.
3. Garden plots should be weeded and cultivated by May 1st. This deadline exists so that the Board can identify abandoned plots and assign them to new members in time for the growing season. Additionally, we need to demonstrate that we are utilizing the land the City of Pitt Meadows generously provided us.
4. You must care for your plot regularly (weed, water, cultivate & harvest) throughout the growing season.
5. Bushes along the fence - for the benefit of members. Members are allowed to plant espalier fruit trees in their plots
6. We ask that you be cautious when planting the following invasive or hard-to-eradicate plant varieties in your plot (mint, oregano, marjoram, catnip, Jerusalem artichokes, horseradish, comfrey, blackberries, or raspberries). Plants on this list may not be planted in common areas of the garden, with the exception of raspberries for the living fence. In your own plot they require vigilance and must be controlled and must be pruned ever year.
7. Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) does not allow the planting of morning glory, periwinkle, goutweed, purple loosestrife, Lamium, or English ivy on public lands.
8. Ensure that plants do not grow into or shade neighboring plots or any common areas, i.e., walkways. If any plants are deemed to be growing out of control, we will attempt to contact you to clean them up, if we are unable to contact you, they will be removed from your plot.
9. Raspberries or grape vines must be planted at least 2 feet from the plot edges. They must be trellised and confined to ensure they do not overgrow other plots or common areas. They must be pruned within plot boundaries and kept below 7 feet. Trellis support construction must be no taller than 7 ' and pre-approved by the Board with accompanying drawings.

SOIL AMENDMENTS, MULCH & COMPOST

1. Organic amendments include leaves, wood chips, wood ash, grass clippings, coffee grounds, crushed eggshells, and peat moss. You must not use or compost animal products; they are very attractive to rodents and other vermin.
2. Members are allowed to install and maintain a suitable composter in their own plot.
3. Members are allowed to dump compostable plant material (Not plastic/wood/trash) beyond the south fence at the signed area. Members are asked to dump material to the right of the gate and as far back in the ditch possible, so as not to restrict the gate access.
4. From time to time, we arrange for bulk deliveries of garden and composted soil to be delivered to the garden. These are available to members at a per wheelbarrow cost.
5. If you wish to have bulk materials delivered, please pre-arrange with the Board of Directors.
6. We encourage gardeners to use mulch to conserve soil moisture. Types of acceptable materials are grass clippings, straw, leaves, peat moss, compost, corn stalks, fir bark, sawdust, cardboard, and newspaper.
7. Do not use hay, western red cedar bark mulch or gravel as mulch.

STRUCTURAL SAFETY

To be sure everyone has a safe and secure experience while in the garden, we must ensure all plots and common areas are in a safe condition.

1. All material, furniture and tools should be stored within plot boundaries.
2. Stored wood or structures should not have protruding nails, screws, re-bar etc... All re-bar used for holding border sides must have protected cap installed.
3. Stored wood, garden tools, etc. should not extend into pathways.
4. Any structure 4 feet or higher (particularly tomato covers) must be pre-approved by the Board of Directors. Submit construction drawings to the Board of Directors.
5. Corner posts to protect the plants from damage by dragged hoses, should not be over four feet above the ground.
6. Courtesy should be extended to fellow gardeners so as not to shade their plot with structures or plants.
7. Black plastic or plastic tarps can become nesting areas for voles, mice and rats and should not be stored in the garden. Doors, scrap metal etc., that are not appropriate for a garden environment, are not allowed.
8. Recycling of materials is supported, however, use of items such as discarded shipping pallets, rubber tires, screen doors, or scrap metals etc., that are not appropriate for a garden environment, are not allowed.
9. Cold frames should have a maximum height of 2 feet and coverage of 10 sq. ft. Glass, particularly old windows, is not allowed.
10. Plant and row covers should have a maximum height under 3 feet. Clear plastic covers should be of durable thickness to ensure they are windproof and will not tear. Row covers must be thoroughly secured. Use of corrugated fibreglass panels must be pre-approved by the Board.
11. Temporary seasonal supports, i.e., pole beans & peas, have no limit per plot, but must not exceed 2.3 metres (7 ft.) in height. Metal pole or supports must be manufacturers for garden uses and approved by the Board.

WEED, DISEASE & PEST CONTROL

We want to make every effort to use environmentally friendly gardening practices, allowing our garden harvest to be as close to “organically” grown as possible. We have many beneficial insects that visit us each year, plants that attract them and our own beehive, therefore:

1. Herbicides are prohibited for weed control in individual garden plots. We encourage members to use Safer’s®-type products.
2. Animal poisons are not to be used by individual members. However, the Director of Maintenance will place and maintain traps as needed.

MAINTENANCE

1. Ensure that nothing is stored on the pathways around your plot, that pathways are free of all weeds and that a plant’s shoots, roots, leaves or branches do not block access.
2. **We do not have garbage or recycling pick up at the garden. Members must dispose of their recycling/garbage at home.**
3. Garden members are required to make arrangements to maintain their plot when they are on vacation or absent due to illness, and unable to tend their plot.
4. At the end of the gardening season, most dead plants, rotting vegetables and fruits should be removed or composted, leaving your plot relatively clean to prevent disease and rodents.
5. Conserve water at all times. Taps must be turned off before leaving the garden. Drain the hose after turning the water off, this will release the pressure. Then returned the hose back to hose hanger coiled to ensure the life of the garden hose.
6. Soaker hoses or drip watering systems may not be permanently connected to the hose bib to water your plot.
7. Rain barrels with screens are permitted on your plot. Catching rainwater in other containers is not permitted. The water must not be allowed to stagnate.
8. When leaving the garden please clean and store all PMGC tools and equipment in the tool shed and ensure that the shed and garden washroom building are locked.
9. Community garden equipment & tools are not to be removed from the garden.
10. Contact a Board member if tools require maintenance or repair.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

We encourage the enjoyment of gardening as a family activity. We ask that you supervise children at all times and make sure they respect other gardeners & garden property.

Your pet is part of your family, and they are welcome in the garden as long as they are leashed, not allowed to wander onto or defecate in garden plots and, when necessary, their poop is scooped - by you.

COURTESY & COMMUNICATION

One of the main goals in community gardens is to work together or next to each other in relative harmony. Please be courteous in all interactions and work together to resolve any disagreements. Contact a Board of Directors member for guideline clarifications or plot delineation.

PARKING

1. Please do not park vehicles inside the garden, as other members arrive to load or unload, it can create a safety hazard as vehicles maneuver in our limited space.
2. Please use the street parking stalls outside the garden gates.

MEETINGS

Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Meetings are usually held once a month during the gardening season at 7 pm at various venues. Check with a Board member if you would like to attend. Only Board members have voting rights, but your input is greatly appreciated to assist in Board decisions. All Board of Director meeting minutes can be found on the PMCG website.

Every member has the right to make motions and vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Potential new members are welcome to attend the AGM.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. It is your responsibility to make sure the Board of Directors always has your current address, phone number and e-mail address.
2. In case of an extended absence (1 month or longer) please provide contact information for a substitute to manage issues regarding your plot if you are unavailable.
3. Any correspondence mailed/emailed to the current address on file is considered delivered.
4. We do not share your personal information with any other sources. We may from time to time send information via email which may be of general interest to our members, including our newsletter.

PAYING IT FORWARD

You are encouraged to support the Local Food bank by donating any excess food you have grown. Donations are to be placed in the designated Bins and will be delivered each week from the Community Garden to the Local Food Bank.

NONCOMPLIANCE

From time to time the Board may be required to deal with noncompliance issues regarding our Membership Agreement:

1. We expect all garden members to work together to resolve disagreements.
2. For noncompliance with our Membership Agreement, the Board of Directors will contact members via a phone call, email and or sign to PLEASE CONTACT MEMBERSHIP in their garden outlining the concern, listing steps to be taken to remedy the situation. Failure to contact the Pitt Meadows Community Garden Board within two weeks of the notice may result in the plot being forfeited and reassigned. Members losing their garden due to non-maintenance may apply for a new garden no sooner than the next year.
3. By way of example, there are several situations that may require the Board's involvement:
 - Plots appear unattended during the growing season with no notice being received from the gardener
 - Use of materials or structures that are not approved by the Board or are unsafe
 - Payments not received by required deadlines
 - Theft or any unlawful activity

GIVING UP YOUR MEMBERSHIP

If you wish to resign from your membership in the garden, we ask that you notify a member of the Board of Directors via email. The Board of Directors reserves the right to issue refunds. All PLOT BORDER enclosures (Wood or landscape blocks) and soil must remain as part of the plot and all other materials must be removed unless approved by the Maintenance Director.