

# BYLAWS OF THE MADISON COUNTY VIRGINIA DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

REVISED November 23, 2019

## Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Madison County Democratic Committee (of Madison County, Virginia), hereinafter called "the County Committee".

## Article II. Purpose and Organization

Section 1. The purpose of the County Committee, acting in accordance with the Virginia Democratic Party Plan, is to promote the interests of the Democratic Party (hereinafter called "the Party"), in Madison County.

Section 2. In pursuit of the aforesaid purpose, the County Committee seeks to:

- a) Support the nominees of the Party in all national, state, and local elections;
- b) Educate the public on the ideals of the Party, the qualifications of its nominees for office, and the stands of its nominees on issues which they might address in carrying out the duties of the offices sought;
- c) Encourage individuals to join the Party, to register to vote, and to support the Party's nominees for office; and
- d) Raise funds necessary to promote the foregoing objectives. Funds received shall not accrue to the benefit of individual members of the County Committee, except that the County Committee may pay reasonable compensation to members for expenses they incur in furtherance of its objectives.

Section 3. The County Committee is organized under the authority of and in accordance with the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan currently in effect (hereinafter referred to as "the Party Plan"). Nothing contained in these bylaws is intended to conflict with either the Code of Virginia or the Party Plan. If any such conflict should occur, then the Code of Virginia or the Party Plan shall take precedence.

Section 4. All activities of the County Committee, including mass meetings, caucuses, primaries, conventions, and fund raising, shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Party Plan.

## Article III. Membership

Section 1. Any person may serve as a member of the County Committee who:

- a) Is registered to vote in Madison County;
- b) Believes in the principles of the Party; and
- c) Does not intend to support the campaign of any candidate opposing any nominee of the Party.

Section 2. The County Committee shall make every effort to include at least one person from each precinct. There shall be no limit to the number of persons that may serve on the County Committee, and new members may be added from time to time.

Section 3. Ex officio members of the County Committee shall include:

- a) Any member of the Party residing in Madison County who holds a local, state, or national elective office, or an office in the state or national Party; and
- b) Any person who has served as Chair of the County Committee in the past, who is willing to serve, and who continues to meet the requirements of Section 1 of this Article.

Section 4. Any member of the County Committee may be removed for cause by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting properly called according to Article V, Section 2; provided that prior written notice of the proposed removal is given to the offending member, and they be afforded an opportunity to appear at the meeting called for that purpose and refute the charges made.

## **Article IV. Elections to the County Committee**

Section 1. A caucus of Democratic voters of Madison County shall be held between December 1<sup>st</sup> in odd numbered years and the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following January. The purpose of this meeting shall be to elect the members of the County Committee.

Section 2. Notice of all caucuses shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting, stating the place, date, time, and purpose of the meeting. The County Committee shall post this notification using channels of communication typically used by the committee, providing the widest possible dissemination within its jurisdiction, including the County Committee website, social media, email database, congressional district website, and the DPVA website. A notice shall be given in the *Madison Eagle* community calendar, as appropriate. Meetings shall be held in places easily accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

Section 3. Following the election of its members as provided herein, the new County Committee shall elect a chair, vice chair(s), secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> following the caucus referred to in Section 1 of this article. The date, time and place the meeting where the election of officers will occur shall be made known to the Committee members in advance following the notice requirements in Article IV, Section 2. Should the meeting take place immediately following adjournment of the caucus to elect committee members, or within 7 days thereafter, notice of the meeting shall be included in the public advertisement for the caucus. All officers elected by the County Committee shall be residents of and registered to vote in the jurisdiction of the County Committee.

Section 4. The secretary shall submit to State Party headquarters within five (5) days of his or her election the names, addresses, emails and telephone numbers of the officers and members of the County Committee. The secretary shall submit a list of any changes to the County Committee list every 6 months thereafter until the next Committee election.

## **Article V. Meetings**

Section 1. Each year the County Committee shall meet no less than twice, with the meeting called by the Chair or at least one-tenth of the members of the County Committee. The Executive Committee shall hold at least one meeting each quarter. The County Committee may convene other meetings as needs arise, in accordance with the Party Plan.

Section 2. The time and place of all meetings of the County Committee shall be publicized fully and, in such manner, as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. The public may attend all such meetings as observers. Written notice of all meetings of the County Committee shall normally be sent to each member not less than one week beforehand. Notices shall state the place, date, time, and purposes of meeting. No votes on major decisions, nominations, or endorsements may be taken unless announced in the relevant notices, or unless mandated by the Virginia Democratic Party, or allowed by a two-thirds vote of those present. The only exception to the requirement of advance notice is an emergency, such as that created by the death or withdrawal of a candidate in the week before an election.

Section 3. Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, decisions of the caucuses and County Committee shall be made by a majority of those present and voting. Each Democrat at a caucus, and each member at a meeting of the County Committee, shall have one vote. No proxies shall be allowed. Secret ballots shall be used if requested by any member present.

Section 4. The County Committee shall prescribe the methods to be used to nominate candidates for local offices and to elect delegates and alternates to party conventions. Such nominations and elections shall be made by primary, convention, or caucus. In the election of delegates and alternates to any District or State convention, the County Committee shall hold a local caucus. The number of delegates and alternates to be elected will be pursuant to the Call to Convention and Delegate Selection Plan issued for said Convention. [See Article IX.]

Section 5. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all business procedures of the County Committee.

## **Article VI: Executive Committee**

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee of up to ten people, including the officers of the County Committee, the immediate past chair, and such other persons as may be elected by the membership.

Section 2. The duties of the Executive Committee are to:

- a) Conduct necessary business in the intervals between meetings of the County Committee, subject to review at the next meeting of the County Committee;
- b) Review and evaluate the status of actions taken to carry out decisions of the County Committee; and serve as a sounding board for ideas to further the objectives of the Party.

Section 3. If a vacancy occurs in any office, the Executive Committee shall nominate an eligible candidate to complete the unexpired term, and an election to fill the vacancy (by a majority vote of those members present and voting) shall be held at the next meeting of the County Committee, within 60 days of the vacancy.

## **Article VII. Officers**

Section 1. The officers of the County Committee shall be a Chair, Vice Chair(s), a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section 2. The Chair shall:

- a) Provide for the day-to-day coordination of the work of the County Committee, including making assignments to officers or committee chairs;
- b) Prepare the agenda and preside at all caucuses and meetings of the County Committee and Executive Committee;
- c) Appoint committee chairs;
- d) Be the official representative of the Madison County Democratic Party and designate others to represent it when necessary; and
- e) Serve as member ex officio of all committees.

Section 3. The Vice Chair(s) shall assist the Chair in any duties as assigned. Duties include:

- a) Presiding at any meeting if the Chair is absent;
- b) Have the authority of the Chair when the latter, for any cause, is unable to act; and
- c) Be responsible for sending out notices of caucuses and meetings of the County Committee (Vice Chair for Communications).

Section 4. The Secretary shall:

- a) Record the minutes of all caucuses and meetings of the County Committee and the Executive Committee;
- b) Keep an accurate record of attendance of members at each meeting;
- c) Conduct the correspondence of the County Committee, subject to the direction of the Chair; and
- d) Within five days of his or her election, the Secretary shall submit to state party headquarters the names of the officers and members and their contact information. Thereafter, an updated list shall be submitted every six months. [Required by Party Plan.]

Section 5. The Treasurer shall:

- a) Be responsible for the safekeeping of the funds of the County Committee;
- b) Keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures;
- c) Make disbursements as authorized by the Chair, including payment to the Democratic Party of Virginia as annual dues;
- d) Present a financial report at each meeting of the County Committee; and
- e) Submit the books and accounts annually, and upon the change from one Treasurer to another, for audit. The Chair shall appoint for this purpose a committee of three members who, having conducted

the audit, shall sign a statement certifying whether the books are in good order and the financial reports of the Treasurer are correct.

Section 6. Upon leaving office, each officer shall turn over to his/her successor, or to the Chair, without delay, all records, books and other materials pertaining to the office.

### **Article VII. Committees**

The County Committee may create such standing and special committees as it may deem necessary to promote the objectives of the Party. The chairs of the standing committees shall be responsible for selecting and organizing their committees and carrying forward adopted programs of work. Appointees to committees need not be members of the County Committee but should meet the requirements of Article III, Section 1.

### **Article VIII. Endorsements for Public Office**

Section 1. The County Committee may endorse candidates for local office and may prescribe the method to be used for granting such endorsements.

Section 2. Whenever the County Committee determines that endorsements shall be made at caucuses, the provisions of Article V, Sections 2-4 shall apply.

Section 3. Whenever the County Committee determines that endorsements shall be made at meetings of the County Committee, the following procedures shall be followed:

- a) The names of all qualified person, who have either declared their candidacy or show names are presented by members of the County Committee, shall be before the committee for consideration;
- b) Each member of the County Committee shall have one vote for each endorsement, no proxies being allowed, and secret ballots shall be used if requested by any member present; and
- c) The person who receives a majority of the votes cast for a given office shall receive the endorsement of the Madison County Democratic Party; and to that end, if no one receives a majority on the first ballot, the person with the lowest number of votes shall be dropped from consideration, and voting shall continue until a majority vote is obtained for each endorsement.

Section 4. The candidate duly endorsed by the County Committee shall have access to Vote Builder upon request and verification of the endorsement.

Section 5. No County Committee member or officer shall publicly support, endorse, or assist any candidate opposed to a Democratic nominee. If a County Committee member is accused of undertaking such public activity, the County Committee shall vote on whether the member has undertaken such public activity. The member's removal from the County Committee shall be automatic if the County Committee finds that the member has engaged in such public activity. Such action shall not be taken without at least ten (10) days written notice to the accused member and an opportunity for him or her to refute such charges.

Section 6. The County Committee, as part of the Democratic Party of Virginia may not formally endorse contested candidates for office prior to their nominations.

### **Article IX. Selection of Delegates to District, State, and National Conventions**

The Democratic Party of Virginia Party Plan governs the selection of delegates and alternates to district, state, and national conventions. All names of qualified persons wishing to be delegates and alternates shall be presented to caucuses called for the purpose. Persons receiving the most votes, up to the number of persons corresponding to the number of delegates and alternates allocated to Madison County, shall be selected.

### **Article X. Bylaws and Amendments**

Section 1. These bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the County Committee meeting, provided they are sent to the members at least one week prior to the meeting. The adopted bylaws shall provide the necessary guidelines for the proper operation of the County Committee. The bylaws, when not in conflict with law or the Party Plan, shall be considered valid and binding. The bylaws shall be mailed to State headquarters within fourteen (14) days of approval by the County Committee and shall be kept on permanent file and made available for public viewing.

Section 2. These bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a meeting of the County Committee, provided that the text of proposed amendments is mailed to all members of the County Committee at least a week prior to the meeting.

### **Article XI. General provisions**

Section 1. Voting by proxy or by unit rule (wherein all members are required to cast a vote in accordance with the majority) is prohibited.

Section 2. The County Committee has the authority to levy and set reasonable filing fees, dues, and assessments. Individual waivers of fees, dues, and assessments may be granted by the Chair.

Section 3. A quorum of forty percent (40%) of the active members of the County Committee shall be required to take any action, except to adjourn the meeting to another time or place.

Section 3.1 For the purposes of establishing a quorum for a regular monthly meeting<sup>1</sup>, an active member is any member who has attended at least one of the previous two regular monthly meetings. Members who have missed both previous regular monthly meetings will be considered inactive for the purposes of establishing a quorum and will not be counted towards the quorum requirement for the current regular monthly meeting. An inactive member who attends a regular monthly meeting shall be restored immediately to active status for all purposes other than establishing quorum for that regular monthly meeting.

*1 A regular monthly meeting is defined as those publicly announced meetings that are currently scheduled to occur on the 4th Saturday of each month. This does not include special events such as rallies, parades, house parties, biennial reorganization, caucuses, etc.*

Section 4. The County Committee has the authority to adopt official policies by a majority vote at a County Committee meeting. Each proposed policy shall be presented to the membership present, in writing, in a distinct document at the meeting during which the vote is taken. Upon adoption by a majority vote, the Secretary shall mark the policy document as adopted at the County Committee meeting, indicate the date of the meeting and sign the document. Each signed and dated policy document shall be kept by the Secretary in a compilation of County Committee policies. The County Committee has the authority to amend or abolish any policy adopted pursuant to this provision by a majority vote at a County Committee meeting. Any policy adopted pursuant to this provision shall govern the actions of all members of the County Committee.