

## **NEWPORT NEWS DEMOCRATIC CITY COMMITTEE**

### **BYLAWS**

#### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

##### *Section 1. Name*

The name of this organization shall be the Newport News Democratic City Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee).

#### **ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATIONAL AUTHORITY, PURPOSE, AND INCORPORATED DOCUMENTS**

##### *Section 1. Committee Organization*

The Committee is organized under the authority of and in accordance with the Code of Virginia and the Party Plan of the Democratic Party of Virginia currently in effect.

##### *Section 2. Purpose*

The purpose and objective of the Committee shall be to conduct the affairs of the Democratic Party of Virginia in the City of Newport News. To that end, the Committee shall:

- (A) Perfect and foster the presence of the Democratic Party in the City of Newport News;
- (B) Identify, register, and encourage voting by qualified residents of the City of Newport News;
- (C) Identify, recruit, and nominate qualified persons:
  - (1) Seeking election to federal, state, and local office (general and special elections), providing them with the training and support required to run competitive campaigns;
  - (2) For election as Committee members and delegates to conventions;
  - (3) For consideration for appointment to a governmental position by Democratic officials at all levels of government;
- (D) Recognize the diversity of our society and the belief that our Party will be strengthened by these differences;
- (E) Adhere to and implement the policies contained in the national and state Democratic Party platforms.

### Section 3. *Fundraising*

The Committee shall raise funds for the Democratic Party and its candidates in office.

### Section 4. *Scope of Bylaws*

These bylaws shall govern the Committee and shall continue in effect, subject to amendment as provided below. All appropriate provisions of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan (State Plan), as amended, are incorporated into these bylaws by reference, and made a part thereof.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

### Section 1. *Reorganization*

The reorganization of the Committee shall be in accordance with and as prescribed by the Party Plan of the Democratic Party of Virginia. Caucuses for the purpose of the election of the Committee may be held on Saturday or on any weekday evening.

### Section 2. *Membership Eligibility*

Each voting member of the Committee shall be a qualified voter under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, duly registered to vote in the City of Newport News, and believe in the principles of the Democratic Party.

All members of the Committee, with its Officers and Executive Board duly elected, shall serve a term of two years upon approval of their membership application unless said member dies, moves from Newport News, resigns, or is removed from office. In such case, a vacancy is to be declared and filled by a majority vote of the Committee.

No person may be nominated as a member until they have completed an application, including a party loyalty statement, on a form approved per Article III Section 3.

### Section 3. *Membership Application Approval*

Membership applications may be voted upon at the reorganization meeting. Applications received between reorganization meetings will be accepted and voted on by the Executive Board.

### Section 4. *Special or Honorary Memberships*

Special or honorary memberships shall be extended as follows:

- (A) Democratic elected officials at the federal, state, and local level are considered ex-officio members of the Committee. These members are eligible to participate in all Committee functions and have full voting privileges on Committee business. Ex-officio members shall not be precinct representatives.

- (B) Non-voting memberships may be extended to two (2) representatives each for any other organization deemed by the Committee to have for its major purpose the furthering of the Democratic Party and its goals. Such representatives shall not be entitled to vote but may otherwise participate in the activities of the Committee.
- (C) Honorary membership may be extended by Committee vote to those persons who have shown particularly high standards and efforts in promoting and fostering the Democratic Party and its goals. Said honorary members shall not be precinct representatives or have voting privileges.

#### *Section 5. Partners and Sustaining Members*

Any person who wishes to contribute to the local Party may become a Partner of the Committee. A person may become a Partner with a minimum yearly contribution of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). Partners would receive news of the Committee as well as any publications or mailing from the Committee. A person may become a Sustaining member with a minimum yearly contribution of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00). Sustaining members would receive news of the Committee as well as publications or mailings from the Committee. In addition, Sustaining members and Partners may attend any meeting, but attendance is not obligated.

#### *Section 6. Special Membership Lists*

The Membership Subcommittee shall maintain and update the List of Honorary, Non-Voting, and Sustaining members.

#### *Section 7. Rights and Responsibilities of Members*

Members of the Committee shall have the following rights and duties:

- (A) It shall be the right of the voting members to fully participate in all business of the 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 Committee, to campaign actively in and on behalf of all Democratic nominees, and to fulfill such other responsibilities as the Chair(s) may assign. Additionally, voting members shall aid in organizing their precincts, recruiting members, and in raising funds for the promotion of the Party and for the support of candidates.

#### *Section 8. Vacancies and Removals*

Vacancies or removals from office and/or membership are as follows:

- (A) The Committee may remove from office and/or membership any person who neglects party duties or for cause. In the event of removal for cause, such action, shall not be undertaken without notice to the offending member and an opportunity for them to refute such charges before the Grievance Subcommittee,

and thereafter, to the membership at large, whereupon the Committee will vote to remove the membership of the offending member by majority vote. The member has the right to file an appeal to the 3rd Congressional District Committee as laid out in the Virginia Democratic Party Plan of any actions taken against them by the Committee.

- (B) Any member who violates Section 10.8 of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan shall have their membership revoked, subject to a vote of the Executive Board (“No Democratic Committee member... or officer shall publicly support, endorse, or assist any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee. In the event any Democratic committee member shall undertake such public activity, the appropriate Democratic Committee shall remove said person from office”).
- (C) Any member who shall be guilty of willful neglect of duty imposed upon them may have their membership revoked. The following shall be considered willful neglect of duties:
  - (1) Malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of duties;
  - (2) Conduct injurious to the good name of the Democratic Party or the Committee;
  - (3) Use or implication of the name or resources of the Committee to promote a contested candidate for public office who is not a Democratic nominee or endorsee, including but not limited to impersonation of a Democratic sample ballot, in writing, in color (blue), and/or verbally;
  - (4) Public recruitment, endorsement, support, assistance, or contribution to a declared or nominated candidate for another political party or an independent, who is opposed to a nominated Democratic candidate.
- (D) For violations not otherwise specified as requiring the removal of a member, the Committee may remove an Officer from their leadership position under the same process outlined in Article III Section 8(A) while permitting their retention as a member. The Executive Board may also initiate the process for removing an Officer from their leadership position in Article III Section 8(A), notifying the member and giving the opportunity to refute charges before the Grievance Subcommittee, after which the Committee membership at large still votes to remove.
- (E) Should any voting member of the Committee fail to attend three consecutive meetings without advising the Secretary or an Executive Board member either in person, by telephone, or in writing of that member’s inability to attend a meeting prior to the time the meeting commences, such person shall be subject to revocation of their voting rights as a member or removal per Section 8(A). The secretary shall advise such person by letter as to the action that will be taken if the member misses a fourth consecutive meeting.

- (F) Should any person be removed, they have the right to appeal to the Congressional District Committee(s) of the City (whichever is applicable) within fifteen (15) days of the action.
- (G) A member removed under Section 8(A) may reapply for membership but must pay the yearly dues upon reinstatement. The member will be listed as a non-voting member for a period of thirty (30) days. After the thirty (30) day period, they will have full voting rights.
- (H) Members elected to the Executive Board who fail to attend two (2) consecutive meetings or five (5) meetings in a year without notifying the Chair(s) either in person, by telephone or in writing of that member's inability to attend a meeting prior to the time the meeting commences, must show just cause to retain their seat. The member may appeal to the Committee for a waiver. Upon an affirmative 2/3 vote of the Committee membership present, the member may retain their office, and if the person is not voted back in, the member will be removed from the Board and the Committee will elect a new Board member to fill the remainder of their term.

## **ARTICLE IV. ELECTED OFFICERS**

### *Section 1. Officer Elections*

At the reorganization meeting, the Committee shall elect all Officers.

### *Section 2. Officer Duties*

The Officers of the Committee and their duties shall be:

#### **(A) Chair**

- Preside at all meetings of the Committee and for the Democratic Party in Newport News;
- Will, whenever possible, represent the Committee to other organizations, the media, and the public to inform the public of the policies, aims, and activities of the Party and the Committee;
- Run meetings;
- Serve as liaison to other committees and state and national parties;
- Develop an annual strategic plan for the committee;
- Appoint chairpersons for subcommittees;
- Provide guidance to Vice Chair and subcommittees;
- Serve as an ex-officio member of all subcommittees;
- Maintain direct responsibility for the organization of city conventions.

#### **(B) Vice-Chair**

- Assume the duties of the Chair(s) in the event of the absence, resignation or inability of the Chair(s) to perform their duties;
- The vice chair shall be a member of all subcommittees, but not chair;
- Perform additional duties as assigned by the Chair.

#### (C) Secretary

- Shall keep minutes of meetings of the Committee and shall make them available to members;
- Serve as custodian of the bylaws governing the Committee and incorporate therein all duly adopted amendments;
- Manage outside correspondence, and send by mail and/or email proper and timely notices of all meetings.

At the expiration of their term, the Secretary shall turn over to their successor all books, documents, records, correspondence files, and any other property of the Committee that they may have in their possession.

#### (D) Treasurer

- Shall receive the funds of the Committee and disburse them as duly authorized by the Committee;
- Develop an annual budget and ensure compliance to budgetary decisions of the Committee;
- Provide a financial report at each regular meeting of the Committee.

At the expiration of their term of office, they shall turn over to their successor all funds, books, records, and property that they may have belonging to the Committee. The Treasurer shall be a member (not the Chair) of the standing Audit and Finance Subcommittee;

#### (E) Parliamentarian

- Serves as expert in rules of order and the proper procedure for the conduct of meetings of deliberative assemblies;
- Shall advise the Committee, the Executive Board, and all subcommittees on interpretation of the bylaws;
- Serves as a member of the Bylaws Subcommittee.

#### (F) Sergeant-at-arms

- Assists the Chair in maintaining order and decorum at meetings of the Committee;
- Provides count in a show of hands vote;
- Assists the Secretary in obtaining a record of all voting members present at Committee meetings.

### Section 3. *Order of Succession*

During the Officer's terms, vacancies in the position of Chair and Vice Chair shall be filled in the following order of succession, if possible: Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Sergeant-at-arms. If there are multiple Chairs, succession occurs only if all Chair positions are vacant. If succession is not possible, replacement for these offices and all other vacancies will be appointed by the Executive Board, and elected at the next regularly scheduled meeting, provided that seven (7) days written notice is provided to the membership.

## **ARTICLE V. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### Section 1. *Executive Board Membership*

The Executive Board shall consist of the Committee Officers, Chairs of the Senate 23rd and 24th Districts, and House of Delegates Districts 69, 70, and 85, members of the Central Committee of the Democratic Party representing Newport News and the subcommittee Chairpersons that have been duly appointed by the Chairs.

### Section 2. *Executive Board Quorum*

The Executive Board shall meet at the direction of the Chair to plan the business of the Committee and to act when necessary between Committee meetings. A quorum of more than 50% of voting persons is required to act. Meetings may take place in person, by phone, or by video. Votes may be taken in person, by email, or by phone.

### Section 3. *Executive Board Duties*

The Executive Board shall:

- (A) Formulate policies and procedures, establish short and long-term goals, and shall formulate a Newport News Democratic City Committee platform;
- (B) Be charged with the responsibility of acting on behalf of the Committee in emergency matters;
- (C) Meet at the call of the Chair(s), or four (4) members of the Board. An emergency may be declared by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Executive Board and any action taken concerning such emergency shall require the affirmative approval of a majority of Board members.

## **ARTICLE VI. SUBCOMMITTEES**

### Section 1. *Named Subcommittees*

The Chair, with approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint the chairpersons of the following subcommittees:

- Affirmative Action, Advocacy, and Activism
- Audit and Finance
- Bylaws
- Grievance
- Membership
- Qualifications
- Outreach
- Precinct Organization

## Section 2. *Subcommittee Duties*

The identified subcommittees and their related duties are as follows:

### (A) *Affirmative Action, Advocacy, and Activism:*

Promotes equitable practices, advocates for social justice, and mobilizes community activism to align with the committee's broader objectives. Encourages participation in the delegate selection process and all-party functions. Concern shall be paid to young people, women, Blacks, LGBTQ+, individuals with disabilities, socioeconomic groups that are financially disadvantaged, and other minorities.

### (B) *Audit and Finance Subcommittee:*

Examines the accounts of the Treasurer and gives a written report to the Committee within ninety (90) days of the close of each fiscal year. The Audit and Finance Subcommittee may choose to appoint an outside auditor to examine the accounts and report.

Systematically budgets and solicits funds for the activities of the Committee. The Subcommittee shall make regular written reports of its expenditures to the Committee and shall present a yearly budget at the February meeting to be approved by the Committee.

The Treasurer shall be a member of the Audit and Finance Subcommittee, but not its chair, and may not participate in the audit.

### (C) *Bylaws Subcommittee:*

Periodically reviews and amends the Committee bylaws to further align with the State Plan or provide clarity into the business and function of the Committee. The Bylaws Committee shall meet at least once per year to review the bylaws.

### (D) *Grievance Subcommittee:*



This subcommittee shall conduct any investigation requested by the Equal Opportunities Commission of the Virginia Democratic Party and shall investigate, evaluate, and make recommendations concerning any complaint of improper conduct or charge of willful neglect or disloyalty by any member, nominee, or elected official of the Democratic Party in Newport News.

*(E) Membership Subcommittee:*

Maintains current list of active and inactive Committee membership. Works in concert with the Secretary and Treasurer to maintain accurate records related to members, and records their attendance at Committee meetings.

*(F) Qualifications Subcommittee:*

Seeks out and recommends to the Committee qualified Democrats for vacancies on the Executive Board, Subcommittees, politically appointed positions, advisory commissions, and boards at all levels of government. The Qualifications Subcommittee may also screen all local Democratic candidates for elective office and recommend whether they should receive the endorsement and support of the Committee.

*(G) Outreach Subcommittee:*

Responsible for planning and implementing two major fundraisers during the calendar year; plan other activities that will enhance and grow the membership to include groups not currently represented on the Committee.

Devises and executes the communications strategy for the NNDCC, including but not limited to: management of website and social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) for the Committee, provision of timely email response to NNDCC email, maintain Committee calendar, ensure creation and dissemination of informational emails/newsletters, and submit information to local media and calendars.

*(H) Precinct Organization Subcommittee:*

Recruits, trains, and coordinates party workers who will organize the voting precincts in the City of Newport News. This Subcommittee shall select precinct captains and will consult and work with campaign managers of all candidates endorsed by the Committee.

*Section 3. Appointment to Subcommittee*

Appointments of Committee members to a subcommittee shall be approved by the Executive Board with a majority vote.

*Section 4. Ad Hoc Subcommittees*

The Chair may establish Ad Hoc Subcommittees as the need arises. All Ad Hoc Subcommittees shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Ad Hoc subcommittee chairs shall not be voting members of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VII. ELECTION AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### *Section 1. Application for Officer Election*

The Committee shall establish requirements for anyone who files as a candidate for Officer elections.

Applications for filing will be made available through the Committee Secretary and chairs, and will be filed at the time, place, and manner provided for by the Committee.

### *Section 2. Officer Election Procedure*

Officers shall be chosen through an election adhering to the guidelines below:

- (A) The election shall be:
  - (1) Contested, by precinct caucus; or
  - (2) Unopposed Committee candidates, who have met all requirements shall be declared duly elected by the Committee by majority vote of those voting members present.
- (B) All candidates for the Committee, before election, are to be approved by the Committee.
- (C) The election shall take place during the period between December 1<sup>st</sup> in odd numbered years and the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following January. This Committee must determine the date of their reorganization meeting and communicate that information to the State Party by November 15<sup>th</sup> of each odd numbered year.

### *Section 3. Officer Election Grievance Procedure*

Any ten (10) Democratic voters of a county or city who feel that the Democratic City Committee has been elected in violation of the Virginia Democratic Party Plan, may within fifteen (15) days after such election, appeal in writing to the Congressional District Committee(s) (whichever is applicable).

## **ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS**

### *Section 1. Meeting Classifications*

The Committee shall hold the following meetings:

- (A) *Organizational Meeting.* Within forty (40) days following the reorganizational caucus, the Committee shall hold an organizational meeting, at which time the officers as provided for in Article IV, shall be nominated and elected. Those duly elected Officers shall serve on the Executive Board of the Committee for two (2) years.
- (B) *Regular Meetings.* Meetings shall be held at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of every month, except in November and December, when they may be called at the discretion of the Chair(s). The Committee should hold a November regular meeting after the election.
- (C) *Special Meetings.* Such meetings can be called by the Chair or Vice-Chair with the concurrence of at least three (3) of the members of the Executive Board, or by written petition of ten (10) percent of the voting membership.

## Section 2. *Parliamentarian Order*

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern all Committee, Executive Board or subcommittee meetings.

## Section 3. *Quorum*

Thirty percent (30%) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

After a quorum is established and declared, at the time of any given vote, members shall determine any issue by a simple majority, except where otherwise provided by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, and as listed below, a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required for amendments to these bylaws.

## Section 4. *Proxy Voting*

Proxy voting is not permitted in the Committee.

## Section 5. *Conflict of Interest*

In the event that a professional, financial, familial, or romantic relationship exists between the Chair of the Committee or a member of the Qualifications Subcommittee and a candidate seeking the Democratic nomination or endorsement for that district, that may impair or appear to impair the chair or a Qualifications Subcommittee member's objectivity in presiding over such a nomination, that person shall immediately recuse themselves from the administration and oversight of duties related to the conduct and execution of the nomination or endorsement for that office.

Failure of the Chair or Qualifications Subcommittee member to recuse themselves pursuant to the paragraph above is considered nonfeasance of duties, and that person is subject to removal from their role per Article III Section 8(D).

## ARTICLE IX. FINANCES

### Section 1. *Dues*

Annual dues are \$50.00 per year and should be paid annually at the January meeting. At the discretion of the Treasurer, they may allow a member's dues to be paid monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually. 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 and file it with the Treasurer. Signing of such a statement shall be conclusive.

A member's dues run from the date a member is voted into the Committee or, in the case of members coming into the Committee at the time of reorganization, every two years. Membership dues therefore run from the applicable dates to the next reorganization.

### Section 2. *Nonpayment of Dues*

Nonpayment of dues shall suspend that member's voting rights until such time as the dues are paid. Dues are payable without regard to monthly meeting attendance, whether the absence was or was not excused. The total amount of dues will be collected at the next attended meeting to bring the member back to full voting status. Should the member elect to not pay dues to return to voting status, their voting rights shall remain suspended until dues are paid through the current month.

### Section 3. *Unauthorized Expenditures by Chair*

The Chair is authorized to expend up to \$100.00 a month on a transaction without approval of the Executive Board or the Committee.

### Section 4. *Executive Board Authorization*

The Executive Board shall have the power to approve unusual expenditures not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00).

### Section 5. *Monetary Contributions to Candidates for Office*

A motion for a monetary contribution to a candidate for office must pass by majority vote of the Committee members present. No contribution shall be made if the amount of available funds is less than \$1,000.

## ARTICLE X. COMMUNICATIONS

### Section 1. *Public Statements*

No person other than the Chair of the Committee shall make releases or public statements in the name of or on behalf of the Committee setting forth Democratic Public Policy.

### Section 2. *Official Committee Correspondence*

Any and all correspondence, including social media posts, that uses the name or logo of the Committee, with the intent to represent the interests of the Committee, shall be approved by the Chair(s) or Vice-Chair of the Committee.

Formal Committee business, including voting conducted in the course of a meeting of the Committee or Executive Board, must be conducted via email, video chat, or in-person. Informal discussions outside of these means will not be considered formal business of the Committee.

### Section 3. *Respectful Conduct*

All correspondence germane to the business of the Committee must be conducted in a respectful and considerate manner.

## **ARTICLE XI. ENDORSEMENTS**

The Qualifications Subcommittee may, in appropriate circumstances, suggest endorsements of candidates in nonpartisan elections that shall be considered by the full Committee.

## **ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a two thirds majority at any meeting of the Committee, provided that the members of the Committee are provided at least seven days notice of the proposed amendment.

Adopted and ratified by the membership of the Newport News Democratic City Committee on July 24, 2025.

*Philip Whitman*

Chair

*Tahnisha Clark Hines*

Secretary

July 24, 2025

Date

**Revised April 1993**

**Revised February 2014**

**Revised January 27, 1994**

**Revised 2016**

**Revised February 28, 1994**

**Revised October 24, 2019**

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