

**Policy: Registration**

**Draft** September 12, 2022

The River Valley Area Community Gardens shall rent garden plots for non-commercial food production to people who live in the River Valley School District.

Residents outside the District shall be approved by the Board on an individual basis after all in District applications have been accepted and the waiting list has been emptied..

**Application / Registration for plots**

All prospective Gardeners shall complete a application / registration form

The Registrar shall keep copies of the application and the signed Gardeners Agreement.

All prospective Gardeners shall read the Gardeners Guidelines based on the policies of the RVACG and sign the Gardener's Agreement before a plot will be assigned by the Registrar.

Registration documents shall be distributed via mail, email or community distribution and returned to the Registrar.

Requests for Registration Forms for the upcoming gardening season shall be accepted at any time but will only be distributed after Board approval of the documents

Application forms shall be made available as soon as all documents have been reviewed for changes and approved by the Board. Target date for distribution of forms for the upcoming garden season shall be no later than October 31 and not earlier than August 1 of the current gardening season.

Registration for gardeners will remain open until mid-June or until all plots are rented for the current season.

The Registration Form, Gardener's Guidelines and Gardener's Agreement shall be reviewed and revised annually prior to being approved for distribution by the Board.

Donations shall be accepted from individuals, businesses or corporations to cover the fees of any families or individuals who are requesting a free plot or to cover gardening expenses..

Gardeners are not considered fully registered and assigned a plot until application forms have been completed, all pre-registration activities have been completed.

Gardeners after the 2022 season shall be limited to renting a maximum of 2 plots.

Gardeners with more than 2 plots rented prior to the 2023 season are grandfathered into renting those plots unless there are weed control issues.



## **Expectations of Gardeners**

It shall be expected that gardeners, their families, and guests shall follow the policies laid out within the Gardener Guidelines and the provisions in their signed Gardener's Agreement

The Gardeners Guidelines shall be a summation of any policies developed by the Board affecting the conduct of the Gardeners and the Gardens.

Gardeners shall be expected to participate in the maintenance of the garden or help with other activities promoting the Garden. Gardeners may help in the following ways:

- Volunteering to help maintain the grounds;
- Volunteering to help maintain the perennial gardens;
- Volunteering to help with fundraisers or special events;
- Volunteering to serve on the Board of Directors or on one of the standing committees.

It is expected that gardeners shall, as much as possible, use organic and/or sustainability garden techniques.

It is expected that gardeners shall provide at least part of the cardboard and newspapers to be used for mulch in their garden plots.

Gardeners shall be encouraged to supply their own tools and trellising equipment as much as possible.

## **Responsibilities of the Board**

The Board shall work with gardeners to ensure that they have a successful gardening season.

The Board shall be responsible for the maintenance of the irrigation system including providing hoses for each centralized irrigation post and water for the Gardens.

The Board shall be responsible for providing straw or marsh hay and some cardboard, newspapers for mulching

The Board shall provide some gardening tools for gardeners to use.

The Board shall provide tillers, wagons, push mowers and necessary large equipment to be used to maintain garden plots and the public areas

The Board may provide fertilizer, and organic insecticides for the gardeners to use.



### **Plot Fees (Separate policy ?)**

The Board shall determine plot fees on an annual basis. Fees shall be based on the estimated expenses and income from plot fees and fund raising activities,, fees of the surrounding community gardens, and the general income of the area.

Plot fees shall be paid to the RVACG and sent to the Registrar before a Gardener may work their plot unless other arrangements have been made.

The Board may decide to offer a discount for first year community gardeners.

### **Free plots Seperate Policy ?**

Free plots shall be made available if an individual or family resides in the River Valley School District and meets one of the following criteria :

- Unemployed
- Qualifies for Medicaid, SSI or Quest benefits or their equivalent, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or Food Share benefits, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) or W-2 Cash benefits
- Qualifies for free school lunch and/or breakfast programs
- Qualifies for Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Receives benefits from local area food pantries
- Disabled or elderly with limited income

Prospective gardeners shall make their qualifications known to the Registrar at the time of registration. Qualification requirements shall be listed on the Registration Form.

### **Liability**

The Gardener's Agreement includes the Waiver of Liability. Gardeners and their family, friends, and other guests, are responsible for their own actions when on the garden site.

The Waiver of Liability releases the RVACG and the Village of Spring Green, who owns the land, for any liability, damage, claim and loss of property or life that occurs in connection with use of the garden site or equipment by any gardeners or their guests.

### **Pre-Season Meeting**

All Gardeners, new and returning, shall be expected to attend the preseason Gardeners meeting which shall be scheduled between the 3rd Saturday in April and the 3rd Saturday in May.

### **Garden Basics Seminar series**

A seminar series instructing gardeners in gardening techniques shall be developed and held in the winter / spring prior to planting time.



### **Waiting List**

If all plots have been assigned, Gardeners applying for plots shall be placed on a waiting list.

Registrants placed on the waiting list from the prior growing season shall have priority for new plots before new registrants.

### **Vacations, Medical emergencies, etc.**

If a Gardener is going on a lengthy vacation or has a medical emergency, the Gardener should ask a neighboring Gardener or the Superintendent or Registrar for help maintaining the plot until the Gardener's return.

The Superintendent or Registrar may ask other Gardeners to help maintain the plot until the Gardener's return.

### **Forfeiture of Plot**

Plot forfeiture is a Gardener's intentional relinquishing of their rights to work that rented plot/s for the season.

If the Gardener or Gardeners responsible for a plot can no longer care for it, the Gardener/s shall notify a Board member of his/her/their intent to relinquish the plot.

The Gardener may contact any Board Member with their decision at any time and for any reason throughout the season

### **Abandonment of Plot**

An abandoned plot is a plot that does not appear as if it is being worked including planted or cared for.

Prior to declaring a plot as abandoned, the Board shall make every attempt to contact the Gardener responsible for the plot regarding the condition of the assigned plot beginning June 15.

The following steps will be used to determine if a plot shall be declared abandoned:

The Board President or another Board Member shall attempt to contact the Gardner at least three (3) times by telephone, email and by any other means listed on the Gardner's signed contract.

- Messages shall be left when making contact by phone
- The Gardner should be given adequate time to respond as determined by the Board.

If the Board is unable to make contact after 3 attempts and 3 weeks then the plot shall be declared abandoned. Starting June 15





### **Refund of Plot Fees**

If the plot has not been planted, a refund of plot fees is automatically granted.

The Board shall make a decision on refunding the plot fee on a case by case basis for abandonment.

### **Conflicts**

Conflicts between gardeners shall first be discussed between the gardeners.

If there is no resolution to the conflict, the Gardener with the complaint shall notify a Board Member.

To avoid conflicts with neighboring gardeners, Gardeners should

- Keep plants within their own allotments.
- Create a 1 foot border around their plot to allow for walking and plant spread.
- If any crop grows 4 feet in height or taller, the crop should be planted in the center of the plot to prevent shading another gardener's plot.
- Gardeners should not walk in or cross the plot of another gardener without that gardener's permission.
- Spreading crops such as squash, watermelons, cucumbers, etc. should be allocated enough space so as not to invade into other plots.

### **Vandalism and theft**

In order to prevent theft of personal tools or equipment, Gardeners shall have access to store tools, equipment, supplies in the mower shed or the locked Gardener's Shed or take them home after each visit.

Gardeners witnessing an unknown person in the Gardens may question that individual's intent.

Gardeners who witness an act of theft or vandalism should first contact the police and then a Board member.

### **Reclaimed Plots for Gardens need**

The ultimate authority of what each plot is used for is determined by the Board.

Therefore the Board has the right to reclaim a plot for a purpose for Garden projects or needs in the following year.. The displaced Gardener/s will receive another plot/s for the following year.

