

Richmond City Democratic Committee

Bylaws

Revised 10-2018

Paid for and authorized by the Richmond City Democratic Committee

ARTICLE I

Section 1.01 Name

This organization shall be named “The Richmond City Democratic Committee”.

ARTICLE II

Section 2.01 Purpose and Authority

The purpose of “The Richmond City Democratic Committee” (“City Committee”) shall be to advance the interest of the Democratic Party. The City Committee shall have the sole charge of the affairs of the Democratic Party in the City of Richmond (“the City”), including full control of the Party’s interest in all elections and the nomination of candidates in the City.

ARTICLE III

Membership and Elections

Section 3.01 Number and Qualification

- A. The City Committee shall have elected members plus:
 - 1. those elected officials of government who are elected as Democratic and who reside in the City;
 - 2. the Democratic State Central Committee members who reside in the City; and
 - 3. the presiding officer of any City of Richmond chapter of the Democratic Women’s Club, Young Democrats, Teen Democrats, College Democrats, and High School Democrats.
- B. The number of elected members may be changed by the City Committee by amending these Bylaws.
- C. There shall be one (1) member elected from each precinct who shall be designated Precinct Chair of that precinct. Voting participants may vote for only one Precinct Chair in their designated precinct.
- D. Forty (40) members shall be elected from each City Council District (“Ward”) and shall be designated as Members-at-Large. Voting participants may vote for up to forty (40) Members-at-Large in their designated Ward.
- E. Seventy-five (75) members shall be elected from the City at large and they shall be designated as Members-at-Large. Voting participants may vote for up to fifty (50) Members-at-Large from the City at large.

Section 3.02 Elections of Members

- A. The members of the City Committee shall be elected by a method approved by the State Party Plan. The re-organization of members shall be held during the period between December 1st in odd numbered years and January 15th of the following year. The City Committee shall otherwise determine the time and place of the election and the method of conducting the election, provided such conforms to the then current State Party Plan. Members so elected shall take office at the City Committee's first meeting within forty (40) days following their election.
- B. All persons registered to vote in the City who support the Democratic Party and who comply with the nomination procedures set forth in Sections 3.03 and 3.04 of these Bylaws and other requirements, if any, adopted by the City Committee shall be eligible for election to the City Committee.
- C. The City Committee may levy annual dues as a condition of membership. The amount and method of payment of such dues shall be determined at the City Committee's first (organizational) meeting, however, no party member shall be excluded from City Committee membership because of inability to pay dues. Any City Committee member who is unable to pay the required dues shall sign a Statement of Inability to Pay which shall be filed with the Treasurer. Signing of such a statement shall be conclusive. The City Committee may also request annual dues from the elected official members and State Central Committee members who reside in the City.

Section 3.03 Declaration of Candidacy

Any person who supports the Democratic Party, is registered to vote in the City and in the jurisdiction from which they wish to represent (i.e., precinct for Precinct Chair, Ward for Ward At-Large, or City of Richmond for City-At-Large) and is otherwise qualified to serve as a City Committee member may declare as a candidate for election to the City Committee. Such person, within the time prescribed by the City Committee, shall file with the designated officers of the City Committee a declaration of candidacy which conforms to the requirements of the State Party Plan, applicable election laws, these Bylaws, and the Call and Rules adopted by the City Committee. Official declaration of candidacy forms shall be furnished by the officers without charge and upon request.

Section 3.04 Appointment of Qualifications, Election or Vacancy

When the membership fee has been paid or the Inability to Pay Waiver has been signed and the declaration properly filed and verified, the person so declaring shall become a candidate for the position sought. When there is only one (1) candidate for a position, the Chair shall declare that candidate elected. If no candidate qualifies for a position or the number who qualify is less than the number to be elected, the Chair shall declare that a vacancy exists.

Section 3.05 Vacancies

- A. In the event a vacancy occurs on the City Committee, the City Committee shall elect an eligible person to fill the vacancy at any regular meeting. The meeting notice must specify the vacancy to be filled.
- B. The City Committee may establish requirements for anyone who files as a candidate for election to fill a vacancy on the City Committee.
- C. When an application for membership to fill a vacancy is submitted, the dues of the membership candidate or a signed waiver of inability to pay must accompany the application. Applications will not be considered until the membership fee is paid or the waiver signed. Upon acceptance and election, the new member will be listed as a voting member.

Section 3.06 Rights and Duties of Members

- A. It shall be the right of voting members to participate fully in all business of the City Committee.
- B. It shall be the duty of all voting members to abide by the Democratic Party Plan and these Bylaws, to attend all meetings of the City Committee, to campaign actively on behalf of all Democratic nominees, and to fulfill such other responsibilities as the Chair may assign. Additionally, voting members shall aid in organizing their precincts and in raising funds for the promotion of the Party and for the support of candidates.

Section 3.07 Vacancies and Removals

- A. The City Committee shall have the power to expel any member for cause. Such action, however, shall not be undertaken without ten (10) days notice to the offending member and opportunity for the member to refute such charges before the Steering Committee, and thereafter, the membership at large. See also Section 7.01.
- B. Should any elected member of the City Committee fail to attend three consecutive meetings without advising the Secretary either in person, by telephone, or in writing of that member's inability to attend a particular meeting prior to the time the meeting commences, such person may be removed by vote of the Steering Committee. The Secretary shall advise such member by letter as to the action taken.
- C. Should any member of the City Committee cease to be a registered voter in the jurisdiction from which they were elected to represent (i.e., precinct for Precinct Chair, Ward for Ward At-Large, or City of Richmond for City-At-Large) such person shall immediately cease to be a member of the City Committee and the Chair shall announce that such a vacancy exists.

- D. Should any member be removed under A or B above, that member has the right to appeal to the Congressional District Committee as provided in State Party Plan within fifteen (15) days of this action.
- E. A member removed under B above may reapply for membership but must pay a filing fee which shall be equal to one year's dues before reinstatement. If reinstated, the member will be listed as a voting member.
- F. Members elected to the Steering Committee who fail to attend two consecutive meetings or five meetings in a year must show just cause to retain their seat. The member may appeal to the Steering Committee for waiver. Upon an affirmative 2/3 vote of the Steering Committee membership, the member may retain their seat. If the person is not granted a waiver, the member will be removed from the Steering Committee and the Steering Committee will elect a new Steering Committee member to fill the remainder of their term. The exception being that the member was away on Steering Committee business.

ARTICLE IV

Meetings

Section 4.01 Call of Meetings

- A. The City Committee shall meet regularly on the call of the Chair and at least once per calendar quarter. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair and the call shall conform to the State Party Plan.
- B. Special meetings of the City Committee may also be called by the Chair or at the written request of at least ten percent (10%) of the City committee members if the signed call is filed with the Chair or any other officer of the City Committee at least fifteen (15) days prior to the proposed meeting date; or by a vote of the City Committee at a properly convened meeting of the City Committee. No business other than that stated in the request shall be brought before a special meeting except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present.

Section 4.02 Executive Session

The City Committee may go into executive session upon a majority vote of those present.

ARTICLE V

Officers

Section 5.01 Designation of Officers

The officers of the City Committee shall be the Chair, First Vice Chair for Organization, Second Vice Chair for Finance, Third Vice Chair for Voter Registration, Secretary, Treasurer, and one (1) Ward Chair per Ward. They shall be elected by the City Committee at its first meeting within forty (40) days of its election. All members of the City Committee may vote for the

officers except that only residents of a Ward can vote for that Ward Chair. Only current members of the City Committee can be elected to any office. The newly elected officers will take office immediately after their election. The officers shall serve until their successors have been elected.

ARTICLE VI

Duties of City Committee Officers, Chair Pro Tempore, and Sergeant-at-Arms

Section 6.01 Chair

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the City Committee and Steering Committee, shall appoint all standing committees and sub-committees, shall generally supervise the affairs of the City Committee and its committees, and shall be the recognized head of the Democratic Party in the City. The Chair shall cause to be published all notices and make all public announcements with respect to candidates, elections, or meetings as may be requested by the State Election Law, the State Party Plan, or these Bylaws.

Section 6.02 Vice Chairs

- A. Vice Chairs, in the order designated, shall preside at all meetings of the City Committee in the absence of the Chair, perform all duties, and have all the authority of the Chair when the Chair is unable to perform their duties, and perform other duties designated by the Chair.
- B. The First Vice Chair for Organization shall be responsible for assuring that Precinct and Ward Chairs perform their duties, coordinating the recruitment of new members to the City Committee and candidates for elective office within the City of Richmond, and the management of caucuses, conventions, and primaries for the City Committee.
- C. The Second Vice Chair for Finance shall be Chair of the Budget Committee, shall be an *ex officio* member of the Audit Committee, and shall be an *ex officio* member of all *ad hoc* fund raising committees.
- D. The Third Vice Chair for Voter Registration shall be responsible for coordinating voter registration efforts by the Democratic Party in the City of Richmond.

Section 6.03 Ward Chairs

The Ward Chairs shall be Registered Voters and live in the Ward for which they are elected and shall be responsible for the Democratic Party in their Ward, especially precinct organization and voter registration. To encourage attendance, Ward Chairs shall notify members in their wards of meetings. The Ward Chair shall keep the Steering Committee fully informed of the status of the Party in their Ward.

Section 6.04 Chair Pro Tempore

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chairs at meetings, the First, Second and Third Vice Chairs in that order, the City Committee shall elect a member of its body who shall act as Chair *pro tempore*, and who shall assume all of the duties and authority of the Chair during that meeting.

Section 6.05 Secretary

- A. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the City Committee and at each meeting thereof present the record of the preceding meeting.
- B. The Secretary shall cause notices of meetings to be sent to all members of the City Committee, one by email no later than ten (10) and no earlier than fifteen (15) days before the meeting, one by email the day before the meeting, and one by email the day of the meeting. As to members with no email, the Secretary shall cause notices of meetings to be either mailed by U.S. first class mail or given by telephone once, no later than ten (10) and no earlier than fifteen (15) days before the meeting. In addition, in the event of a priority meeting, the Secretary shall cause members to be notified by robocall.
- C. The Secretary shall conduct correspondence.
- D. The Secretary shall take roll of the members present at meetings of the City Committee.

Section 6.06 Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer shall have charge of all City Committee money, shall deposit such money in a bank within seven (7) business days of receipt to the credit of the City Committee, and shall pay all bills authorized by the Chair or the Steering Committee by check upon the bank in which the account is maintained. All checks must be signed by two of the following officers, one of whom must be the Chair or Treasurer: Chair, Treasurer, Second Vice Chair for Finance.
- B. The Treasurer shall, not later than the 31st day of January of each year, submit to the City Committee a report of all receipts and expenditures. At the expiration of the Treasurer's term of office the accounts shall be audited by an Auditing Committee.
- C. The Treasurer shall be an *ex officio* member of the Finance Committee.

Section 6.07 Sergeant-at-Arms

The Chair shall appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms who shall preserve order during meetings of the City Committee under direction of the presiding officer. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall keep out all intruders or persons not entitled to be at meetings and see that all doors and entrances are properly closed during sessions of the City Committee. When required by the Chair, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall summon members to meetings of the City Committee or its committees.

ARTICLE VII

Removal of Officers or Members

Section 7.01 Removal of Officers or Members

The City Committee at any time, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any duly constituted meeting, may remove any officer or member who is found guilty of willful neglect of any duty imposed, provided that such officer or member is given at least ten (10) days prior written notice of the action to be taken and an opportunity to refute such charges. All removal cases shall be tried in executive session.

ARTICLE VIII

Vacancies

Section 8.01 Declaration of Vacancies

- A. A vacancy in the City Committee shall occur when any member thereof resigns, is removed, is no longer registered to vote in the City, or whenever a sufficient number of members are not elected at the reorganization of members, or whenever the number of the City Committee is increased.

- B. Whenever a vacancy occurs in any Officer position there shall be an election for filling the remainder of the vacant term. Such election shall be held within a period no sooner than thirty (30) days and no later than sixty (60) days from the vacancy being announced at a duly called meeting of the City Committee. If the vacancy occurs within ninety (90) days of December 1st in an odd number year (or at the earliest date as the current State Party Plan calls for the reorganization of county and city committees), then the Chair may appoint a member of the City Committee to serve as Acting officer for the remainder of the term.

- C. Section 8.01-B shall apply to the positions of Chair with the following exceptions.
 - 1. The First Vice Chair for Organization shall serve as Acting Chair until the election of a new Chair (at which time the Acting Chair shall resume the office of First Vice Chair for Organization).

 - 2. If the vacancy occurs within the time referenced above, then the First Vice Chair for Organization shall become Acting Chair and shall appoint an Acting First Vice Chair for Organization. Both Acting officers shall serve until the newly reorganized City committee shall elect its officers.

ARTICLE IX

Steering Committee, Standing Committee, Ward Committees and Sub-Committees

Section 9.01 Appointment of Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall consist of the Chair, three Vice Chairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Ward Chairs, the members of the State Central Committee who reside in the City, the immediate past Chair, and four (4) additional persons appointed by the Chair from among the members of the City Committee who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chair.

Section 9.02 Purpose and Authority of Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall conduct the affairs of the City Committee when the City Committee is not in session. The Steering Committee shall report matters which it acts upon at the next meeting of the City Committee.

Section 9.03 Appointment of Standing Committees and Sub-Committees

The Chair shall appoint at least five (5) City Committee members to each of the following Standing Committees: Finance, Voter Registration, Precinct Organization, Programs and Convention Arrangements, Candidate Recruitment and Review, and Membership and Records. The Chair may appoint such *ad hoc* committees as the Chair deems necessary.

Section 9.04 Ward Steering Committees

At the discretion of the Chair of the City Committee, each Ward Chair may appoint a Ward Steering Committee composed of the Ward Chair, a Secretary, and such other members as the Ward Chair deems necessary. All members of the Ward Committee must be members of the City Committee and reside in the Ward. A current list of such members shall be filed with the Secretary of the City Committee.

ARTICLE X

Quorum

Section 10.01 Number of Members Constituting a Quorum

The State Party Plan's provision for what constitutes a quorum shall be the quorum necessary for the transaction of business at a meeting of the City Committee. A majority of the members shall constitute the quorum necessary for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Steering Committee or any standing committee.

ARTICLE XI

Transfer to Incoming City Committee

Section 11.01 Method of Transfer

At the end of its term the outgoing City Committee shall turn over to the incoming City Committee all its records, funds and at least one (1) copy of these Bylaws for their adoption or reformation. The incoming City Committee shall proceed at once to its permanent organization.

ARTICLE XII

Candidates and Nominations for Public Office

Section 12.01 Declaration of Candidacy

The Chair shall give notice to the public that the declarations of candidacy for the Democratic nomination to be filed in a primary election or caucus for any public office to be voted on at the succeeding General Election will be received on proper forms to be furnished by the City Committee and filed by a certain date, such date shall be fixed by the City Committee. Each person seeking nomination as a candidate in the Democratic Primary or caucus shall be required to sign in the presence of the Chair, the Secretary, or a Notary Public, the declaration of candidacy required by the State Party Plan.

Section 12.02 Nomination by City Committee

When, by reason of time limitations, it becomes necessary for the City Committee to make a nomination for an elective office, it shall proceed in the following manner. The names of all qualified persons who have thus declared their candidacy, or any other qualified persons who may be presented by any member of the City Committee, will be before the City Committee for consideration, and the City Committee shall proceed to nominate by written ballot, the name receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped from further consideration until at least two (2) succeeding ballots shall have been cast, and the balloting shall then proceed until one (1) candidate receives the vote of a majority of the City Committee members present and voting.

ARTICLE XIII

Qualification of Delegates

Section 13.01 Qualification of Delegates

Each person offering as a delegate or alternate to any Democratic Party Convention shall, upon filing an application with any of the designated officers of the City Committee, pay a fee to be determined by the City Committee not to exceed the amount stated by the Delegate Selection Plan of the Democratic Party of Virginia for that convention. These funds will be paid into the treasury of the City Committee and shall not be subject to refund whether or not there is any opposition offered against the several candidates. Each person offered as a delegate or alternate to

a Democratic Party Convention shall sign a declaration of candidacy on a form provided by the City Committee, such form shall contain the following declaration:

I, _____, announce myself as a candidate for the office of Delegate or Alternate to _____ to be held at _____ on _____. I do not intend to support any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee in the next ensuing election.

Persons attending mass meetings may be required to file similar declarations.

ARTICLE XIV

Inability to Pay Fee

Section 14.01 Statement of Inability to Pay

No party member shall be excluded from participation in a mass meeting or convention because of inability to pay a fee. Any Democrat who desires to participate but who is unable to pay the requested fee shall sign a Statement of Inability to Pay. Signing of such a Statement of Inability to pay shall be conclusive.

ARTICLE XV

Full Participation

Section 15.01 Full Participation

- A. Full participation without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age (if of voting age), color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, or disability is encouraged. Members shall endeavor to include individuals from the above groups in City Committee appointed committees and delegations to Democratic Conventions.

ARTICLE XVI

Amendments to Bylaws

Section 16.01 Method of Amendment

- A. Spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in these Bylaws may be corrected by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present at a regularly called meeting of the City Committee. Such changes shall be considered as corrections and not amendments.

- B. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by the Steering Committee or by a petition signed by one-quarter of the membership of the City Committee. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the membership ten (10) to thirty (30) days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting at which they will be discussed.
- C. If any five (5) members call for a secret ballot or a division of the house, the Chair shall appoint a Teller Committee at the meeting cited above which shall have at least three (3) members. The Teller Committee shall have at least one (1) member from each side if the proposed amendments are opposed by at least five (5) members.
- D. Approval shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members in good standing attending at two (2) consecutive meetings.
- E. The unopened ballots will be opened and tallied by the Teller Committee who shall then inform the City Committee Chair of the results. If any member of the Teller Committee believes that the results of the tally are improper then that individual can demand that the ballots be placed in a sealed container and held by the City Committee Chair pending an appeal to the appropriate Democratic Congressional District Committee.
- F. Proposed amendments which receive a vote of approval shall take effect immediately unless otherwise stated in the amendments. A copy of the revised Bylaws will be sent by email or, as to members without email, by first class mail, to each member of the City Committee within four (4) weeks of adoption.

ARTICLE XVII

Rules

Section 17.01 Applicable Rules

The following rules of procedure shall be applicable at all meetings of the City Committee.

1. Voting shall be voice vote, but a division may be ordered and a recorded vote (yea, nay, or abstain) may be had if five (5) members of the body demand it or a secret ballot may be had if five (5) members of the body demand it.
2. No member of the body shall occupy the floor for more than five minutes at one time, unless by unanimous vote of the body, and no member shall be recognized to speak upon any question twice until all members who desire to do so have debated the question, provided that this rule shall not apply to a member answering a question specifically addressed to that member by another member.
3. Members desiring to speak at a meeting shall rise and address the Chair and be recognized before proceeding. Persons who are not members of the body shall be permitted to speak at a meeting only upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present.

4. Other parliamentary procedure shall be in accordance with the latest available edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

ARTICLE XVIII

Business Transacted at Meetings

Section 18.01 Order of Business

The order of business at each meeting of the body shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call of Members
3. Secretary's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Chair's Report
6. Standing Committee Reports
7. Special Committee Reports
8. Announcements
9. Unfinished Business
10. New Business
11. Adjournment

The Chair may modify the Order of Business for a particular meeting to accommodate guest speakers.