

# Charlottesville Democratic Committee Bylaws

Adopted December 7, 2011

## ARTICLE I - Name

1.01 **Organization Name:** The name of this organization will be the “City Democratic Committee of Charlottesville, Virginia.”

## ARTICLE II - Object

2.01 **Statement of Object:** The Committee will have charge of the affairs of the Democratic Party in the City of Charlottesville as provided in the Virginia Democratic Party Plan. The Committee will have charge of the nominations of candidates and full control of the Party’s interest in all primary, special and general elections in the City. The Committee will do all in its power to aid in the victory of the Party at the polls in all general and special elections. Specifically, the members of the Committee will:

- a) seek the registration of voters,
- b) perfect the Democratic organization within the City of Charlottesville,
- c) do all within their power to aid in the victory of the Democratic Party’s nominees in all elections, and
- d) take stands on current issues which in the judgment of a two-thirds majority of the Committee are both timely and desirable.

The Committee may not formally endorse candidates for office prior to their nomination.

## ARTICLE III - Membership

3.01 **Methods of Selection:** The Committee shall consist of members selected by one of the following methods:

- a) election as precinct representatives in the manner prescribed under sections 3.03 and 10.02;
- b) *ex-officio* membership pursuant to section 3.10; and
- c) election as officers of the Committee as prescribed in section 3.06.

3.02 **Qualifications for Membership:** All members of the Committee:

- a) must believe in the principles of the Democratic Party; and
- b) must not intend to support any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee in the next ensuing general election.

In addition, members elected as precinct representatives must be registered to vote in the precinct they represent or, if age prevents registration, be a resident of the precinct.

3.03 **Election of Precinct Representatives and Alternates:** Precinct Representatives will be elected biennially by an organizational mass meeting of the Democrats of the City of Charlottesville during the period between the first Saturday in December in odd-numbered years and the second Wednesday of the following January. The organizational meeting shall be held on Saturday or on a weekday evening. Public notice of this meeting, including time, place and purpose, will be published at least 10 days prior to the mass meeting. The time and place of the organizational mass meeting will be determined by the Chairperson(s) and the Executive Committee prior to the date on which notice must be published.

At this organizational meeting, each precinct will meet in a precinct caucus to elect its representatives. Any person who is registered to vote in the precinct, who believes in the principles of the Democratic Party, and who does not intend to support any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee in the next ensuing general election, may participate in the precinct caucus.

The number of representatives allotted to each precinct will be known as the Precinct Allotment (or PA) and will be determined by the method prescribed in section 3.05. Nominations for precinct representatives will be made from the floor and will require a second. Persons nominated need not be present. A two-thirds vote will be required to close nominations. Only those persons present at the meeting may vote. Each participant may vote for up to PA representatives. The votes for each nominee will be tallied and the top PA nominees will be elected.

Once the precinct's full allotment of representatives has been elected, alternates may be elected. The same nomination and election procedure that was used for representatives will be followed to elect alternates. A precinct may not elect more than PA alternates.

3.04 **Temporary Membership for Alternates:** At any meeting, alternates may take the place of absent precinct representatives in their precinct. Alternates may become temporary voting members for that one meeting if the full allotment of representatives in their precinct is not present. If there are more alternates present in a precinct than there are absent representatives, the alternates who may become temporary voting members will be chosen by lot.

**3.05 Number of Precinct Representatives (Precinct Allotment):** There shall be 100 elected precinct representatives. For the reorganization following the 2011 election these representatives shall be allotted to the nine precincts by the following formula:  $(N/D) \times 100$ . The numerator (N) shall be the number of active voters registered to vote in the November election immediately preceding the meeting. The denominator (D) shall be the total number of active voters in the City of Charlottesville registered to vote in the November election immediately preceding the meeting. For all succeeding reorganizations these representatives shall be allotted to the nine precincts by the following formula  $(N/D) \times 100$ , where the numerator (N) shall be the number of votes cast in each precinct for any Democratic candidate in the most recent gubernatorial election. The denominator (D) shall be the sum of those votes across all nine precincts. A precinct will be entitled to one Committee member for each whole number or major fraction thereof resulting from such mathematical division, except that no precinct shall have fewer than four Committee members.

**3.06 Election of Officers:** Following the election of its members as provided herein, the newly-constituted Committee shall elect a Chairperson or Chairpersons, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer no later than the second Wednesday in January. The date, time and place of the meeting where the election of officers will occur shall be made known to committee members in advance following any notice requirements set forth in these Bylaws or in the State Party Plan. Should the meeting take place immediately following adjournment of the caucus to elect committee members, or within 7 days thereafter, notice of the meeting shall be included in the public advertisement for the caucus. Election will be by a majority vote of those Committee members present and voting, including any alternates who may be selected pursuant to section 3.04. Proxy voting will not be permitted.

Although the Executive Committee may appoint a Nominating or Search Committee to offer suggestions at this meeting, all nominations will be made from the floor.

**3.07 Dues:** Upon assuming office and annually thereafter, no later than March 15th, each member of the Committee and each alternate will pay dues of \$15.00 to the Treasurer.

**3.08 Responsibility of Committee Members:** No Democratic committee member shall publicly support, endorse, or assist any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee. If a Democratic committee member is accused of undertaking such public activity, the Democratic committee shall vote on whether the member has undertaken such public activity. The member's removal from the Committee shall be automatic if the Committee finds that the member has engaged in such public activity. Such action shall not be taken without at least ten (10) days written notice to the accused member and an opportunity for him or her to refute such charges.

No Committee member shall be required to support any candidate who is publicly supporting a nominee on the ticket of any other political party in any general election where Democratic candidates for office appear on the ballot or who publicly supports any other candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee.

3.09 **Expulsion:** The Chairperson(s) may expel any member for failure to pay dues or missing two consecutive meetings without just cause. The full Committee will, by majority vote, have the power to expel any member who is found guilty of willful neglect of any duty imposed upon him or her, or for publicly supporting any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee at any election during the member's term of office. No expulsion will take place without notice to the offending member and an opportunity for the member to refute the charges.

3.10 ***Ex-Officio Members:***

- a) The following persons will be automatically elected to membership on the Committee with all privileges and requirements of membership:
  - 1) all currently elected and past elected public officials who are Democrats and vote in Charlottesville;
  - 2) all past Chairpersons of the Committee who vote in Charlottesville;
  - 3) all regional, state, or national officers of the Democratic Party and of the Young Democrats who vote in Charlottesville.
- b) The residence of an ex-officio member in a precinct will not diminish the number of Committee members to which a precinct is entitled under section 3.05.
- c) It will be the responsibility of each precinct Chairperson to notify all individuals who live in the precinct and qualify for automatic election under this section. The precinct Chairpersons will also be responsible for notifying the Secretary when elected officials in their precincts become members.

**ARTICLE IV - Meetings**

4.01 **Call of Meetings:** The Chairperson(s) will call a meeting not less than 30 days nor more than 90 days prior to each general election. Other meetings may be called as follows:

- a) upon call of the Chair of the Committee; or
- b) by at least ten percent (10%) of the members of the Committee if the signed call is filed with the Chair at least fifteen (15) days before the proposed meeting date; or
- c) by a vote of the Committee at a properly convened meeting of the Committee.

4.02 **Regular Meetings:** The Chairperson may set a regular periodic meeting date so long as the total meetings thus established do not exceed 12 during one calendar year.

4.03 **Emergency Meetings:** The Executive Committee may call an emergency meeting of the Committee with less than one week's notice.

4.04 **Notice of Meetings:** The Secretary will be required to notify each precinct chairperson and each officer of the Committee of the date, time and place of each meeting called by the Chairperson of the Committee not less than one week prior to the date of the meeting. Each precinct chairperson will be responsible for notifying each member (other than officers living in his or her precinct) of the date, time and place of each meeting no less than five days prior to the meeting.

4.05 **All Meetings to be Public:** All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public.

#### **ARTICLE V - Quorum**

5.01 **Quorum:** Thirty percent (30%) of all Committee members (precinct representatives and *ex-officio* members) will constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Committee. Alternates who have become temporary members as prescribed in section 3.04 shall be counted as precinct representatives for the purposes of determining a quorum.

#### **ARTICLE VI - Courtesy of the Floor**

6.01 The following may attend all meetings of the Committee with the courtesy of the floor:

- a) alternates;
- b) all elected public officials who are Democrats;
- c) all regional, state or national officers of the Democratic Party and the Young Democrats; and
- d) representatives of other City or County Democratic organizations as determined by the Executive Committee.

Those who have the courtesy of the floor may be asked to leave the floor when votes are being taken.

#### **ARTICLE VII - Officers**

7.01 **Designation of Officers:** The officers of this Committee will consist of a Chairperson or Co-Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson (optional if there are Co-chairpersons), a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Vice-Chairperson of Records, and a Vice-Chairperson of Communications. These officers will serve until their successors have been elected and qualified.

7.02 **Precinct Officers:** The precinct representatives in each precinct will elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson or two Co-Chairpersons for their precinct.

### **ARTICLE VIII - Duties of Officers**

8.01 **Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons:** The Chairperson(s) will preside at all meetings of the Committee, appoint all subcommittees, have general supervision over the affairs of the Committee, and be the chief executive officer(s) of the Democratic Party in Charlottesville. The Chairperson(s) will be *ex-officio* member(s) of all standing and special committees. The Chairperson(s) will cause all notices to be published and make all announcements with respect to candidates, elections or meetings as may be required by the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Democratic Party Plan or these Bylaws.

If there are Co-Chairpersons, one will be designated as the contact person with the Democratic Party of Virginia. The Co-Chairpersons will decide between themselves which one is to be so designated. The Chairperson shall submit a copy of the Bylaws to the Democratic Party of Virginia within ninety (90) days of his or her election as Chair.

The Chairperson(s) shall be responsible for fund-raising for the Party for the money necessary for the operations of this Committee.

8.02 **Vice-Chairperson:** The Vice-Chairperson will preside at all meetings of the Committee in the absence of the Chairperson(s) and, in the event that there are not Co-Chairpersons, will perform all the duties and have all the authority of the Chairperson when the latter is, for any cause, unable to attend to his or her duties. The Vice Chairperson may be assigned further duties that the Executive Committee deems desirable. The Vice Chairperson shall be responsible for precinct operations.

8.03 **Secretary:** The Secretary shall take minutes at all Committee meetings, maintain an archive of minutes from past meetings, and make them available to members. The Secretary shall formally certify actions and resolutions of the Committee and shall be responsible for the publication of all formal notices required by the State Party Plan and Committee By-Laws and rules. The Secretary shall submit to Democratic Party of Virginia headquarters within five (5) days of his or her election the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of the officers and members of the Committee. The Secretary shall submit a list of any changes to the Committee list every 6 months thereafter until the next Committee election.

8.04 **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall safely keep all funds of the Committee and shall keep a detailed account of all contributions, other receipts, and disbursements. The Treasurer shall submit to the members of the Executive Committee an oral financial report at each meeting of the Executive Committee and a written report annually. The Treasurer shall be the signatory on the required financial reports of the Federal Election Commission and State Board of Elections.

At the conclusion of each campaign, all financial records of the campaign shall be preserved by the Treasurer.

8.05 **Additional Officers:** In addition to the above-named officers who shall be elected by the Committee, the Executive Committee may name other officers, and shall name the following officers, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee:

- a) **Vice-Chairperson of Records:** The Vice-Chairperson of Records will be responsible for maintaining voter information files maintained by the Democratic Party of Virginia in accordance with such regulations and policies as the Democratic Party of Virginia may prescribe, and such Committee member lists, mailing lists and other data belonging to the Committee.
  
- b) **Vice-Chairperson of Communications:** The Vice-Chairperson of Communications shall appoint and chair the Communications Committee which will be responsible for preparing communications undertaken by the Charlottesville City Democratic Committee, including:

- § writing and distributing newsletters, either in print or on-line
- § maintaining media outlet contacts
- § creating and distributing press releases
- § maintaining and improving the Committee website
- § using social media to disseminate information concerning the Party

- c) Other Vice-Chairs may include Community Outreach, Events, Historian, or others as deemed needed by the Executive Committee for the good and effective operations of the Party.

8.06 **Precinct Chairpersons, Co-Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons:** The Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons of each precinct will have general charge of the organization of the precinct for fulfilling the purposes of the Committee. In precincts with one Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will assist the Chairperson and take on the duties of the Chairperson in his or her absence. Precinct Chairs serve as the party leader in the precinct. The Precinct Chair or Co-Chair organizes and represents the precinct in carrying out the mission of the Charlottesville Democratic Party. The Precinct Chair(s) shall:

- § Attend Executive Committee meetings, City Committee meetings and special Party functions;
- § Read all Party communications and respond in a timely manner
- § Stay informed on current issues and candidates
- § Get to know the precinct and the people in the precinct
- § Maintain and build lists of Democrats in the precinct, including contact information
- § Send updated list information to the Vice-Chair for Records
- § Communicate with Democrats in the precinct about Party events

- § Organize Committee members and Alternates to attend City Committee meetings
- § Coordinate with campaigns to communicate information about candidates and ballot measures to the precinct
- § In coordination with campaigns, organize volunteers for campaign activities
- § Organize volunteers to work at the polls on Election Day
- § Welcome new residents to the precinct
- § Identify potential leaders within the precinct and increase their involvement

8.07 **City Committee Members:** City Committee members are elected by members of the Party to serve as active participants in Party functions and election activities. A Committee member reports to the Precinct Chair or Co-Chairs to assist in organizing and representing the precinct in carrying out the mission of the Charlottesville Democratic Party. Committee members shall:

- § Attend City Committee meetings and special Party functions
- § Read all Party communications and respond in a timely manner
- § Stay informed on current issues and candidates and communicate information to the precinct as needed
- § Get to know the precinct and encourage new participants in the political process
- § Be willing and able to volunteer for campaign activities
- § Help with Party building and fundraising activities
- § Help identify potential candidates for elected office or for City Boards and Commissions

#### **ARTICLE IX - Removal of Officers**

9.01 **Removal of Officers:** The Committee at any time, by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any duly constituted meeting, may remove any officer, provided such officer is given at least ten days written notice of the action proposed to be taken, and is shown to be not a proper person for the office held, or is unable to serve the Committee by reason of continued absence from the City or other sufficient reason.

#### **ARTICLE X - Vacancies on the City Committee**

10.01 **Declaration of Vacancies:** A vacancy in the Committee will occur, and the Chairperson(s) will so declare, when any precinct representative or Committee officer resigns or is expelled, or when a precinct representative ceases to be a resident of the precinct from which he or she was elected.

10.02 **Filling Vacancies:** Whenever the Chairperson(s) declares that a vacancy exists on the Committee; such vacancy will be filled by election by a majority vote of the Committee members present and voting at any duly constituted meeting of the Committee. Persons to fill the vacancy will be nominated at the precinct level by majority vote of those Committee members present and voting in their precinct. Alternates may be added to precinct rosters at any duly



constituted meeting of the full Committee or of a precinct caucus, provided the number of alternates in a precinct does not exceed the Precinct Allotment. Alternates added between organizational mass meetings will be chosen at the precinct level by a majority vote of those Committee members present and voting in their precinct.

#### **ARTICLE XI - Committees**

11.01 **Executive Committee:** The current officers of the Committee, the immediate past Chairperson(s) of the Committee, and one representative from each precinct committee will constitute the membership of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will act as an advisory committee to the Chairperson(s) and perform such functions as the Committee may assign. The Executive Committee shall have charge of all party matters arising between meetings of the City Committee except that it may not: (1) change the amount of dues; (2) determine the method of nominating Democratic candidates for office unless a nominated candidate dies, withdraws, refuses candidacy or if the nomination is set aside for any reason; (3) pass resolutions.

11.02 **Sub-Committees:** The Chairperson(s) will establish such sub-committees, standing and special, as are deemed appropriate.

#### **ARTICLE XII - City Committee Resolutions**

12.01 **Resolutions:** By a two-thirds vote of those members present, the City Committee may, from time to time, pass resolutions stating Party positions on issues.

#### **ARTICLE XIII - Access to Committee Records**

13.01 **Access to Committee Records:** Any Committee member may obtain from the Vice-Chairperson of Records a list of all Committee members and alternates. Mailing lists will not be disseminated, although mailing labels that have been derived from those lists will be available to any Committee member at cost. Any voter information maintained by the Democratic Party of Virginia, or any data derived there from, will be made available only in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Code and any regulations and policies of the Democratic Party of Virginia. The Executive Committee may ask those requesting this information to pay the costs of providing requested records.

#### **ARTICLE XIV - Candidates and Nominations for Public Office**

14.01 **Notice Requirements:** Whenever candidates for Democratic nomination to public office are to be selected, either by primary, convention, or mass meeting, the Chairperson will cause timely public notice to be made of the time, place and method of nomination and of filing requirements, if any. This action will be taken in accordance with the Virginia Democratic Party Plans, pertinent Virginia statutes, and all other rules and laws governing this committee.

14.02 **Nominations by Committee:** When time does not permit nomination for elective office by primary, convention or mass meeting and it therefore becomes necessary for the Committee to make a nomination for an elective office, it will proceed in the following manner: The names of all qualified persons who have thus declared their candidacy, or any qualified persons who may be presented by any member of the Committee, will be before the Committee for consideration and the Committee will proceed to nominate by written ballot; the name receiving the lowest number of votes will be dropped from further consideration until at least two succeeding ballots have been cast, and the balloting will then proceed until some candidate receives a majority vote of the entire Committee. If time does not permit giving notice as required elsewhere in these Bylaws prior to the Committee meeting, it is not required, but the Chairperson will cause to be given such notice as is practicable.

14.03 **Endorsement for Appointive Office:** The Committee will seek to secure the appointment of qualified Democrats to appointed office.

#### **ARTICLE XV - Amendment of Bylaws**

15.01 **Method of Amendment:** The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose; provided, that any amendment be offered in writing by at least two members of the Committee and either: 1) presented at a meeting held at least ten days before it is to be acted upon, or 2) sent by e-mail or mail to each Committee member at least ten days before it is to be acted upon. If notice has been given of the proposed language of the amendment, the Committee may adopt that language or similar language.

15.02 **Automatic Revision of Bylaws:** This Committee will function in accordance with the official State Democratic Party Plan to the fullest extent possible. Whenever these Bylaws are determined by the Chairperson(s) to be in conflict with the State Party Plan, they will be considered temporarily revised to conform with the State Party Plan, such revision to be effective upon the written notification to the members of the Committee by the Chairperson(s) and until such time as these Bylaws can be duly amended.

15.03 **Notification to the State Party:** A copy of the Bylaws shall be mailed to the Democratic Party of Virginia headquarters within fourteen (14) days of approval or amendment.

#### **ARTICLE XVI - Public Information**

16.01 **Public Information:** The procedures governing caucuses, City conventions, District conventions and State conventions shall be made available to any Democrat requesting such information. A copy of these Bylaws shall be furnished to any person upon request.

By-laws of September 1978 amended February 1986, August 1988, June 2001, May 2005 and December, 2011.