

CONSTITUTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF RACINE COUNTY

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Democratic Party of Racine County

ARTICLE II – Definitions

As used in this Constitution, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

“Bylaws” – the Bylaws of the Democratic Party of Racine County

“Chair(s)” – the Chair(s) of the County Party

“Constitution” – this Constitution of the Democratic Party of Racine County

“County” – Racine County

“County Party” – the Democratic Party of Racine County also known as DPRC

“Democratic Party” – refers to the Democratic Party in general, from the Democratic National committee through the DPW to the Caucuses and County Parties

“DPW” – the Democratic Party of Wisconsin

“Executive Committee” – has the meaning set forth in Article V, Section 1a.

“Member” – a member of the County Party who has paid and is current on payment of dues

“Officers” – the Chair or Co-Chairs, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary

“Secretary” – the secretary of the County Party

“Treasurer” – the treasurer of the County Party

“Vice-Chair” – the vice-chair of the County Party

“Written Notice” – Notice provided to a Member by electronic means, unless the Member has requested receipt of physical notices, in which case Written Notice shall be provided to the Member via U.S. Mail or hand delivery.

ARTICLE III – Purpose

The purpose of the County Party is to promote and enact the platform of the DPW and resolutions of the DPW and the County Party. The County Party does this primarily by electing Democrats to public office who support our platform. We also advocate for issues included in the platform and resolutions and work with other groups who have similar goals (within the law).

It shall be the responsibility of the County Party to:

- a.) Develop the fullest possible membership.
- b.) Hold regularly scheduled meetings
- c.) Recruit and assist Democratic candidates for all elected offices in the County
- d.) Make recommendations to the DPW platform
- e.) Promote democratic principles in the County

ARTICLE IV – Membership

Any resident of the County, at least fourteen years of age, who subscribes to the principles of the Democratic Party is eligible for voting membership in the County Party and shall become a Member upon payment of dues and receipt of such dues by the Treasurer or the DPW headquarters. Such a person is automatically a Member of the DPW and the Democratic Party of the congressional district in which the Member resides.

- a.) Individuals attending school in the County shall be considered residents of the County for the purpose of membership.
- b.) Individuals who reside in counties contiguous with the County and who are not members of any other county party shall also be eligible for membership to the County Party, providing they meet all other membership requirements and applicable provisions of the by-laws of the DPW, which govern this issue.

ARTICLE V – Organization and Election of Officers

Section 1. Organization

- a.) The elected Officers of the County Party shall include a Chair, a First Vice-Chair and a Second Vice-Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer, one Sergeant at arms, and five members at large. One member at large should, if possible, reside west of Interstate 94, and one member at large should, if possible, be a representative of a young Democratic caucus.
- b.) Officers will begin duties on January 1 following the election for a two-year term. The election shall be at the annual meeting to be held not earlier than November 1 and no later than December 31 of odd-numbered years.

Section 2. Duties of Officers

- a.) The Chair(s) shall be the presiding officer(s) at all meetings and shall act as administrative head(s) of the County Party.
 - i. With the consent of the Executive Committee, the Chair(s) shall have the power to appoint or remove committee chairs, special project chairs, and any

other persons to or from the Executive Committee as may be necessary for the effective operation of the County Party. Special project chairs shall serve until the project is completed, the Executive Committee or Chair(s) removes(s) them, or the Chair/Chairs' term of office expires.

- ii. Absent cause for earlier replacement, all appointed members of the Executive Committee may serve until the next election of Officers, at which time all appointed members of the Executive Committee shall be subject to replacement or re-appointment.
 - iii. It shall be the duty of the Chair(s) to:
 - i. Ensure the County Party is performing its purpose;
 - ii. Act as a proactive media contact;
 - iii. Preside at Executive Committee meetings and membership meetings;
 - iv. Enforce the observance of the Constitution and Bylaws;
 - v. Call all special meetings;
 - vi. Appoint members to standing committees;
 - vii. Appoint committees not otherwise provided for;
 - viii. Develop working relationships with like-minded community groups;
 - ix. Perform other such duties as the office may require.
- b.) The Vice-Chairs shall be responsible for the executive direction of the County Party in the event of an absence or incapacitation of the Chair(s). It shall be the duty of the Vice-Chairs to:
- i. Coordinate event planning and execution;
 - ii. Complete other assignments as deemed necessary by the Chair.
- c.) The Secretary shall maintain records of the County Party in accordance with all DPW guidelines. The Secretary shall be responsible for:
- i. Taking and distributing minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee and all membership meetings;
 - ii. Maintaining the documents and papers of the County Party;
 - iii. Scheduling spaces for meetings;
 - iv. Assisting in correspondence for the County Party.
- d.) The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the County Party, shall make financial reports available in writing at each County Party meeting, and shall expend funds only in accordance with the directives of either the Executive Committee or the majority vote of the Members. In addition to the customary duties of the Treasurer, the Treasurer shall:
- i. Prepare such financial statements as are required by law and forward them to the proper county, state, and/or federal official.
 - ii. Keep a record of all paid memberships.
 - iii. Submit the books annually for audit to an auditor or to an auditing committee appointed by the Chair(s).
 - iv. Prepare a draft budget in conjunction with the Chair(s).

- e.) The Sergeant at arms shall assist the Chair in preserving order when called upon to do so. They shall collect names of attendees and perform other duties assigned to them by the Chair.
- f.) All Officers shall endeavor to keep and protect the property and records of the County Party to the best of their ability in a secure manner according to the best practices established by the County Party, the DPW, and any government oversight agency. At the end of their term, all vacating Officers shall turn over records and property of the County Party as outlined in the DPW by-laws.

Section 3. Removal of Officers

- a.) By a two-thirds vote of the Members present in person and voting at a regular meeting or special meeting called for such purpose, an elected Officer may be removed for cause, which includes, but is not limited to, neglect of duties or misuse of County Party property, funds, or resources.
- b.) Before any removal vote by the County Party membership, the Executive Committee shall afford the Officer, if present, an opportunity to be heard.
- c.) Written Notice shall be sent to the Members at least ten days prior to the meeting at which removal of an Officer will be voted upon.

ARTICLE VI – Executive Committee

Section 1. The Executive Committee is comprised of the elected committee members as defined in Article V.1a. All standing Committee chairs shall be members of this Executive Committee with voice and vote.

Section 2. Executive Committee procedures

- a.) The Executive Committee may establish policies and procedures for the County Party and the frequency and conduct of all Executive Committee meetings.
- b.) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the conduct of all County Party business between membership meetings and shall have the authority to take action on all such County Party business as it deems necessary for continued functioning of the County Party.
- c.) A quorum at an Executive Committee meeting shall be fifty percent of Executive Committee members, including those present by telephone or videoconference.
- d.) Executive Committee decisions at an Executive Committee meeting shall require a majority of those Executive Committee members present, whether in person or by phone or videoconference. The Executive Committee may take action without an Executive Committee meeting on any matter needing timely action by voting via phone, email, or other telephonic or electronic means, by majority vote of the Executive Committee members.
- e.) Decisions made by the Executive Committee may be reversed by a majority vote of the Members.

Section 3. If a vacancy, other than of the Chair(s), occurs, the Chair may appoint a replacement and is subject to approval of the Executive Committee. If the Chair position becomes vacant, the First Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair.

Section 4. Unexcused absences from three consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee by any Executive Committee member shall be considered a resignation of the person's membership on the Executive Committee and, if applicable, the person's position as Officer.

ARTICLE VII – Dues and Finance

Section 1. Membership dues shall be determined by the DPW.

Section 2. A portion of the annual dues of the Members determined by the DPW Administrative Committee shall be sent to the DPW treasurer. The portion of the membership dues remaining within the County Party may be used as the County Party determines in accordance with all finance regulations.

Section 3. A budget shall be created by the Treasurer and Chairs for the upcoming year and presented at the January County Party membership meeting for approval by the Members. The Executive Committee may approve additional items to the budget for the current fiscal year.

ARTICLE VIII – Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings of the Members

- a.) Unless otherwise ordered by the County Party or Executive Committee, regular meetings of the Members shall be held once per month. Notice of regular meetings shall be sent to the Members.
- b.) Upon request by any two Members present, Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall be the parliamentary authority for meeting agenda items, business actions, or motions. Otherwise, actions and discussion will follow normal generally-accepted meeting practices.
- c.) Ten Members, or ten percent of the total number of Members, whichever is fewer, shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at any membership meeting, unless a quorum is defined in the County Party Bylaws. In the absence of a quorum, should there be a majority of the Executive Committee present, necessary business may still be conducted under that authority.
- d.) The order of business shall be determined by the Chair(s), and new business shall be in order at every general membership meeting.
- e.) After three months have elapsed without a general membership meeting of the County Party, any ten Members, or Members totaling at least ten percent of the total Members, whichever is fewer, may petition the chair of the DPW, who shall call a membership meeting of the County Party with at least ten days Written Notice first provided to the Members.

Section 2. Meetings to Elect Officers.

- a.) The biennial County Party meeting held for the purpose of nominating Officers and other business shall be held not earlier than November 1 nor later than December 31 of each odd-numbered year. Notice of this meeting shall be sent to the Members at least ten days in advance of the meeting. Only those Members whose dues have been paid at least five days prior to the election are eligible to vote.
- b.) Officers must be Members. Rules for the nominating committee can be found in the bylaws.
- c.) Elections of Officers shall follow the rules defined in the DPW by-laws; in the event of a conflict between this Constitution and the DPW Constitution or bylaws, the DPW Constitution or by-laws shall prevail.
- d.) Officers elected shall begin serving on January 1 and end their service in office on December 31 of the second year in office.
- e.) In the event the Chair fails to call the biennial election meeting within the period specified herein, the DPW chair shall be authorized to call such a meeting as soon as practicable, provided that the provisions of this Constitution with respect to notice are observed.

Section 3. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the Executive Committee, or upon written request of any ten Members. Written Notice of such special meeting shall be sent at least seven days before each such meeting and shall contain the purpose of the meeting.

ARTICLE IX – Endorsement

Section 1. The County Party shall not endorse nor support any candidate for any partisan elective office in any contested primary election unless the County Party recommends in writing an endorsement because of unusual circumstances to the DPW Executive Committee and the DPW Executive Committee approves said recommendation.

Section 2. To receive a County Party endorsement, a candidate must be a member of the DPW and follow the rules of the DPRC by-laws.

ARTICLE X – Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended after a written notice and two readings at successive regular County Party membership meetings and/or special membership meetings called for such purpose, provided that:

- a.) The proposed amendment is presented to all Members at least ten days before it is to be voted upon

- b.) Such Notice shall describe the nature of proposed amendments and shall identify the article to be amended
- c.) Two-thirds of those Members present and voting at the second meeting approve the amendment.

Section 2. No proposal to amend this Constitution shall be submitted to the membership unless it has been first approved by the Executive Committee or endorsed in writing by at least fifteen Members.

Section 3. A quorum for the purposes of this Article X shall be no fewer than twenty Members or twenty percent of the total number of Members, whichever is fewer.

Section 4. The Constitution and any amendments hereto shall be submitted to and approved by the DPW Constitution Committee, after which time they will go into effect.

ARTICLE XI – Constitutional Precedence and Bylaws

Section 1. This Constitution shall supersede any previous constitutions. Proposals shall not be voted on at the meeting during which they are presented, but may be voted on during the next meeting.

Section 2. If and when it shall appear that this Constitution is in conflict with the Constitution of the DPW, the DPW Constitution shall prevail.

Section 3. By-laws are designed to aid the Constitution and serve the County Party. Amendments to the by-laws do not require DPW approval.

Section 4. By-laws may be amended after a proposal by two-thirds majority of members attending the County Party meeting.

ARTICLE XII – Interpretation

In the event of a dispute or doubt over the interpretation or construction of this Constitution, the Executive Committee may issue an interpretive decision in writing. Any two Members aggrieved by such decision or by the failure of the Executive Committee to interpret this Constitution may present the Members’ grievance to the DPW Constitution Committee, which shall be the final judge of the meaning of the language of this Constitution.

Initially Approved: _____ Date: _____

Date Amended: _____

Signatures and date indicating approval:

_____, County Party Chair
 _____, County Party Officer

Approved by DPW Committee, *Lisa Herrmann*
 Chair, Constitution Committee DPW Date: 5/26/2019