

West
Newbury
Garden
Club

Operations Manual

Updated 2022

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Section 1. Purpose of Operations Manual

Purpose

The Operations Handbook has been established to document procedures for the club's activities, Executive Board's duties, and committee responsibilities. It is intended to help new members and new officers and directors understand their obligations and how to perform them.

Definitions

The **officers** of the club are the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary.

Executive Board is comprised of the club's officers and four (4) Directors.

Committee Chairs are club members who volunteer to lead the various club's committees. Although a committee chair may also be an officer serving on the Executive Board, the roles and responsibilities of the two functions are completely separate. A committee chair is not an officer unless he/she holds one of the offices named above.

Revision

The Executive Board and committee chairs will review the Operations Handbook annually. Any revisions that refer to policy must be consistent with the club's by-laws and approved by members at the annual meeting. Revisions that refer to procedure may be approved by the Executive Board. A member of the Executive Board or an active member appointed by the Executive Board will make the changes over the summer and will ensure the Operations Handbook is posted to the website by the September meeting.

Emergency Protocol

In the event of a medical emergency, the following procedures are to be followed.

- Call 978-363-1212 to obtain medical assistance.
- If a nurse or other medical staff is present, they will be asked to assist until further help available.
- The Club President or designee will follow up the next day.

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Section 2. West Newbury Garden Club Calendar of Events

Garden Club Meetings

The following table presents a general guideline of activities that occur monthly, either at regular garden club meetings or other venues.

Month	Event
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome back meeting and pot luck dinner • Collect dues for new year • Present new yearbook to all paying members • Introduce new officers and directors • Present outgoing President with thank you gift • New member reception
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program • Treasurer's report to club, if requested
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program • Sign up for decorating the Museum of Old Newbury in Newburyport
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual wreath making as a club program • Council on Aging Christmas decorations • Holiday Party • Donations for Pettingill House • Send in application for Art in Bloom if anyone is interested
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program • Sign up for Boston Flower Show
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program • Sign-up sheets for Plant Sale
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program • Finalize assignments for Plant Sale
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual meeting and pot luck dinner • Vote on new slate of officers and directors • Vote on any changes to by-laws • Sign-up for following year's committees and hospitality • Discuss and hold Annual Plant Sale • Plant town gardens prior to West Newbury Memorial Day celebration • Treasurer's report
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual plant swap if held • Final meeting of year • Treasurer's report

Section 3. West Newbury Garden Club Executive Board

Structure

The Executive Board shall consist of the officers and four directors.

An officer shall not service more than three (3) consecutive years in the same capacity with the exception of the Secretaries and Treasurer unless an exception is made by the Executive Board. Each director will serve a minimum of two (2) years, with the intent of electing two (2) new directors annually.

The retiring President shall automatically become a director.

Purpose

The Executive Board governs the affairs of the Club.

Meetings

The Executive Board meets monthly with the exception of December, January and July. Other meetings may be called by the President if required.

Responsibilities

Key responsibilities of the Executive Board include, but are not limited to the following:

- Overseeing the finances of the Club, including review and approval of expenditures, fund raising, and setting of dues for the fiscal year
- Reviewing and sanctioning all new or ongoing committees and activities
- Determining and administering policies and positions of the Club
- Considering proposed amendments to the by-laws for subsequent presentation to general membership
- Considering changes in the Operations Handbook
- Appointing an auditor
- Applying for Federation awards

Board Meeting Agendas and Timeline

The Executive Board meets from August to June. New officers and directors are invited to the June Executive Board meeting but their responsibilities do not start until the August meeting. The incoming President officiates at the August Executive Board meeting.

All board meetings include a treasurer's report, district and federation announcements and news, items to cover in the newsletter and membership update. Agendas are established by the President or 1st Vice President in the President's absence.

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The following table serves as a general monthly guideline of topics for the Executive Board to discuss.

Month	Event
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September garden club meeting and potluck • New member reception • Programs and committees • Yearbook status
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topsfield Fair • Fund raisers
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship amount
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum of Old Newbury Christmas decorations expenditure (The museum typically donates to the club to be used for decorations.) • Wreath making supplies • Art in Bloom, if a club member is interested in participating, expenditure
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boston Flower Show club visit • Plant Sale Chairperson(s)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art in Bloom club visit • Nominating Committee Chair • Changes to by-laws
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize changes to the by-laws • Plant Sale
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant sale • Summer Field Trips
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new Board members

Section 4. Officer Roles and Responsibilities

President

Generic responsibilities:

- Presides at all Executive Board meetings and West Newbury Garden Club meetings
- Represents the club at District Meetings, or if unable to attend, arranges for an alternate
- Responds to District requests as needed
- Communicates to club members all Federation events, District events, or other garden club events
- Represents the Club at community events as required
- Assists other Board members if requested
- Ensures timely appointment of Plant Sale Chair
- Reviews by-laws with the Board to determine if changes should be proposed
- Applies to use Town Hall and Annex with the Selectman. (Annually – June for following year)
- Obtains key to Town Hall for Executive Board meetings if meetings are held there
- Signs form PC of MA along with the Treasurer

1st Vice-President

- Assists the President. In the absence of the President, performs all the duties of the office.
- Serves as the Program Chairperson which entails the following duties:
 - a. Determines with the Board what the goals and budget parameters for the following year's program will be
 - b. Forms a committee to assist in the following:
 - i. Make contact with other clubs to find program reviews
 - ii. Attend GCFM Presenters Showcase in April
 - iii. Call potential presenters to determine availability and costs
 - iv. Meet together to pick best options
 - c. Presents the results to the Board for approval
 - d. Finalizes and sends contracts to the chosen presenters, making copies of the returns for the treasurer
 - e. Sends all program information to the yearbook coordinator
 - f. Checks with 1910 Town Clerk's Office regarding set-up and equipment in the Annex
 - g. Contacts presenter prior to meeting to give directions and any last minute information.
 - h. Introduces the presenter at the meeting and gives payment check
- Arranges Club field trips and off-site excursions
- Arranges December holiday decoration activities and holiday party

2nd Vice-President

- Serves as Chairperson of the Hospitality Committee
 - a. Establishes and maintains the Hospitality Committees for the year.
 - i. Provides support and technical assistance to the committees as needed

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- ii. Replenishes basic supplies (paper plates, cups, napkins) for club meetings and events. These supplies are kept in WNGC cabinets in the Annex
- iii. Provides the set-up plans for the dinner meetings if requested
- iv. Helps coordinate with the Town the use of the Annex prior to the dinner meetings if requested
- Provides sign-up sheets at the May/June meetings for all committees for the upcoming year
 - a. Reviews committee sign-ups to ensure all members are serving on both a Hospitality committee or standing committee, unless the member is an Honorary or Associate member
 - b. Finalizes all Hospitality and standing Committees prior to publication of the annual yearbook

Treasurer

- Maintains fiduciary responsibility for the Club. In this capacity, he/she is responsible for the following:
 - a. Depositing club dues and any other monies received from dues and fundraising
 - b. Paying expenses and reimbursements for the Club's authorized expenditures, such as speaker contracts, invoices, or other reimbursable expenses. Appropriate document must be retained to support all payments.
 - c. Paying the scholarship directly to the individual recipients based on an authorizing letter from the Scholarship Committee
 - d. Maintaining accurate records of all financial transactions. Records must be kept up-to-date and bank statements balanced each month.
 - e. Providing an oral report of the Club's finances to members at the October and June meetings.
 - f. Balancing the monthly income and expenditures and providing a report to the Executive Board monthly to be included in the Recording Secretary's minutes of the Board meeting.
 - g. Ensuring funds are available in the checking account to meet the club's obligations
- Files necessary forms with the Garden Club Federation of MA (GCFM)
 - a. **GCFM insurance** is billed between March 15 to April 15 of each year for the period 6/15/xxxx through 6/14/xxxx. A charge is made for all active members. Information related to insurance is e-mailed to the Treasurer, or can be found in the Spring edition of Mayflower or on the GCFM website.
 - b. **GCFM dues** are due before May of each year for the Federation's fiscal year (July-June). Dues are paid for total paid membership as of January 1 of each year. Currently dues are \$5.00 for each paying member, and \$.50 for each non-paying member.
- Maintains banking activity at The Haverhill Bank in West Newbury.
 - a. On-line user name and password are known to the Treasurer and Club President.
 - b. There are three signatories on the account: President, Treasurer and one other members.
- Files the following two forms annually with the MA State Attorney General's office.
 - a. FORM PC for MA. This form must be filed with the State Attorney General's office by May 15, xxxx, based on the club's fiscal year ending on December 31st, xxxx.
 - i. Form PC and instructions on how to complete it are found at www.mass.gov/ago/charities.
 - ii. A filing fee must be submitted with the form.
 - iii. MA will issue a "Certificate for Solicitation" after the form is processed if necessary.
 - b. FORM 990-EZ must also be filed with the State Attorney General's Office.
 - i. This form and instructions to complete can be found at www.irs.gov.
- Files FORM 990-N with the IRS (Federal)
 - a. Form 990-N must also be filed with the IRS at the end of the organization's fiscal year. For example, WNGC cannot file until January after the club's December fiscal year close.

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- ii. 990-N and instructions to complete it are found at www.irs.gov.
- iii. This form must be completed and filed electronically. Paper forms are not acceptable.
- iv. This form is to be used for organizations with gross receipts less than \$50,000 annually.

Recording Secretary

- Records minutes at each Board of Directors meeting.
- Records minutes of the May West Newbury Garden Club annual meeting.
- Sends a copy of the minutes to each board member by email (or post).
- Keeps a copy of the Board's minutes from each meeting in a folder. The folder should include meeting minutes from August to June.
- After the August meeting, stores the folder in the Garden Club vault in the (old) Town Hall.

Corresponding Secretary

- Sends thank you notes, notices, and any other correspondence deemed necessary
- Assumes the duties of the Recording secretary in his/her absence
- Distributes printed versions of the newsletter to those members not having e-mail

Section 5. Membership

The membership chairperson or member of the committee is responsible for the following:

- Maintaining current information on all members of the club on a spreadsheet
- Establishing a method of communication-email or phone- for each member
- Notifying President, 1st Vice, Newsletter and Yearbook Chairs of all changes
- Providing name badges and sign in sheets for meetings
- Greeting members as they enter
- Bringing membership forms to meetings
- Processing new membership forms once dues are paid. Dues are delivered to the treasure
- Providing a yearbook and WNGC card to the new member
- Introducing new members to the Club President who will then make introductions to the club members
- In November notifying the Board of any outstanding dues
- Performing outreach duties
- Delivering brochures to local sites
- Mailing/E-mailing membership forms and brochures to anyone who has expressed interest in membership

Section 6. Sunshine Committee

The following represent guidelines for the Sunshine Committee.

- In the event of accident or illness to a club member, the club will send a card and either flowers, plant, fruit basket or other appropriate gift. The cost of such an acknowledgement should not exceed \$50.
- In the event of death of a club member, the club will either send a donation (if requested) or flowers, fruit basket, etc. The cost of such an acknowledgement should not exceed \$100. The club may also purchase a book on gardening for the GAR Memorial Library in memory of the deceased or other memorial as determined by the Executive Board.
- In the event of a death of a direct family member of a club member, the club will either send a donation (if requested) or an appropriate gift, such as flowers, fruit, etc. The cost of such a donation or gift should not exceed \$75. A direct family member is defined as spouse, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, or parent.
- In the event of a club member giving birth, the club will acknowledge the parent with a card and an appropriate gift. The cost should not exceed \$50.00
- If it is deemed that any of the above donations or gifts should exceed the amount stipulated above, the amount should be brought to the Executive Board for approval. If this approval is not feasible, the President and/or Treasurer is authorized to approve the requested amount up to 50% above the limits stipulated above.

Section 7. Town Gardens

The West Newbury Garden Club is responsible for planting and maintaining the following public areas in West Newbury: 1910 Building, Elwell Square and Church Street Island, Ferry Lane Park, Hills House Herb Garden, Library, Town Hall, the Training Field, Garden Street Island, and Carr Post. A separate committee is established for each of these locations and the committee is authorized to spend up to \$150.00 per year for annual plantings and maintenance, with the exception of the Training Field which has three planting areas. Expenditures beyond that amount are to be approved by the Executive Board. Any new garden sites must be approved by the Executive Board.

Committee Responsibilities

- Spring clean-up and pruning of minor shrubbery
- Planting geraniums or other annuals prior to the Memorial Day Parade
- Watering and weeding throughout the growing season
- Planting mums or other fall plants
- Mulching if desired
- Putting up and taking down holiday decorations

Section 8. Holiday Wreaths and Holiday Decorations

The WNCG is responsible for holiday wreaths and/or swags at the town’s public locations. Wreaths are made/or decorated at the December club meeting with greens brought in by club members. Wreath frames are kept in the WNCG’s room in the Town Hall if the decision is to make vs. buy the wreaths. Wreaths or swags are made for the following locations:

Location	Type of decoration	Number required
Town Hall	Wreath	2 – 12”
1910 Building	Wreath	4 – 12”
Police Safety Complex	Wreath	3 (2 police, 1 fire) – 12”
Hills House	Wreath	1 – 12”
Library	Wreath	2 – 12” and 1 – 16”
Training Field	Wreath	2 – 12”
Ferry Lane Park	Swag	2
Anna Jacques Hospital	Wreath	2 -30”

As of 2017 the Board decided to purchase wreaths instead of making them. Purchased wreaths are then decorated at the December meeting. The decision to purchase or make wreaths should be revisited annually by the Board. If possible, contact the Boy Scouts to determine if they will purchase wreaths at cost for the club.

In addition to decorating these locations, the WNCG also participates in the annual Christmas decorating of Anna Jacques Hospital and the Museum of Old Newbury (Cushing House) in Newburyport. Decorations for the Cushing House are paid by the club; the exact amount is to be determined each year by the Board. The Cushing House reimburses the club \$100 (2021).

Section 9. Publicity

This committee is usually made up of members who are responsible for publicity related to WNGC events such as special speakers, the Plant Sale, etc. The committee is in charge of posters, announcements, press releases, radio announcements, social media etc. Posters are often placed at the West Newbury Food Mart, the GAR Memorial Library, and other locations around West Newbury, Newburyport, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Amesbury, Merrimac, etc.

Although subject to change, key contacts are as follows:

Newburyport Daily News

Jen Solis - West Newbury correspondent, jensolis@comcast.net

Current

Victoria Chuang

How to list your event:

1. Visit website homepage (newburyport.wickedlocal.com) & open “sections” in top left corner. Scroll down and select. “calendar”. Bookmark page for later.
2. Register or, if you have visited before, log in. Then click on “add event” at top of page
3. Follow instructions to fill out the event form and click “submit event”.

Town Common - Community Calendar, Community Announcements, 978-948-8696, events@thetowncommon.com

Eagle Tribune – Add event on-line at eagletribune.com

West Newbury E-mail distribution - contact finance.admin@wnewbury.org

GAR Library newsletter – contact Cflaherty@westnewburylibrary.org

NCMHub.org – posts to Greater Newburyport area

Section 10. Telephone

Although the majority of communication occurs through e-mail, members who do not regularly read or do not have e-mail are telephoned when needed. The telephone chairperson maintains a list of members and their phone numbers, and will call them for specific last-minute notifications, such as club meeting cancellations, etc.

Section 11. Scholarship

WNGC Scholarship Mission Statement

The West Newbury Garden Club has as a part of its mission aiding in the protection and conservation of natural resources. Each year, the Club offers scholarships to students who plan to study, or are studying, environmentally related disciplines in post-high school academic programs. The scholarship is open to high school and college students who reside in the three communities of the Pentucket School District: West Newbury, Groveland, and Merrimac. Students may attend public or private institutions.

To apply, a student submits a WNGC Scholarship application, available on the club website. It includes an essay describing the applicant's interest in the environment and demonstrating his or her commitment to the environment. Two letters of recommendation from individuals who can address the applicant's experiences with environmentally related courses or activities are required and the student must also submit a high school or college transcript.

Student are evaluated on the strength of the transcript, recommendations, and demonstrated environmental commitment.

Annual Time Line for WNGC Scholarship Process

October Use Scholarship display in library to publicize scholarships. Have application information available. Update application, if necessary, during the fall. Board decides the number and amount of the scholarships for the year.

January Begin process of publicizing in newspapers and schools. Have updated scholarship application on-line for candidates. Post in local greenhouses/garden centers.

February Contact high schools, make sure that application in on Naviance, encourage counselors to find appropriate students. Continue with newspaper, bulletin advertising.

April, first week. Applications due. Exact date set each year. Member of the committee will scan application materials and send to committee members.

May, first week Committee meets to decide scholarship recipients. Chair sends out criteria and methods ahead of meeting.

May Members select Awards Nights to attend and invite students to our June meeting.

June WNGC meeting—scholarship recipients and introduced and asked to say a few words. Send announcement of winners to the WNGC newsletter and publicize in newspaper.

June Committee debrief of year's process.

There are tasks committee members take on such as publicity, contacting schools, scanning, updating application, attending Awards Nights, etc.

Section 12. Newsletter

The newsletter is published monthly except for January, July and August. It should be delivered by mail or e-mail approximately one week before a meeting. Newsletters are also kept on the wngc.org website for one year.

The newsletter should keep members informed of pertinent club information, surrounding events of interest and include articles of gardening interest. Content for the newsletter is provided by members of the Newsletter Committee and provided to the editor each month. The newsletter is posted to the website and a PDF is sent to the membership coordinator for e-mail distribution and the corresponding secretary printed distribution.

Special notes: The text of the newsletter shall be text not an image for accessibility standards. When new member information such as name and contact information is included in the newsletter it should be removed before posting a version to the website for privacy.

Section 13. Yearbook

The yearbook is to be produced annually in time for distribution at the opening (September) meeting. It should meet requirements as outlined by the GCF of MA and copies shall be sent to the federation as directed. Enough copies should be ordered to cover members, 10 new members and four extras for the Federation. Usually, extra copies can be made if needed during the year.

Printing of the book varies from year to year as the printing industry changes. Currently, an electronic file is sent to a local printer for printing, collating and binding

Specifications:

- Approximately 50 PAGE PLUS COVER WITH CLEAR ACETATE PROTECTOR SHEETS FRONT & BACK 5.5 X 293.97
- Digital Color FRONT & BACK 5.5 X 8.5 COVERS, 5.5 x 8.5 Covers
- Digital B&W TEXT ON WHITE PAPER BODY, DOUBLE SIDED
- COLORED PAPER FIRST AND LAST PAGES to coordinate with cover colors

The yearbook should be set-up by a club member. The only costs should be for clip art, printing and assembly.

The electronic file should be finalized and sent to the printer two weeks before the opening meeting.

The book is usually due to the club member coordinating the book's production by mid-July. Editing is completed by all those contributing content to the book, and the coordinator. The current electronic file is maintained by the club's webmaster and yearbook coordinator.

Section 14. Web Site

The West Newbury Garden Club's website is wngc.org. The site is maintained by the webmaster, Elisa Grammer, who retains all passwords and files.

Section 15. Plant Sale

The following information provides a generic description of what individual committees do at the plant sale. A detailed Plant Sale Workbook is available (hardcopy and electronically) for the Plant Sale Chair(s). This workbook contains detailed checklists of activities that need to be done and provides suggestions for the Plant Chairs in preparation for each year's sale. The workbook can be obtained from the prior year Plant Sale Chair(s).

The WNGC Plant Sale is the club's main fundraiser. It is usually held the 3rd Saturday in May, with exceptions made if that date coincides with Memorial Day week-end. The sale is held outside on the Training Field or inside at the Town Hall. If inside, the floors are covered with tarps.

The Herb Farmacy often participates in the sale. They are responsible for their own set-up and break-down.

Plant Sale Chair(s)

The Plant Sale Chair is responsible for the overall planning, organization, and decision making with respect to all aspects of the plant sale including but not limited to the following:

- Applying for use of the Training Field and Town Hall for the day before and day of the Plant Sale and completing required paperwork
- Ensuring all committees are properly staffed and working with committee chairs as requested
- Arranging for police the day of the sale. Police are on-site from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM.
- Arranging lay-out of the Training Field or Town Hall
- Banners
 - a. Arranging for banners to be updated with new dates. Lead time is usually one week. Banners are updated at
 - Seacoast Sign Works
 - 18 Graf Rd. #10
 - Newburyport, MA
 - 978-255-1103
 - b. Putting up and taking down banners. The decision of where to place banners is up to the Plant Sale Chair(s), but one usually is placed at Ferry Lane Park. Permission to put to the banner at Ferry Lane Park is obtained from the Parks Department. Banners are put up 2-3 weeks in advance of the plant sale.
- Working with committee chairs and publicity
- Ensuring full support of club members by reviewing procedures at club meetings

Other Plant Sale Committees

Digging/Potting Committee (6 to 8 members)

Digging is generally started 3-4 weeks prior to the sale—depending upon weather and ground conditions. Plants are labeled with name, height, color, and requirements, i.e. sun or shade. Plants do not need to be potted on-site, but can be dropped off at the potting location. Work is usually completed during the week-ends and evenings, or if convenient for home owner or diggers, during the day.

Sun Committee and Shade Committees (8 or more members)

Plants are divided into two categories: sun or shade. Separate committees are in charge of each category. The committees major tasks are to identify a “holding location” where plants will be dropped off two weeks prior to the sale. There plants will be watered and maintained until the actual sale. The committee members usually meet 1-2 days in advance of the sale to clean pots, ensure plants are labeled with name, color and any special characteristics such as tall, short, aggressive, etc., and price plants consistently. They are responsible to transporting plants to the sale and assisting customers during the sale.

Native Committee (5-8 members)

Native plants are a recent addition to the plant sale. Typically, plugs are purchased from a native nursery and potted for sale, as well as requested from club members. Native shrubs and trees are also purchased. The chair of the Native Committee should request funds from the Executive Board.

Bake Table (3 to 4 members)

All members are requested to bake something to sell at the Bake Table. Items should be clearly labeled with any potential allergic ingredients, such as peanuts, gluten, etc.

Members assisting at this table are responsible for pricing, arranging and selling baked goods.

Set-up Committee (3-4 members)

The set-up committee is responsible for setting up and covering tables, putting up signs designating various areas of the sale (sun, shade, holding area, cashiers, etc.), covering the floor with tarps if held in the Town Hall, and helping committees set-up plants if indoors. This work is done on Friday, the day before the sale.

Clean-Up Committee (3-4 members)

Although it is expected that all members will help clean up their specific areas, the clean-up committee is responsible for transporting all items back to Town Hall if held on the Training Field.

Trash bags should be put on the side of Town Hall for Monday pick-up. The Town Hall should be locked and key returned to the Town Offices.