

# Williamson County Democratic Party Bylaws

## ARTICLE I. - NAME AND OBJECTIVE

### Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be The Williamson County Democratic Party.

### Section 2: Objective

The objective of this organization shall be to promote the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party, to aid in the election of Democratic nominees for public office, to encourage constituent participation in matters of public policy and to facilitate communication between constituents and elected officials.

## ARTICLE II. - MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1: Eligibility.

All residents of Williamson County, TN, who are registered to vote in this county, are eligible to become members of the Williamson County Democratic Party.

### Section 2: Non-Discrimination

Membership in the Williamson County Democratic Party shall not be denied based on race, gender, orientation, religion, age, ethnicity or level of ability.

## ARTICLE III. - POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Section 1: Governance

The governance and direction of the affairs of the Williamson County Democratic Party shall be vested in the Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee and its officers, as hereinafter set forth in these bylaws, subject to the laws of the State of Tennessee and such rules as may be established by the Tennessee State Democratic Executive Committee.

### Section 2: Party Responsibilities

The Williamson County Democratic Party shall:

- a. Plan and conduct all meetings and conventions
- b. Keep and maintain records of all Democratic Party meetings and business
- c. Support the duly selected nominees of the Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Section 1: Membership**

The Executive Committee shall be composed of men and women from throughout the county. The stated goal shall be one man and one woman from each county district. Additional members may serve at-large not to exceed **six\*** in number.

Officers of the Williamson County Democratic Party and all duly elected Democratic Officials serving Williamson County automatically become ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

Active affiliate organizations of the Williamson County Democratic Party may appoint one representative of their organization to serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

### **Section 2: Manner of Election**

The Executive Committee members shall be elected at a county convention which is convened every two years for reorganizing the County Party. The convention shall be held during the timeframe stipulated by the Tennessee Democratic Party.

### **Section 3: Resignations**

The resignation of any member of the Executive Committee shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein or, if no time is specified, upon receipt of such resignation by the Chair or Secretary.

### **Section 4: Vacancies**

A vacancy on the Executive Committee may be filled by a county resident who has signed the pledge of loyalty to the Democratic Party. Nominations may be offered by any member of the Executive Committee. The vacant position may be filled during any Executive Committee meeting by an affirmative vote of the members present at the meeting.

### **Section 5: Attendance**

An Executive Committee member is required to attend 60% of the regularly scheduled meetings in a calendar year. If a member fails this requirement or misses three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without a valid excuse, the position shall be declared vacant.

### **Section 6: Manner of Acting**

A simple majority of the Executive Committee members in attendance shall act on behalf of the Executive Committee, unless a greater number is required by law or otherwise specified within these bylaws.

**Section 7: Sanctions or Expulsion**

The Executive Committee may vote to impose sanctions on or expel a member. Written notice shall be given to the member in question prior to the meeting at which sanctions or expulsion will be taken up so that the member has a chance to respond.

**a) Mandatory Expulsion:**

Expulsion from the Executive Committee is mandatory and immediate for the following reasons:

A member qualifying for political office representing any political party other than the Democratic Party.

**b) Discretionary Sanctions or Expulsion:**

Sanctions or Expulsion may be imposed at the discretion of the Executive Committee when a member demonstrates disloyalty to the Democratic Party either in making public statements or by working for or financially supporting a candidate of another political party. A member may support an Independent candidate as long as that candidate is not running against a duly nominated candidate of the Democratic Party.

**ARTICLE V. - MEETINGS**

**Section 1: General**

All meetings of the Williamson County Democratic Party or the Executive Committee shall be well publicized electronically to the membership and the public. All meetings shall be held at convenient times and locations and shall be open to the public and media representatives except where a need for a closed meeting is called for at the discretion of the Chair, or by legal counsel.

**Section 2: Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held on the last Thursday of the month. An exception is where a regularly scheduled meeting date falls on a holiday.

The Executive Committee may elect by simple majority vote to change the agenda / conduct of its regularly scheduled meeting on the last Thursday of the month to alternate monthly - between Business Meeting and Working Committee meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by a request of one-third (1/3) of the Executive Committee members. At least five (5) days prior notice of the meeting must be given to all members of the Executive Committee. Under special circumstances “E conference” or teleconference meetings may be called by the chair.

**Section 3: Quorum**

Adopted 8/31/17, Amended 6/28/18

Forty percent (40%) of the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the Executive Committee. If less than a quorum is present at a meeting of the Executive Committee, a majority of the members may adjourn the meeting.

**Section 4: Post-Convention Meeting**

A meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held without other notice than this bylaw immediately after, and at the same place as the county convention in Article VI Section 1.j

**Section 5: No Proxies Allowed**

No proxy vote shall be allowed at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

**Section 6: Unit Rule**

No voting by the unit rule shall be allowed at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

**Section 7: Open Voting**

All votes shall be public and shall not be secret ballot.

**ARTICLE VI. - CONDUCT OF CONVENTION**

**Section 1: Convention**

Every two years a county reorganization convention shall be held within the 14-day window specified by the Tennessee Democratic Party to elect members to the Executive Committee, elect officers and ratify the bylaws. The provisions for the county conventions shall be as follows:

- A. The convention shall be well publicized electronically and in print to the residents of Williamson County. At last fourteen (14) days prior notice shall be given for the convention.
- B. All Williamson County residents who are registered voters and who attest that they are bona fide Democrats by execution of affidavits or affirmations to that effect are eligible to vote at the county convention and to be candidates for the Executive Committee.
- C. The Chair shall appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms, Credentials Committee and Rules Committee to assure that only bona-fide resident Democrats are present for the voting process. The Sergeant-at-Arms or duly appointed representative shall verify the affirmations of all attendees.
- D. The incumbent Chair of the Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee shall preside over, and call the convention to order.
- E. The attendees shall then separate into individual district caucuses for the purpose of

electing two members of the Executive Committee representing that district. The stated goal is one man and one woman to represent each district. Any member of the caucus may nominate a candidate. Once the nominations have concluded, the ballot is closed and voting process shall begin. In the event of a tie or if no candidate receives a simple majority of the votes, runoff votes will be held to decide the winner.

- F. Upon completion of every district's Executive Committee selection, the convention shall reconvene and each district shall report the Executive Committee members that have been selected.
- G. Immediately following the completion of the Executive Committee selection, the new Executive Committee shall commence to nominate and select Williamson County Democratic Party officers as described in Article VII, Sections 1 and 2.
- H. Immediately following the election of officers, the Executive Committee shall review and adopt the County Party bylaws.
- I. Immediately following the adoption of the bylaws, the reorganization convention shall adjourn.
- J. The Executive Committee will immediately hold a brief meeting to outline the goals of the party for the next two years. During this meeting suggestions and comments shall be taken from the floor if time permits.

## **ARTICLE VII. - OFFICERS**

### **Section 1: Officers**

The officers of the Williamson County Democratic Party shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. Officers shall be elected by the Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee for two (2) year terms.

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

The officers shall be elected by a simple majority of the members of the Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee present at the meeting held immediately following the selection of the Executive Committee as stipulated in Article VI, G.

Should no nominee receive a majority, runoff elections shall be held with nominee receiving the lowest vote total being dropped from each subsequent ballot.

A complete list of all officers and Executive Committee members shall be provided to the Chair of the Tennessee Democratic Party.

### **Section 3: Vacancies**

The Executive Committee shall fill vacancies in any office for the remainder of the term.

#### **Section 4: Chair**

The Chair shall preside over any convention called and over the meetings of the Executive Committee and regular meetings of the Williamson County Democratic Party. The Chair shall perform all duties incident to the office of Chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Executive Committee members.

The duties of the Chair include:

- A. Setting agendas for regularly scheduled meetings.
- B. Coordinating all committees and appointing all committee chairpersons acting on behalf of the party.
- C. Proposing goals for the Williamson County Democratic Party for the two-year period of the term, including events, fundraisers, campaigns, election activity and other special events.
- D. Serving as the liaison between the Williamson County Democratic Party, the Tennessee State Democratic Party, and Democratic officials.
- E. Overseeing correspondence from the Williamson County Democratic Party to its membership and the public via print, electronic and social media.
- F. Approving scheduling for events and party activities.
- G. Authorizing public statements from the party.
- H. Authorizing expenditures of \$500 or less without approval of the Executive Committee.
- I. Leading the initiative to seek potential candidates for public office serving Williamson County and coordinate assistance to those candidates.
- J. Overseeing all activities of the Williamson County Democratic Party.

#### **Section 5: Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in all aspects of the Chair's responsibilities. The Vice-Chair shall perform all duties incident to the office of Vice-Chair and any other duties that may be assigned by the Chair or by the Executive Committee.

When the Chair is absent or unavailable, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair and in so acting, shall assume all powers, responsibilities and constraints of the position of Chair.

The Vice-Chair shall be responsible for overseeing the work of all committees. The Vice-Chair shall receive reports from each Committee Chair and in the event a committee representative is absent from an Executive Committee meeting, the Vice-Chair shall deliver a summary of that committee's work.

#### **Section 6: Recording Secretary**

The function of the Recording Secretary is to take attendance and record minutes of Executive Committee meetings, called conventions, or any other official party business. The recording Secretary shall distribute minutes in a timely fashion and keep an archive of the approved minutes and attendance.

The Recording Secretary shall perform all duties incident to the office of Recording Secretary and such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair or by the Executive Committee, or which may be required by law.

#### **Section 7: Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

- (a) have charge and custody of, and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Party from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such monies in the name of the Williamson County Democratic Party in such bank or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws;
- (b) keep and maintain, open to inspection by any member of the Executive Committee at all reasonable times, adequate or correct accounts of the funds and transactions of the Executive Committee, which shall include all matters required by law;
- (c) disburse the funds of the Executive Committee as may be ordered by the Executive Committee;
- (d) provide to the Chair and the Executive Committee an accounting of all transactions by category and a financial statement showing the balances of the party accounts for Executive Committee meetings and when requested.
- (e) register with the State Election Commission and file all reports required by the State Election Commission (SEC) and/or the Federal Election Commission (FEC) should the Executive Committee choose to become a registered Political Action Committee (PAC).
- (f) Insure that the Williamson County Democratic Party adheres to campaign finance laws, regulations, accounting procedures, fundraising disclosures and donor data collection requirements.

- (g) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the chair or Executive Committee; and
- (h) if required by the Executive Committee, give a bond, to be paid for by the Executive Committee, for the faithful discharge of such duties, in such sum and with such corporate surety or sureties as the Executive Committee shall determine.

**Section 8: Officers Not Required to be Executive Committee Members Prior to Election**

It is not required that persons nominated for officer positions be members of the Executive Committee. Any officer who is elected by the Executive Committee who is not an elected member of the Executive Committee shall, upon election as an officer, become a voting member of the Executive Committee.

**Section 9: Resignations**

The resignation of any officer of the Executive Committee shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if no time is specified, then it shall take effect upon receipt of such resignation by the Chair or Secretary.

**ARTICLE VIII. - COMMITTEES**

**Section 1: Committees Appointed by Chair**

The Chair may establish committees to be composed of members of the Williamson County Democratic Party. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be ex-officio members of all standing committees. Committees may include but are not limited to: Communications, Membership, Fundraising & Events, Administration, Political Action & Candidate Recruitment.

**Section 2: Terms of Office**

Each member of a committee shall serve at the pleasure of the person or entity creating the committee, but no longer than until the next convention.

**Section 3: Removal of Any Member of a Committee**

Any member of any committee may be removed by the person or persons authorized to appoint such member whenever, in their judgment, the best interest of the Party shall be served with their removal.



## **ARTICLE IX. - CONDUCT OF BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The regular order of business at meetings should be as follows:

- A. Call to order.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Attendance Roll.
- D. Approval of the previous meeting minutes.
- E. Treasurer's report.
- F. Committee reports.
- G. Resolutions.
- H. Old Business.
- I. New Business.
- J. Elections.
- K. Announcements.
- L. Adjourn.

## **ARTICLE X. - RESOLUTIONS**

All proposed resolutions must be submitted to the Chair at least one (1) week prior to a meeting. Emergency resolutions may be brought before the body with the consent of two thirds (2/3) majority of those present.

## **ARTICLE XI. - CONTRACTS AND EXPENDITURES**

### **Section 1: Contracts; Expenditures; Bill Retention**

The Executive Committee is responsible for approving, modifying and adhering to the yearly budget.

Except in case of emergency for items not designated in the budget no expenditures or bills shall be made nor contracts entered which purport to obligate the Executive Committee unless such expenditures or contracts are authorized by a majority vote of those present at a duly called executive meeting, except those expenditures for less than five hundred dollars (\$500.000 which may be authorized by the Chair.

The Treasurer shall retain all receipts and invoices for a period of five (5) years.

### **Section 2: Audits**

Auditors may be designated by the Executive Committee to audit and examine the books of account for the Williamson County Democratic Party. The report will be prepared in consultation with the Treasurer and presented to Executive Committee.

### **ARTICLE XII. - NEUTRALITY**

The Williamson County Democratic Party shall maintain neutrality to insure party unity, and not support one Democrat over another Democrat in a Democratic Primary.

### **ARTICLE XIII. - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Except where inconsistent with these by-Laws, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern meetings of the Executive Committee in all cases where applicable.

### **ARTICLE XIV. - AMMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended or substituted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Executive Committee at any meeting of the Executive Committee called for the purpose of amending these laws provided 14 days written notice of the proposed change(s) has been given.

### **ARTICLE XV. - RULES**

The Williamson County Democratic Party is a constituent party of the Tennessee Democratic Party. The Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee is an organization created by the State Democratic Executive Committee, with the State Democratic Executive Committee having full authority in all matters over the Williamson County Democratic Executive Committee. State Party rules take precedence over the Bylaws of the Williamson County Democratic Party.