

## PROPOSED CHANGES, April 15, 2010

### **Whatcom County Democratic Central Committee Bylaws**

Adopted: July 12, 2000. Amended March 14, 2001, February 11, 2004 and January 11, 2006.

#### **PREAMBLE**

WE, the Democrats of Whatcom County, State of Washington, believe in the concepts expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America that all power to govern resides with the people. In accordance with the National Charter of the Democratic Party of the United States, we organize and pledge ourselves to promote a truly representative party open to all who support its principles.

We further pledge to make every effort to encourage maximum participation in the political process and to protect individual rights, civil liberties, our environment, and social and economic justice for all.

#### **ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE**

##### **Section 1: Name**

The Whatcom County Democratic Central Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Central Committee), is the functioning body of the Whatcom County Democratic Party.

##### **Section 2: Purpose**

The Central Committee shall:

- a) Conduct all business of the Whatcom County Democratic Party.
- b) Raise and disburse funds in the name of the Party.
- c) Promote the election of Democrats to office through campaign-support activities.
- d) Provide political information to the public through a variety of venues.
- e) Conduct caucuses and a convention of democrats of Whatcom County every even-numbered year.
- f) Promote the values of the Democratic Party, including those in the County Platform, and local and state Democratic activities and issues.

#### **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

##### **Section 1: Open Membership**

The Central Committee shall be open to all who support the party and wish to be known as Democrats. All members shall enjoy equal rights, protections and opportunities in all proceedings. Discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age (except where state or federal law precludes participation), religion, sexual orientation, economic status or ethnic origin is prohibited in the conduct of Central Committee business.

## Section 2: Membership

The membership of the Central Committee shall consist of:

- a) Precinct committee officers (hereinafter referred to as PCOs), elected or appointed, who are duly certified by the County Auditor in accordance with RCW 29A.80.040.
- b) General members, who are registered voters, residents of Whatcom County and have paid their membership dues to the Central Committee.
- c) Associate members, who are not registered to vote in Whatcom County but have paid their membership dues to the Central Committee.

## Section 3: Term of Membership

- a) Except for PCOs, the term of membership shall run for 12 months from the date of enrollment.
- b) The term of membership for PCOs shall ~~run from the date of their election or appointment until the next biennial election of PCOs coincide with their term of office as stated in RCW 29A.80.040~~, or until the PCO resigns or moves out of their precinct, whichever is sooner.

## Section 4: Dues

- a) The amounts and levels of dues ~~for the next calendar year~~ shall be reviewed by the Executive Board and ratified by the Central Committee ~~at the October Central Committee meeting annually~~.
- b) Special allowances may be given to members residing in the same household, members over the age of 65 years or with limited income, and Associate members under the age of 18 years. Multiple levels of dues may be made available to members wishing to contribute funds above the individual membership dues level.
- c) Members designated as Honored Democrats by the Central Committee will be awarded free lifetime membership in the County Party.
- d) By State law, PCOs are not required to pay dues but are encouraged to do so.

## ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

### Section 1: Officers

The officers of the Central Committee shall consist of a Chair, ~~First~~ Vice-Chair, ~~Second~~ Vice-Chair, ~~Recording~~ Secretary, ~~Corresponding Secretary~~, Treasurer, State Committeeman and State Committeewoman. Officers shall be elected in accordance with procedures set forth herein.

### Section 2: Qualifications

- a) Officers must be members of the Central Committee.
- b) Attention shall be given to diversity in the selection of nominees for these offices. In accordance with RCW 29A.80.030, the Chair and one Vice-Chair shall not be of the same gender.

### Section 3: Manner of election and Terms of Office

- a) Officers must be elected in December of even-numbered years in a manner that is consistent with applicable state law (RCW 29A.80.030), Article IV, and Roberts Rules of Order, Revised.
- b) The Nominating Committee will be appointed in October of even-numbered years. The

Nominating Committee shall report their nominations to the Central Committee at the November meeting. The Nominating Committee, at its discretion, may place one or more names in nomination for each position. Nominations also will be accepted from the floor at the November and December meetings.

- c) Written notice of the time and place of the reorganization meeting and the list of candidates recruited by the nominating committee shall be provided to all elected PCOs not less than 10 days prior to the December meeting. The list of candidates shall also be made public to the membership.
- d) The term of office for officers of the Central Committee shall be two years.

## Section 4: Duties

All Central Committee officers, along with the other members of the Executive Board, are responsible for effectively meeting the political goals of the Central Committee. Specific duties are as follows:

- a) Chair. The Chair shall:
  - 1. Serve as the presiding officer of all meetings of the Central Committee and of the Executive Board.
  - 2. Exercise general supervision over the affairs and activities of the Central Committee.
  - 3. Perform such other activities as usually pertain to the office and as may be ordered by the Central Committee or Executive Board.
  - 4. Appoint all committee chairs of the Central Committee, subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
  - 5. Serve on the Executive Committee and as an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee, with voice and vote.
  - 6. Assume responsibility of calling special meetings.
  - 7. Appoint, with the advice of the Executive Board, PCOs to fill vacancies which exist or occur following the biennial election of PCOs. To maintain fairness, the Chair shall refrain from making PCO appointments within 30 days prior to scheduled voting on changes to the Bylaws or for filling a vacancy in the Central Committee officer positions.
  - 8. Provide timely media response.
  - 9. Encourage communication between committees and within membership
- b) Vice-Chairs. The Vice-Chairs shall:
  - 1. Perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.
  - 2. Assume the Chair's duties in the event of resignation or the inability of the Chair to serve, until such vacancy is filled by a special election.
  - 3. Perform any other duties as directed by the Chair or the Executive Board.
  - 4. Serve ~~on the Executive Committee and~~ as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- c) ~~Recording~~ Secretary. The ~~Recording~~ Secretary shall:
  - 1. Take, report and maintain an official copy of the minutes of the Central Committee and Executive Board meetings.
  - 2. Maintain an official copy of the By-Laws and all amendments, and an official copy of all Standing Rules of the Central Committee.
  - 3. Obtain, maintain, and have available at every meeting a list of PCOs and paid members in order to verify voting eligibility.
  - 4. ~~Submit membership reports to the State Democratic Party.~~
  - 5. ~~Publish minutes as directed by Executive Board.~~
  - 6. ~~Serve on the Executive Committee.~~
  - 7. ~~Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall:~~

8. 4. Carry on correspondence of the Central Committee as directed by the Chair and/or Executive Board.
  9. 5. Maintain a copy of all correspondence as a permanent record.
  10. ~~Serve on the Executive Committee.~~
- d) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:
1. Receive and provide receipts for all monies on behalf of the Central Committee, and make payments for approved expenditures.
  2. Maintain an accurate accounting of all income and expenditures, and provide a monthly balance sheet and income statement for review by the Central Committee and Executive Board.
  3. Prepare and submit to the Executive Board annual financial reports.
  4. Prepare and file reports in accordance with Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) rules and regulations.
  5. Prepare and maintain a permanent copy of all correspondence and reports pertaining to the office of Treasurer.
  6. Provide for data input the correct names, addresses and phone numbers of paid members of the Central Committee.
  7. ~~Serve on the Executive Committee.~~
- e) State Committeewoman and State Committeeman. The State Committeepersons shall:
1. Represent at the State level the interests of the Whatcom County Democratic Party.
  2. Attend State meetings and report the happenings to the Central Committee.
  3. Be prepared to serve on State committees upon appointment by the State Chair.
  4. Regularly communicate with the state committeepersons of the legislative districts within Whatcom County to develop coordinated positions which will support the platforms and policies of the Whatcom County and legislative district Democratic parties.

## **Section 5 - Vacancies and Removals.**

- a) A Central Committee officer or Executive Board member may resign by submitting written notice to the Chair (or to the Vice-Chair in the case of resignation of the Chair).
- b) A vacancy in the Central Committee officers shall be filled promptly by election, after giving PCOs at least 10 days notice.
- c) By a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the PCOs present and voting at a special meeting called for the purpose, a Central Committee officer may be removed from office for good and sufficient cause. By a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Executive Board, the chair of a standing or special committee may be removed from office for good and sufficient cause.

## **ARTICLE IV: VOTING PROCEDURES**

### **Section 1: General Voting**

All members of the Central Committee are entitled to vote on all matters which come before the body, except as specified in Article IV, Section 2.

### **Section 2: Election of Officers and Bylaws**

- a) Only elected PCOs are eligible to vote for Central Committee officers at the biennial reorganization meeting, in accordance with state law.
- b) Only PCOs are eligible to vote on changes to the Bylaws or on vacancies in Central Committee

officer positions subsequent to the reorganization meeting. ~~Signed ballots shall be used for election of Central Committee officers.~~

- c) When a person votes as a representative, open ballots shall be used. This provision does not apply to the election by PCOs of organizational officers, provided that there is a mechanism to ensure the eligibility of those who cast ballots (e.g. a check-off list, sign-in sheet, ballot receipts).

### **Section 3: Endorsement of Candidates**

- a) The members of the Central Committee reserve the right to endorse candidates for public office and ballot measures in the name of Whatcom County Democrats.
- b) Rules for the conduct of endorsement voting and eligibility for endorsement shall be ~~found in the standing rules of the campaign organization committee~~adopted by the Central Committee.  
In any case, the rules shall not be amended within 60 days of an endorsement vote.

### **Section 4: Verification**

- a) The ~~Recording~~ Secretary shall verify those persons who are eligible to vote.
- b) Procedures shall be utilized to ensure that only eligible voters cast ballots.

## **ARTICLE V: CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Participation**

Any individual may attend any meetings of the Central Committee and shall be entitled to speak, subject to the rules of the meeting.

### **Section 2: Regular Meetings**

Meetings of the Central Committee shall be held on a regular monthly schedule at a designated time and place. Changes in venue must be made public in a timely fashion. When meeting times or places are changed without prior written notice to the membership, no official action may be taken.

### **Section 3: Special Meetings**

- a) Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the Executive Board. A special meeting also must be called upon receipt of a petition signed by twenty percent (20%) of the existing PCOs.
- b) Notice of special meetings shall be given to members ten days prior, except in emergencies. Notice of special meetings must state the time, place and purpose for which called, and no other business shall be transacted unless two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present concur to the additional agenda items.

### **Section 4: Quorum**

A quorum of the Central Committee shall consist of 5 percent or 20 members who are eligible to vote, whichever is greater. A quorum of PCOs shall consist of 20% of existing PCOs, except as otherwise noted in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VI: RESOLUTIONS**

### **Section 1: Purposes**

Any member may bring resolutions to the Central Committee for adoption, for these and other reasons:

- a) To adopt a position that is not covered in the current County Platform, or is in conflict with the current County Platform;
- b) A member has proposed the resolution to the Executive Board and disagrees with their decision;
- c) The Executive Board believes the issue is of sufficient importance as to warrant adoption by the membership; or,
- d) The resolution relates to the powers of the Central Committee not delegated in these Bylaws to the Executive Board.

### **Section 2: Introduction of Resolutions**

For resolutions involving public policy issues a resolution should be submitted by a member to the Issues and Resolutions Committee for first reading to the Central Committee. A member may introduce a resolution directly to the Central Committee if there is cause for urgent action on the issue.

### **Section 3: Voting on Resolutions**

A resolution may be passed by a simple majority of those present and voting, at a subsequent meeting after the first reading. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting is required to pass a resolution at the same meeting at which it is introduced.

## **ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

The Executive Board is responsible to the Central Committee for long-term operational and political planning for the Central Committee and is responsible for oversight of the Executive Committee.

### **Section 1: Membership**

The Executive Board shall consist of the following:

- a) The officers of the County Central Committee.
- b) One representative from each legislative district ~~central~~-committee having jurisdiction within Whatcom County. The representative should be the chair, co-chair or other person elected by the legislative district committee or executive board, and should be a resident of Whatcom County.
- c) The Chair of each County standing committee. A committee will have only one vote, even if Co-Chairs have been appointed.
- d) One representative - each from the Democratic Women's Club, from the Western Democrats' Club and, upon recognition and acceptance of the Central Committee, from any other organization which advocates and works to fulfill the principles of the Democratic Party. These representatives must become and remain members of the Central Committee.

### **Section 2: Executive Board Meetings**

- a) The Executive Board shall meet at a regular time and place, made known to the membership
- b) Any member may attend meetings of the Executive Board, and shall be entitled to speak,

subject to the rules of the meeting.

- c) The actions of the Executive Board shall be recorded by the ~~Recording~~ Secretary and copies shall be ~~posted~~distributed to the Executive Board ~~email management list~~, and made available to members at their request and at the office.

### **Section 3: Duties**

The Executive Board shall:

- a) Ensure development and promotion of the goals of the Whatcom County Democratic Party.
- b) Monitor the daily corporate functions of the Central Committee.
- c) Develop an annual budget for review and approval by the Central Committee.
- d) Establish controls and monitor expenditures of the Executive Board and Central Committee officers and committees.
- e) Designate and authorize those persons permitted to disburse Central Committee funds.
- f) Designate the depository for Central Committee funds.
- g) Approve nominations of committee chairs proposed by the Central Committee Chair.
- h) Recommend to the Central Committee for approval the bestowing of special recognition as an Honored Democrat on any member whose long service and dedication has been an outstanding example to the Party.
- i) Responsible for establishing administrative procedures and controls for the Central Committee.

## **ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Section 1: Membership**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Central Committee Chair, ~~Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and the chair of the Communications Committee and~~ three officers and three standing committee chairs, elected by the Executive Board.

### **Section 2: Duties**

The Executive Committee shall be responsible to the Executive Board for:

- a) The day-to-day corporate activities of the Central Committee.
- b) ~~Providing timely media response to political activities when the response can be based on already established policies and positions covered in the Party platform or other approved policy documents.~~ Other duties as assigned by the Executive Board.

## **Article IX: Editorial Board**

### **Section 1: Membership**

~~The Editorial Board shall consist of the Central Committee Chair and Vice Chair and the Chairs of the Communications and Campaign Committees and the Communications Officer.~~

### **Section 2: Duties**

~~Committee shall review and approve educational and public content that comes from the party and is to be distributed publicly. When Central Committee Chair responds to media contact, approval is presumed.~~

## ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

### Section 1 - Standing Committees

The standing committees will be made up of Central Committee members. ~~Any member may attend meetings of a standing committee or special committee, and shall be entitled to speak, subject to the rules of the meeting. Members may request to attend committee meetings by contacting the committee chair prior to the meeting and may speak subject to the rules of the committee.~~ Their duties are:

- a) Finance Committee:
  1. Propose and monitor the Central Committee's annual budget.
  2. Assume responsibility for the Central Committee fundraising.
  3. ~~Monitor and recommend allocation of campaign funds, based on requests from the Campaign Organization Committee.~~
  4. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
- b) Issues and Resolutions Committee:
  1. Develop programs to inform and educate Central Committee members on democratic issues and objectives, as defined in the County Platform and adopted resolutions.
  2. Identify and introduce resolutions for discussion and disposition by the Central Committee.
  3. Plan and recommend effective steps for members to follow with regards to each resolution.
  4. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
- c) Candidates Committee:
  1. Identify and/or recruit individuals interested in seeking public elected office.
  2. Determine individual's positions on democratic principles.
  3. Encourage candidates to endorse and support the platform of the Whatcom County Democrats.
  4. ~~Provide candidate information to Central Committee one week prior to endorsement meeting.~~
  5. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
- d) Campaign Organization Committee:
  1. Provide information on establishing a campaign to members who are interested in running.
  2. Provide assistance to the candidates, in accordance with the Central Committee endorsement policy.
  3. Evaluate requests for and recommend allocation of campaign funds.
  4. Assist chair in recruiting and training PCOs.
  5. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
- e) Affirmative Action Committee:
  1. Provide and coordinate issues, resolutions, projects and programs involving diversity within the Central Committee.
  2. Propose and monitor a Central Committee affirmative action plan.
  3. Work with the Communications Committee to ensure that diversity issues and activities are publicized to the members of the Central Committee and the public at large.
  4. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.

- f) Communications Committee:
  1. Develop and maintain communication systems within the party, including but not limited to newsletter, web site, and email lists.
  2. Assist Central Committee and its standing committees with publicity.
  3. Implement process for making available to members, the latest information about Executive Board and standing committee activities and party documents.
  4. ~~Responsible for writing generic party flyers. Advise the Chair in developing media statements.~~
  5. ~~All educational content shall be approved by the editorial board prior to public distribution.~~
  6. ~~5.~~ Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
  7. ~~Chair to serve on the Executive Committee.~~
- g) Membership Committee:
  1. Work to increase the membership of the Central Committee
  2. Provide updated list of PCOs and paid members to ~~Recording~~ Secretary prior to each Central Committee meeting.
  3. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.
- h) Technology Committee:
  1. Coordinate data requirements and data entry to the Central Committee computer with Central Committee officers and committees.
  2. Manage local databases and interface with state databases.
  3. Provide technical assistance and recommendations for selection and use of hardware, software and other office machinery.
  4. Provide technical assistance to other committees and officers on use of data resources.
  5. Provide technical assistance as needed for official web site and email lists.
  6. Develop and maintain ~~standing rules to outline and maintain~~ committee policies and procedures.

## Section 2: Special Committees

The Chair, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint from time to time such special committees as are necessary to conduct the business of the Central Committee, or are prescribed elsewhere in these Bylaws. Special committees will be made up of Central Committee members.

- a) The Auditing Committee will:
  1. Annually audit the books of the Central Committee.
  2. Report audit results to the Central Committee in writing.
- b) The Bylaws Committee will:
  1. Review the Central Committee Bylaws every two years.
  2. Propose changes to the Central Committee.
- c) The Convention Committee will:
  1. Organize and conduct the biennial Whatcom County Democratic Party Convention.
  2. Coordinate planning with the Credentials Committee and Platform Committee.
- d) The Credentials Committee will:
  1. Verify against voter registration records the eligibility of each delegate and alternate delegate to the Whatcom County Democratic Party Convention.
  2. At the Convention, verify the credentials of each person wishing to be seated as a precinct delegate or alternate delegate, and report to the Convention any challenges to credentials.

- e) The Platform Committee will:
  1. Develop and publish a written plan for creating the proposed platform to be presented at the biennial county convention.
  2. Develop the proposed platform using inputs from precinct caucuses, open meetings of specialized platform subcommittees, and other Democratic sources. Except for the committee Chair, participants in the platform development process need not be members of the Central Committee.
  3. Assure that the platform will be clearly written and well-organized before being presented.
- f) The Caucus Committee will:
  1. Organize and conduct the biennial caucus of democrats of Whatcom County.
  2. Provide the caucus results to the Convention Committee, Platform Committee and Credentials Committee, and to the Washington State Democratic Party.
- g) The Nominating Committee ~~will:~~ [See Article III, Section 3.](#)
  1. ~~Seek good candidates for party positions with an eye towards diversity.~~
  2. ~~WCDC Chair will appoint committee Chair in October of appropriate year.~~
  3. ~~First report of nominations should be available at November meeting. Final nominations will be available at least two weeks prior to December Central Committee meeting.~~
- h) The Honored Democrats Committee will:
  1. Identify criteria for recognizing Honored Democrats.
  2. Identify all past Honored Democrats.
  3. Suggest ways for Honored Democrats to be acknowledge

## **ARTICLE XI: BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES**

### **Section 1**

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Central Committee provided that the proposed amendment has been read at a prior regular meeting. PCOs will be provided with a copy of the proposed amendments and sent a reminder of the time and place of the meeting at least 10 days prior to the meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Precinct Committee Officers present and voting is required to amend the Bylaws.

### **Section 2**

~~Standing rules shall be approved through the standard process: they will be drafted by committees, presented and passed by the Executive Board, and then taken to the Central Committee for final passage. The Central Committee may adopt ordinary resolutions of a permanent nature, known as Standing Rules, to further define and prescribe policies and procedures as necessary to execute its powers defined in these Bylaws.~~

~~The Standing Rules of each committee shall be distributed to the Central Committee and available to the membership.~~

## **ARTICLE XII: ROBERT'S RULES**

Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern all questions of procedure not covered in these Bylaws ~~or standing rules.~~