

# **Mendocino County Democratic Central Committee By-Laws**

Adopted October 3rd, 2017

## **ARTICLE I NAME AND PURPOSE**

### **Section 1. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be “The Democratic Party of Mendocino County” (hereafter This Committee).

### **Section 2. PURPOSE**

This Committee is organized under the California Elections Code and the Bylaws of the California Democratic Party State Committee to operate as the Mendocino County Democratic Central Committee.

This Committee:

- serves as the official governing body of the Democratic Party in the County of Mendocino in cooperation with the Democratic State and National Committees
- conducts State Democratic Party candidate and initiative campaigns within the County of Mendocino in cooperation with the State Central Committee
- builds and strengthens party organization on regional, district, county, precinct, and grassroots levels
- registers voters as Democrats
- informs and turns out Democratic voters in elections
- encourages the fullest possible participation of Mendocino County Democratic voters in the party and in civic life
- participates in the development of party policies and positions, and communicates them to the public and to local officeholders
- provides forums for the study and discussion of public issues
- conducts visibility and public relations programs for the Democratic Party in Mendocino County and represents the Democratic Party within the county
- develops and supports Democratic candidates for public office in Mendocino County
- endorses and promotes positions on local ballot initiatives and measures
- advances Democratic Party positions and values in testimony before local boards, councils, and commissions
- recommends qualified Democrats to fill vacancies for appointments where the law so allows

- charters and supports Democratic clubs and other Democratic organizations within Mendocino County
- ensures, as far as possible, the election of the Democratic Party Nominees for President and Vice-President of the United States and candidates endorsed by the National, State or applicable County Democratic Party
- performs other duties and services as will benefit the Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. **Membership.** This committee shall consist of:

- A. Persons duly elected from each County Supervisorial District as well as appointed, pursuant to the provisions of the California Elections Code. Members so elected in the Presidential Primary Election shall take office at the following organizational meeting in January, for a four-year term starting in January.
- B. Ex-officio Members:
  - i. The Democratic Representatives to Congress, to the State Senate and Assembly representing Mendocino County.
  - ii. The immediate past Democratic nominees for the above seats representing Mendocino County, or if no nominee, the “Highest Finishing Democrat”. In the event no registered Democrat appears on the ballot in the most recent general election for one (1) of these offices, the “Highest Finishing Democrat” shall be the Democrat who received the most votes in the primary election for the most recent general election for that office.
  - iii. Ex-officio members shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of regular members, including the right to vote.
- C. Affiliated Groups:
  - i. Local Democratic Clubs throughout Mendocino County that have been chartered by this Committee. These affiliated groups do not have a voting membership on this committee.
  - ii. Other Democratic Party organizations in Mendocino County as may request recognition and affiliation and have been accepted by a majority vote of this committee. These organizations do not have a voting membership on this committee.

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## Section 2. **Alternates.**

A. This Committee may appoint alternate members to serve in members' absence. Alternates must attend one regular meeting before being elected.

B. Alternates must meet the same qualifications as the regularly elected or appointed members.

C. Alternates vote only in the absence of a member from the same supervisorial district. Alternates shall be designated as first, second, etc. according to the date they were appointed. The first alternate would fill the first open voting slot if one member from his/her district is absent, the second alternate would fill the opening caused by a second member's absence, etc.

D. The term of appointed Alternates run concurrent with the terms of the elected members.

## Section 3. **Qualification for Membership.** A person is eligible for membership on this Committee only if registered as affiliated with the Democratic Party.

## Section 4. **Notification of Appointment or Election.** The Co-Chairs of this Committee shall notify in writing each person appointed or elected as a member of this Committee.

## Section 5. **Removal From Membership.**

A. This committee may remove any member, other than an ex officio member, who during his or her term of membership affiliates with, or registers as a member of another party, who publicly advocates that the voters should not vote for the nominee of this party for any office, or who gives support or avows a preference for a candidate of another party or candidate who is opposed to a candidate nominated by this party.

B. Any member of this committee, other than an ex officio member, who misses four regularly called meetings within one 12-month period shall be removed from the committee concerned, unless his or her absence is caused by illness or temporary absence from the county on the date of the meeting.

C. This committee may, in its sole discretion, remove a member, other than an ex officio member, who misses four or more regularly called meetings within one 12-month period, regardless of the reasons for the absences.

## Section 6. **Vacancies.**

A. A vacancy on this Committee shall exist: when an insufficient number of members is elected from a supervisorial district; when an ineligible person is appointed or elected; when a seated member becomes ineligible, when a

member dies, resigns, moves from the district, becomes incapacitated to act, or when removed from membership pursuant to Section 5 of this Article.

B. Vacancies shall be filled by Committee appointments in accordance with the following procedure:

- i. Vacancies shall be declared at a regularly scheduled meeting of this committee.
- ii. All individuals interested in appointment by this committee to fill a vacancy must submit a letter of request for appointment to the co-chairs of the committee.
- iii. Appointments to vacancies will be made no sooner than the regularly scheduled meeting following the meeting where the vacancy is announced.
- iv. Should more than one individual request appointment to the same seat, the sitting members of this committee shall determine the appointment based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:
  - a.i.1.a. The contributions of the individual to the Democratic Party
  - a.i.1.b. The willingness of the individual to work for the nominees of the Democratic Party
  - a.i.1.c. Attendance at meetings of this committee prior to consideration of appointment.
  - a.i.1.d. Need of this committee to reflect the broad diversity of the people of Mendocino County.
  - a.i.1.e. Particular skills and resources that the individual may have that would enhance the ability of this committee to do its work.

Section 7. **Dues.** Member dues shall be set by this Committee annually by December, and payable beginning in January. Dues are considered delinquent on April 1.

### **ARTICLE III. OFFICERS**

Section 1. **Officers.** The officers shall consist of: Two Co-Chairs, Vice Chair – Coastal/Central, Vice Chair – Inland/North, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers as the Committee may find necessary.

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## Section 2. **Description of Duties**

A. A Co-Chair shall preside at all meetings, appoint such committees as necessary and otherwise direct and execute the policies of the Committee. At the first organizational meeting with two co-chairs seated the monthly order for determining which co-chair shall preside will be determined by the flip of a coin. After the first organizational meeting the co-chairs shall alternate which one presides over the monthly meetings and be considered the Chair.

B. The Vice Chairs shall assist the Chair in the performance of the duties of that office. In the event of the absence of both Co-Chairs or a vacancy in that office, the Vice Chairs shall exercise all powers of the Chair. When necessary the Inland/North Vice Chair shall preside at meetings held inland and north and the Coastal/Central Vice Chair shall preside at meetings held on the coast and central county.

C. The Secretary shall take minutes, conduct roll call and record attendance, maintain an accurate record of the proceedings of the Committee, and be responsible for all general correspondence.

D. The Treasurer shall present a monthly report to the Committee and have the books available for inspection. All disbursements shall be made upon approval of the Committee.

E. If the Co-Chairs and Vice Chairs are absent from a regularly scheduled meeting, first the Secretary and then the Treasurer shall preside over said meeting.

## Section 3. **Election of Officers**

A. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Committee members, provided only that a quorum be present at the organizational meeting of the Committee held in January as provided by law or whenever a vacancy shall occur. The officers so elected shall hold office at the pleasure of the Committee and constitute the Executive Committee. There shall be annual elections. Nominations occur at the December meeting by voice or letter prior to that date. Slate to be circulated before the January elections.

B. The Executive Committee shall transact such business as is necessary, either at the direction of This Committee or subject to the ratification by This Committee.

## **ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Regular Meetings**

A. Regular meetings shall be held each month. The Committee may fix the dates, places and times of such meeting.

B. If the Chair neglects or refuses to call a meeting, such meeting may be called upon five days written notice by a majority of the members in accordance with Sec. 7243 of the Elections Code.

**Section 2. Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by a Co-Chair, or a majority of the Executive Committee, provided written notice is given to all members at least five days in advance.

### **Section 3. Agenda**

A. Five days prior to all meetings, each member shall be sent a written agenda.

B. The Chair shall be responsible for the agenda. Any member may place an item on the agenda by contacting the Chair one week prior to the meeting. This Committee may place any matter on the agenda as new business by majority vote.

**Section 4. Quorum.** A quorum of This Committee shall be either the presence of seven of its qualified members, or a majority of its qualified members, whichever is the lesser.

### **Section 5. Proxies**

A. Members of this Committee may be represented at any meeting by proxy.

B. A member may give his/her written proxy to another member from his/her district under the following circumstances:

i. When the member and his/her alternate are absent due to illness or temporary absence from the county.

ii. Such proxy shall be valid for one meeting.

### **Section 6. Parliamentary Procedures and Voting**

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A. The authorities of governance of This Committee in descending order are federal and state law, the bylaws of the California Democratic Party, the bylaws of This Committee, standing rules of order adopted by This Committee, and then the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Voting on all issues by This Committee shall be taken by voice vote, show of hands, written ballot, or roll call. Any member of This Committee may require a roll call vote to settle a challenge to a ruling of the Chair on the outcome of a voice vote or show of hands vote.

## ARTICLE V. ENDORSEMENTS

This Committee has adopted a Standing Rule of Order to govern the process of endorsing candidates for office and making recommendations on ballot measures and initiatives placed before the voters: we follow the document *MCDCC Endorsement Guidelines*.

The Standing Rule of Order shall be constructed to ensure the integrity of the endorsement process. The Standing Rule shall comply with the rules of the California Democratic Party so that endorsements of This Committee will be recognized as endorsements of the California Democratic Party.

This Committee shall not endorse in conflict with the California Democratic Party. This Committee shall not contribute funds or material aid to any committee formed in support of any candidate, ballot measure, or initiative which has not been endorsed by This Committee.

### **Standing Rule of Order**

#### **MCDCC Endorsement Guidelines**

- A. The Chair of the Elections Committee shall annually submit to the Central Committee Chair(s) an endorsement timeline for specified elections to local office, which must be approved by the full membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. This timeline will include the date(s) of the meeting(s) where endorsement will be considered by the full membership.
  1. Endorsements may take place prior to the deadline for filing for specific offices with the approval of the full MCDCC.
- B. The annual endorsement timeline may include dates for a candidate training to be offered to educate candidates on the Democratic Platform in advance of endorsement interviews.

- C. All known viable Democratic candidates in the elections of the adopted timeline will be invited to participate in the endorsement process.
- D. Consideration of any motion for immediate action that waives the adopted timeline shall require at least ten (10) days advanced notice to the full CC membership.
  - 1. If there is less than ten (10) day notice, a vote of eighty percent (80%) of the full membership (present and voting) would be required to waive the timeline.
- E. All candidates, including those being considered for immediate action, must submit a written questionnaire to the Elections Committee prior to any interview or full committee action. These questionnaires will be for internal purposes only and will not be made public beyond the members of the interview committee and the Executive Committee of officers.
- F. No endorsement shall be given to any candidate who does not request recommendation from the Standing Committee.
- G. Interview committee(s) of MCDCC members will be selected by the Elections Committee with the concurrence of the MCDCC chair(s) for each office under consideration. All candidates in each election will be interviewed using identical questions developed by the committee. Interviews via telephone or other electronic medium, at the discretion of the Committee, may be included if a candidate cannot attend a scheduled interview.
- H. The interview committee shall operate on a consensus basis where possible.
  - 1. If there is not a consensus, only candidates who have the support of at least 65% of the interview committee members present and voting shall be forwarded for consideration by the full membership.
  - 2. Only interview committee members who were present for all interviews conducted for a given race may vote on endorsement in that race that will be advanced to the full MCDCC for concurrence.

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- I. The chair of the Elections Committee will report the interview committee(s) recommendation(s) to the Executive Committee after the interviews.
  
- J. The interview committee(s) may recommend that no candidate be supported or that one or many candidates warrant the support of the Central Committee. The Elections Committee may not recommend more candidates than there are available seats.
  
- K. Notice will be sent via email to all members and alternates of the full MCDCC membership at least ten (10) days prior to the regularly scheduled full committee meeting at which the endorsement will be considered.
  
- L. All recommendations of the interview committee(s) for races in the geographic area of a particular supervisorial district may be considered for concurrence by a caucus of the Central Committee members from that supervisorial district.
- M. All endorsements under consideration shall be presented to the full Central Committee as a consent calendar that will include the recommendation of the interview committee and the concurrence or non-concurrence of the supervisorial district caucus, if any. The Central Committee must then vote as follows:
  - 1. The consent calendar must be passed by a supermajority (2/3) of the members present and voting.
  - 2. A motion to pull a particular race from the consent calendar shall require a majority of the members present and voting.
  - 3. For any pulled recommendation, present and voting members must affirm the candidate by a supermajority (2/3) to confer Endorsement.
  - 4. All voting will be by voice vote or roll call if called for by any voting member. There shall be no secret balloting.
- N. For candidates being considered for immediate action, an opportunity to briefly address the full Central Committee may be offered in lieu of the interview with the Endorsement and Election Committee.
  - 1. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, a longer, more extensive interview may be conducted by the full Central Committee at the meeting, using the identical questions used previously by the interview team.
- O. To be officially endorsed by the Central Committee, a candidate must receive supermajority (2/3) of the votes cast for that office in the endorsement meeting.
  - 1. If the supermajority vote threshold is not met on the slate of consent calendar endorsements, the Central Committee may refer one or more races back to the Elections Committee for a substitute consent calendar recommendation.

2. If there is no referral back to the Committee and no candidate receives the required supermajority vote, the official position of the Central Committee shall be neutral in that race.
- P. No member of the Central Committee may support any candidate not officially endorsed by the Central Committee in their capacity as an officer or member of the Central Committee.

## ARTICLE VI. CHARTERING DEMOCRATIC CLUBS

- Section 1. **Request for Charter.** Any organized club that would like to be chartered by the Mendocino County Democratic Central Committee must submit a letter of request to be agendized at the regular monthly meeting for approval.
- A. A copy of the Bylaws of the organization must accompany the request for charter.
  - B. A list of a minimum of 15 members, including names and addresses, must also be submitted with the request. All original chartering members must be registered Democrats.
- Section 2. **Recognition of the Club.** Approval of the charter will be voted on at a regular monthly meeting of This Committee by majority vote of those present and voting.
- Section 3. **Identity.** No group may use the capitalized word “Democratic” or “Democrat” in their title unless they are officially chartered by a County Central Committee or the Democratic State Central Committee.
- Section 4. **Rechartering.** At the first meeting of This Committee each calendar year, Charters for existing Democratic Clubs which meet the initial chartering criteria shall be extended for an additional year unless action to the contrary is taken by This Committee

## ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

- Section 1. **Amendment.** These Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds of those present and voting at a regular meeting of the Central Committee provided:

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A. They are proposed, discussed, amended if necessary at one meeting and voted upon at the next meeting, and

B. They are submitted in writing to all Committee members prior to each meeting.

Section 2. **Effective Date.** Bylaws or any amendments thereto shall go into effect and become effective immediately upon their adoption.