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# Winchester–Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

January 9, 2020

**WINCHESTER-FREDERICK COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Winchester-Frederick County Democratic Committee, hereafter referred to as “the Committee”.

**ARTICLE II**

**ORGANIZATIONAL AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE**

Section 1. The Committee endorses the principles contained in the Charter of the Democratic Party of the United States of America and is organized under the authority of and in accordance with the Code of the State of Virginia and the Party Plan of the Democratic Party of Virginia currently in effect. Nothing contained in these bylaws is intended to conflict with either the Code of Virginia or the Democratic Party Plan. If any such conflict should occur between these bylaws and the Code of Virginia and/or the Party Plan, then the Code of Virginia or the Party Plan, as the case may be, shall have precedence.

Section 2. All activities of the Committee, including mass meetings and conventions, shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Party Plan.

Section 3. The purpose of the Committee shall be to conduct the affairs of the Democratic Party of Virginia in the City of Winchester and Frederick County, hereafter referred to as "the Area", including:

- A. To serve as the organizing body of the Democratic Party within the jurisdiction of the Area;
- B. To encourage voter registration and voting by qualified residents of the Area;
- C. To raise funds for the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates for office at the local, state and national levels;
- D. To organize and appoint election officials to work all general and special elections in the Area pursuant to the election laws as contained in the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended; and
- E. To adhere to and implement the policies and platform contained in the national and state Democratic Party Plans and Platforms.

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. The Committee should include at least one person from each precinct or ward. There shall be no limit to the number of persons on the Committee; and new members may be

## Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

added. Eligible members shall consist of those voters who are registered to vote in the Area who call themselves Democrats, who believe in the principles of the Democratic Party, and who do not intend to support the campaign of any candidate opposing any nominee of the Party.

Section 2. Prospective members of the Committee shall submit a membership application, introduce themselves to membership, and must be approved by a simple majority of the attending members of any regular meeting. In lieu of the procedure in the prior sentence, the membership applications shall be presented by the Secretary at the next Executive Committee Meeting for formal approval. Members shall pay dues and support the Committee functions such as: attending at least one scheduled or special Committee meeting, volunteering for an endorsed candidate's campaign, working in Democratic Headquarters, or donating in some manner (service or financial support) to an endorsed candidate or to the Committee. Membership shall not be denied due to inability to pay dues. The Executive Committee shall waive all dues for any person who so requests and who completes an application for membership into the Committee.

Section 3. Every alternate year, the Committee shall have a mass meeting during the period from the first Saturday in December of the odd-numbered year to the second Wednesday in January of the even-numbered year, in accordance with the State Plan, to reorganize the Committee and elect officers (when necessary) or to conduct business. This date will be set by the Executive Committee, advertised, and relayed to the State Party. Committee members will be elected at the mass meeting by all Democrats who sign a pledge in accordance with the State Party Plan. The elected officers' terms will be two years. In preparation for the reorganization and three to six months prior to the mass meeting, the Chair shall appoint a 5-member working committee to nominate a slate of officers for each position and to recommend chairs for each standing committee.

## ARTICLE IV

### OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, a First Vice-Chairperson, a Second Vice-Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Officers can be from anywhere in the Area.

Section 2. The officers shall be elected by the Committee membership at the mass meeting. Nominations for officers shall be submitted to the Executive Committee at its meeting prior to the election. Installation of officers shall be at a meeting in January prior to January 15. Unless they resign or are removed from office, they shall serve for a term of two years.

Section 3. The Chair of the Committee is also the Chair of the Executive Committee (Article V) and shall be the official spokesperson of the Committee at all levels. The duties of the Chair shall include presiding at all meetings and appointing all standing and special subcommittees, including the chairs thereof. The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all such subcommittees.

## Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

Section 4. No person may hold office in the Committee who is not a regular member of the Committee. Any change in residency to outside the Area or membership status of an officer chosen from the Area shall result in a vacancy in that office. The vacancy will be filled by the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term.

Section 5. The First Vice-Chair shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair, and shall perform all duties delegated by the Chair, and shall have all authority of the Chair when the latter, for any cause, is unable to act. The First Vice-Chair shall assume the position of the Chair should the position become vacant. The First Vice-Chair shall be a member of and have oversight of the Public Relations and Communications standing committee under the direction of the Chair and with the approval of the Executive Committee. The First Vice-Chair shall not manage any political campaign.

Section 6. The Second Vice-Chair shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair and the First Vice-Chair, shall perform all duties delegated by the Chair, and shall have the authority of the Chair when the latter and the First Vice-Chair, for any cause, are both unable to act. The Second Vice-Chair shall assume the position of the First Vice-Chair should that position become vacant. . The Second Vice-Chair is in charge of coordinating all standing committees except the Public Relations and Communications standing committee under the direction of the Chair and with the approval of the Executive Committee. The Second Vice-Chair shall not manage any political campaign.

Section 7. The duties of the Secretary shall include keeping a record of all meetings of the Committee and its Executive Committee and proceedings thereof. The officer shall keep a file of all reports and official correspondence of the Area. Within five (5) days after each re-organizational meeting of the Committee, the Secretary will submit to the State Headquarters of the Democratic Committee of Virginia the names, addresses, e-mails and telephone numbers of the newly elected officers and other members of the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall submit a list of any changes to the Committee list every six months throughout until the next Committee election. The Secretary shall maintain the external contact list. The Secretary shall provide notices of all meetings to all members of the Committee and shall conduct correspondence and perform such other duties as pertain to this office. Minutes of meetings shall be transmitted to members within 30 days of the meeting. Additional duties are described in Addendum 1.

Section 8. The duties of the Treasurer shall include administering the funds of the Committee and exercising general supervision over the income and expenditures of the Committee. The Treasurer will be in charge of membership dues for the Area. The Treasurer shall take an active role in advising the Chair of potential financial issues such as uncollected dues and any deadlines which may arise with regard to expenditures. The Treasurer shall submit at each regular meeting a summary of revenue and expenditures of the Area since the last meeting, as well as a cash available balance. He/she shall complete a written annual report to be presented to the Executive Committee at its first meeting of the year and shall work with the Executive Committee to establish a draft budget to be presented for approval at the next meeting. In addition, the Treasurer will maintain records of membership dues and regularly update the Executive Committee regarding paid members. The list of paid members and those who complete an application for membership will constitute the membership list of the Committee. Additional duties are described in Addendum 1.

## Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

Section 9. Vacancies in any elected office shall be filled at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee. Nominations may be made by any member of the Executive Committee. Prospective new officers shall be approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority of those in attendance at the Executive Committee meeting and they shall assume their new office immediately after the vote.

**ARTICLE V****THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Committee, standing committee Chairs, the historian, a parliamentarian, the newsletter editor, any members of the State Central Committee who reside in the Area, Democratic elected officials holding office in the Area and the State of Virginia, a member of each Electoral Board in the Area, the members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District who are members of the Committee, and the immediate past Chair of the Committee. The Executive Committee may appoint additional members as needed, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee membership present.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Committee between its regular business meetings, subject to the review at the next meeting of the Committee, shall make recommendations to the Committee members, shall review and evaluate the status of actions taken to carry out decisions of the Committee, shall serve as a sounding board for ideas to further the objectives of the Party, and shall perform other such duties as specified in these bylaws. The amount of the annual dues shall be set at the first meeting of the Executive Committee each year. The Executive Committee shall report to the Committee as a whole about any action taken at the next regular Committee meeting.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly at a time and place agreed upon at a prior meeting. Special meetings may be called as follows:

- A. By the Chair, provided the Chair contacts the Secretary at least Forty-eight (48) hours before the proposed meeting; or,
- B. By any three (3) members of the Executive Committee, provided the Members contact the Secretary and the Chair at least seventy-two (72) hours before the proposed meeting; or,
- C. By a vote of the Executive Committee at a properly convened meeting; or,
- D. By adjournment to executive session, as called by the presiding Chair during a general meeting.

A quorum, for the purpose of doing business, will consist of at least 50% of the members of the Executive Committee. No proxy votes will be allowed.

## Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

**ARTICLE VI****INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

Section 1. The minutes of the meetings of the Committee, the Executive Committee, records and statements of the financial affairs of the Committee, the Bylaws of the Committee, and a roster of names and addresses of the Committee membership shall be made available to any member of the Committee for inspection, at any reasonable time, upon reasonable notice to the Secretary. Any member of the Committee, upon written request to the Executive Committee, may elect to have his/her name restricted from the membership list.

**ARTICLE VII****MEETINGS**

Section 1. There shall be at least four (4) regular meetings of the Committee each year, one of which will be the reorganization mass meeting. The Committee shall meet in a place designated by the Fundraising and Events Standing Committee or by a person selected by the Chair for that purpose, provided that sufficient notice is given with the meeting call. In an emergency, any regular meeting date of the Committee or the Executive Committee may be changed, provided notice is given to all Committee members. All meeting dates and times, including any reorganization caucus, shall be at the discretion of the Chair under advisement of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Committee shall be held: (a) upon the call of the Chair; or (b) within thirty (30) days following receipt by the Chair of a written request, signed by at least ten percent of the members of the Committee, stating the purpose for which a meeting is requested. In (b) above, either Secretary or the Chair shall give at least fifteen (15) days notice to the entire membership, stating the purpose for which the special meeting is called, and at such meeting, no other business shall be transacted, except upon the two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present and voting. Should the Chair fail to call the special requested meeting within the specified time, then those members requesting the special meeting may call such a meeting by giving at least fifteen (15) days notice to all members of the Committee, stating the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting. The expense of such meeting shall be borne by the Committee.

Section 3. At least seven days' notice shall be given before each regular meeting.

Section 4. A quorum shall consist of at least thirty (30%) percent of the Committee to take any action.

Section 5. All regular meetings of the Committee shall be public and shall be held in a location easily accessible to all interested parties. The Committee may adjourn to a closed meeting of the membership upon a majority vote of those members present at the meeting. The Chair may cancel any regular meeting if there is insufficient business on the agenda. Agenda items may be submitted at any time to the Chair by any member, for review by the Executive Committee.

## Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

Section 6. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

**ARTICLE VIII****STANDING COMMITTEES**

Section 1. As soon as practicable after the election of officers, the Chair, with the consent of the Executive Committee, shall appoint standing committees and the chairs of each, who must be members of the Committee. Each standing committee chair shall report at each Executive Committee meeting. The standing committees are:

**A. Precinct Organization:**

1. Recruit 1-5 active Democrats in each Precinct who will identify the Democrats in their Precincts and then work to organize them into a reliable group of voters and also poll volunteers for election days;
2. Take an active part in Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities for each election;
3. Coordinate plans and timelines with the Virginia Democratic Committee and the 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District plans and timelines; and
4. Maintain call lists, scripts, voter contact lists,

**B. Membership:**

1. Devise and implement strategies to increase membership;
2. Prepare each new member for full participation in WFCDC by preparing and presenting both informative personal contact and printed material about the many WFCDC committees and functions and their contacts.
3. Plan and hold at least four meeting a year, preferably quarterly, to introduce new members to the inner workings and leadership of WFCDC.
4. Prepare a list of new members for approval for each Executive Committee and General Membership meetings;
5. Report membership status and changes by precinct and in total; and
6. Maintain and improve membership contact information.

**C. Candidate Recruitment and Selection:**

1. Develop criteria for candidate selection;
2. Assist candidates with planning to include campaign budgets;
3. Actively work with and support candidates throughout the campaign/election;
4. Develop proposed platform planks for potential Democratic candidates; and
5. Develop criteria for independent candidates who seek support of the Committee.

**D. Fundraising and Events:**

1. Provide a fundraising plan for Committee activities and initiatives;
2. Assist candidates with fundraising planning;
3. Manage Committee-sponsored events (fundraising, meetings, picnics, etc.) to accomplish goals within budget guidelines; and
4. Provide meeting facilities and support for all general meetings.

Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

E. Public Relations and Communications:

1. Function as the Committee point-of-contact for all public and media contact;
2. Prepare and execute a communication plan;
3. Prepare and distribute fact sheets and publicity to support Committee activities/initiatives;
4. Publish a regularly scheduled newsletter; and
5. Develop and maintain all web sites, blogs, social media, etc.

F. Community Outreach:

1. Promote a positive Committee presence within the community;
2. Liaise with the Area organizations that share the Committee's values to foster a coordinated approach to Committee initiatives and communications and promote the Committee as a central coordinator for events and movements;
3. Apprise the Committee of other community activities;
4. Form caucuses of special interest (veterans, Hispanic, senior citizens, youth, LGBT, etc.);
5. Encourage the committees to reach out to like-minded people who may join the Committee; and
6. Have each caucus develop and maintain a list of issues important to it with suggested actions for each issue. Provide the list to the Executive Committee and the Candidate Recruitment and Selection standing committee.

G. Scholarship:

1. Administer all scholarships awarded by the Committee;
2. Disseminate scholarship announcements and application materials;
3. Accept scholarship applications;
4. Recommend awardees to the Executive Committee for approval;
5. Coordinate the announcement of approved award winners with the Public Relations and Communications standing committee; and
6. Revisit scholarship criteria, scholarship amounts, timetable annually.

## ARTICLE IX

### PRECINCT ORGANIZATION

Section 1. It shall be the duty of the Committee officers and members, led by the chair of the Precinct Organization / Membership standing committee, to create a well-defined and efficient political organization, beginning at the precinct and ward level.

Section 2. The elected or appointed members from each precinct or ward shall elect from their number a Precinct Captain and a Co-Captain.

Section 3. Precinct Captain with the assistance of the Precinct Co-Captain shall:

- A. Build a precinct organization on a person-to-person basis;
- B. Serve as a local contact for all programs of the Committee;
- C. Help organize poll workers on election day;



Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

- D. Generate greater enthusiasm and participation in Democratic politics; and
- E. Report and coordinate with the Precinct Organization / Membership standing committee.

**ARTICLE X**

**NOMINATIONS**

Section 1. Any candidate wishing to run for office as a Democrat must declare his/her intention of candidacy to the Candidate Recruitment and Selection standing committee. Nominations will be made in accordance with the State Party Plan.

**ARTICLE XI**

**PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Section 1. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the Committee in all cases to which they are applicable unless inconsistent with these Bylaws and the Democratic Party of Virginia Plan, in which instance, the latter shall prevail.

**ARTICLE XII**

**AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS**

Section 1. These Bylaws are subject to regular annual review by the Executive Committee, and any amendments recommended by this review shall be considered at the First Executive Committee meeting of the year and ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting. Upon approval by the Executive Committee, the Secretary shall submit to the Democratic Party of Virginia headquarters within ninety (90) days of his/her election to office. This section shall serve as appropriate and adequate notice of such annual consideration.

Section 2. These Bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting of the Committee by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting, provided that the amendments have been submitted in writing to and approved by the Executive Committee at a previous meeting.

**ARTICLE XIII**

**REMOVAL**

Section 1. Removal Action. Any member of the Committee may be removed in accordance with the State Party Plan (Section 8.9). Charges may be brought by any member of the Committee, and the removal of any member shall require a three-fourths (¾) majority vote of the Committee members present at the meeting at which a quorum is present. Such action shall not be taken without at least ten (10) days written prior notice to the accused member and the

Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

opportunity for him/her to refute such charges in a hearing before the Committee. The decision of the Committee may be appealed to the 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Committee.

Section 2. Resignations. Any member desiring to resign from the Committee shall inform the Chair in writing, who will notify the Committee at its next regular meeting.

## ARTICLE XIV

### MERGER WITH A DIFFERENT ORGANIZATION

The Committee will consider incorporating another Different Organization, hereafter referred to as "DO" and to include Democratic Committees or other like-minded groups, as members of the Committee on a path to permanent status as a part of the Committee. The purpose of this section is to help give such DOs a period to rebuild or to be absorbed into the Committee.

Section 1. Initial Entry. Should another DO wish to consider merger into the Committee, the merger shall occur only with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the Committee and a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the DO attending a joint meeting including the purpose of merger in its agenda. Said merger shall have an initial effect of twelve (12) months with an option by either party to end the merger at the end of that period.

Section 2. First Year of Merger. Should another DO wish to consider merger into the Committee, the merger will have a one-year trial period during which the DO funds, deficits, and membership shall be absorbed by the Committee, but book-kept separately. During that time, any expenses by the Committee shall be proportioned by membership count between the Committee and the DO so long as funds remain for the DO. During this first year of merger, the President/Chair of the DO shall audit the DO's funds administered by the Committee. Dues from the members of the DO shall be collected at the Committee's rate and held in the DO's account.

Section 3. Officers. The Committee Officers will preside over all business of the combined organization. The President/Chair of the DO shall have a seat on the Committee's executive committee during the first year of merger. The DO may retain its own officers during the first year of merger for the purpose of reestablishing themselves, but DO officers other than the President/Chair shall have no office in the Committee during that time.

Section 4. End of First Year of Merger. In the twelfth month of merged operations, either the Committee or the DO may dissolve the merger by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of its votes in a meeting that month. Should such a vote fail or not be held, the merger shall become permanent. In a permanent status, all funds, debts, and members are no longer book-kept separately and become a permanent part of the funds, etc., of the Committee.

Section 5. Dissolution of Accounts. Should a merger be dissolved at the end of its twelve-month period, all remaining funds, debts, and members shall be given to the DO.

Section 6. Exemptions. Should the merged DO have an established fund specifically for scholarships in its former specific area, that fund shall remain intact so long as it contains a

Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

balance greater than \$500. Should the fund drop below that threshold, it shall be merged permanently with a general fund for that purpose in the Committee.

Section 7. Extensions. In the twelfth month of the merged operations, the merger may continue for one additional year on a 3/4 vote of approval by the Committee and a three-quarters (3/4) vote of approval by the DO. During the extension, Paragraphs 2 through 6 shall be invoked again. No more than one extension is permitted.

## ARTICLE XV

### OTHER ISSUES

Section 1. All other issues not explicitly determined in these bylaws shall be governed and directed by the Virginia State Party Plan.

Section 2. Addenda to these bylaws may exist following the required bylaw signatures. Each addendum shall be dated and signed by the Secretary and Chair of the Committee. The Addenda shall be distributed and/or published with all distributions and publications of the bylaws. Addenda may not conflict with the Virginia State Party Plan or these bylaws. Addenda are in effect with a simple majority approval of a quorum of the Executive Committee.

ADOPTED AND RATIFIED by the Winchester-Frederick County Democratic Committee on January 9, 2018.

Attested:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

January 9, 2018

**ADDENDUM 01**

Winchester, Frederick County Democratic Committee  
Financial Procedures

I. The WFCDC shall practice separation of financial duties as follows:

A. The Treasurer

1. Shall manage or oversee the management of the financial affairs of the organization, including selecting a bank, reconciling bank statements, and managing cash flow. Relating to any and all investment accounts the Treasurer shall be responsible for investing funds consistent with applicable laws, procedures adopted by the Executive Committee and shall at least quarterly report to the Executive Committee on the financial positions of such investment accounts.
2. Shall be responsible for paying all financial obligations of the organization.
3. Shall keep records of all payments and receipts.
4. Shall report to the Executive Committee at least monthly on all balances, payments and receipts of the organization.
5. Shall oversee the filing of all financial documents, tax reporting and other financial aspects as may be required of the organization by state, federal, DPVA, and other issues as directed by the Executive Committee.
6. Shall maintain, account for and report to the Executive Committee for all and any credit and debit cards, all credit card devices and other financial instruments that may from time to time be authorized by the Executive Committee.
7. Shall at least annually develop and present to the Executive Committee an annual budget and financial goals for the organization

B. The Secretary

1. Shall be responsible for collecting the mail at least weekly
2. Shall collect all receipts either through the mail or other means that shall from time to time generate receipts including but not limited to cash, Act Blue accounts, checks, or credit card transactions.
3. Shall prepare deposit slips or all receipt transaction and deposit such in the bank.
  - a. Shall keep a log of all incoming receipts and file a copy of the log with the Treasurer at least weekly.

C. The accounts of the organization shall at least annually be reviewed by Certified Public Account.

D. There shall be a minimum of two signatories on all financial accounts, e.g. Checking, Savings, Investments, Credit and Debit cards.

Adopted and Approved by action of the Executive Committee 2/12/2019

January 9, 2018

Winchester - Frederick County Democratic Committee Bylaws

William Fuller, Chair \_\_\_\_/s\_\_\_\_\_. Katherine Simpson, Secretary \_\_\_\_/s\_\_\_\_\_