

# Rules of the Gallatin County Democratic Central Committee

Presented to Central Committee for Adoption April 29, 2015

## Preamble

The Mission of the Gallatin County Democratic Central Committee is:

1. Recruit, support and get elected to public office, candidates who uphold the values and philosophy of the Democratic Party.
2. Effectively turn Gallatin County into a majority Democratic stronghold.
3. Raise awareness in the Community regarding issues that pertain to economic justice, human rights and equal opportunity for all citizens.
4. Protect the voting rights of all of the citizens of Gallatin County and promote free and fair elections.
5. Advocate on behalf of the citizens of Gallatin County on issues important to Democratic principles in order to promote, pass and enact legislative action.
6. Support our elected Democratic Legislators and Officials and provide updates to the residents of Gallatin County throughout the Legislative sessions.
7. Recruit members and fundraise for the Gallatin Co. Democratic Central Committee.
8. Increase awareness for and be an example of Democratic values throughout the County.

## I. Gallatin County Democratic Central Committee (hereafter known as GCDCC)

A. As provided in Montana Law, there is a GCDCC, which consists of the duly elected or appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen of each precinct. Precinct committeemen and committeewomen hold such position for terms of two years from the date of their election or in the case of appointment, until the next regularly scheduled election.

B. Those committeemen and committeewomen who reside within the limits of any incorporated city or town shall constitute ex-officio the city central committee and shall have the same power and jurisdiction as to the Democratic Party in such city affairs as the GCDCC has in county matters, except to fill vacancies as provided in Rules 7, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

C. Appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen shall have the same rights, privileges, duties, and responsibilities as elected precinct committeemen and committeewomen.

D. Duties and powers of GCDCC:

1. The committee shall conduct in the county the business of the Democratic Party not in conflict with the powers of the state central committee.
2. The GCDCC may not adopt any rules or regulations that conflict with the laws of Montana or the rules of the Montana Democratic Party.
3. All public meetings of the GCDCC are open to all members of the Democratic Party of Montana regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, religion, ethnic identity,

economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or philosophical persuasion.

4. Members of the Democratic Party are defined as any individuals who are supportive of the Democratic Party's mission and values, without test of membership or oath, and are in good standing with the organization. All members of the Democratic Party of Montana shall be encouraged to participate in party affairs.

5. The time and place for meetings of the GCDCC on all levels shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings shall be held in places accessible to all party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

6. The Montana State Central Committee and GCDCC shall before every general election conduct an intensive effort to inform residents of voter registration procedures and provide all possible assistance in registering new voters.

7. When the GCDCC is providing financial or technical support to any Democratic nominee for public or party office, in providing that support, preference shall be given to those candidates who support the party.

8. It shall be the duty of all delegate selection conventions and all GCDCC members at every level, to encourage persons from all income levels, young people, women, persons of minority races or ethnicities, senior citizens, LGBT persons, and other under-represented and minority groups to participate in and seek selection as delegates to Party conventions and as members of Party committees.

9. The GCDCC shall fill vacancies as provided in state party rules 7, 13, 14, 15 and 16, which are hereby referenced in the appendix.

10. The GCDCC shall perform such duties as may be specified by the Montana Presidential Nominating Convention Delegate Selection Rules as those rules may be amended from time to time.

11. The GCDCC may authorize subcommittees to exercise any of the powers conferred upon it by the laws of Montana. Each precinct committeeman or woman shall represent the respective precinct in any ward or subdivision committees formed.

12. GCDCC shall to the best of its ability:

- a. actively recruit candidates for every office elected in the county on a partisan ballot;
- b. provide campaign assistance to candidates of the Democratic Party;
- c. assist in registration and get-out-the-vote projects;
- d. provide a local voice for Democratic views on local and state issues;
- e. monitor the activities of public officials in the county and demand accountability;
- f. maintain the books and records of the GCDCC;
- g. appoint an ex officio media coordinator who will attend executive committee meetings and oversee the website and media communication for the GCDCC;
- h. actively raise funds that will be used to support the GCDCC and its mission

## **II. County convention and selection of officers**

A. The GCDCC shall meet in county convention between April 15 and May 31 of each odd-numbered year and elect the following officers:

1. A County Chair and Vice Chair, one of whom shall be a woman and one of whom shall be a man.
2. A State Committeeman and a State Committeewoman.
3. Four State Central Committee Alternates, two of whom shall be women and two of whom shall be men. These officers serve as alternates to the Chair, Vice Chair, State Committeeman, or State Committeewoman. Central Committee Alternates shall replace members of the same sex whenever possible. The county convention shall designate first and second Alternates.
4. A Secretary and a Treasurer.

B. Only Precinct Committeemen, Precinct Committeewomen, and current GCDCC officers may vote for officers at the county convention. Officers are not required to be Precinct Committeemen or Precinct Committeewomen. The officers elected by the county convention shall constitute the Executive Committee of the County Central Committee and are charged with the execution of the county party's policies and programs between meetings of the full committee. They shall be entitled to full voting privileges at all other meetings of the county central committee. (State Rule 2, Section B, Subsection 2).

## **III. Duties of officers**

A. The duties of the Chair shall be to:

1. Call all regular and special meetings in accordance with these rules, state party rules, and Montana law.
2. Preside at the county convention.
3. Set the agenda for meetings.
4. Appoint such subcommittees as may be authorized.
5. Sign certificates of election for the delegates to the state convention.
8. Perform all duties required by state party rules 13, 14, 15 and 16, referenced in appendix.
9. Provide guidance to the GCDCC regarding Montana law and rules regarding the conduct of election campaigns and prohibited practices.
10. Conduct such actions not in conflict with these rules, the state party rules, or the laws of Montana, as may from time to time, be assigned by the GCDCC.
11. Serve as a representative of the county to all meetings of the state central committee.

12. Preside as chair of the executive committee.

13. Appoint a temporary chair to run the GCDCC meeting in the absence of the chair and the vice chair.

B. The duties of the Vice Chair shall be to:

1. Preside at meetings in the absence of the chair.
2. Succeed to the position of the chair in the event of a vacancy in the chairmanship.
3. Perform such duties as may be assigned by the GCDCC.
4. Serve as a representative of the county to all meetings of the state central committee.

C. The State Committeeman and Woman (or their alternates as appropriate) shall:

1. Serve as a representative of the county at all meetings of the state central committee.
2. Maintain contact all year with the state Democratic office.
3. Report to the GCDCC on activities of the state central committee and state Democratic office via email and/or at GCDCC meetings.

E. The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

1. Sign certificates of election for the delegates to the state convention.
2. Maintain custody of the papers and records of the GCDCC not in possession of the treasurer or on deposit at the GCDCC office.
3. Keep minutes of the GCDCC meetings and submit such minutes for the committee's review at subsequent meetings.
4. Inform the state party headquarters of the GCDCC officers and their contact information within ten days of the election and/or change of officers.
5. Maintain an up-to-date list of all Democratic precinct committeemen and women in the county and report the list and updates to the county election office.
6. File a copy of these bylaws with the election administrator of the county and the state party headquarters.
7. Provide reasonable notice of GCDCC meetings.
8. Take such actions as directed by the GCDCC.
9. Maintain a policy book, also containing standing rules, recording each motion that controls future policy. These bylaws shall be reviewed every two years and consider which motions in

this book will remain policy and which should be added to the bylaws.

F. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to:

1. Keep the financial records of the GCDCC.
2. Collect and account for all funds held by the GCDCC.
3. Make such expenditures of the committee's funds as directed by GCDCC.
4. Report the financial condition of the committee, at each Executive and GCDCC meeting.
5. Comply with all Montana campaign finance laws and rules, including the preparation and submission of all required reports.
6. Submit financial records for inspection as directed by the GCDCC.

G. Officers shall not miss more than two consecutive monthly meetings in a calendar year, if so their seat shall be vacated and a replacement shall be appointed according to the rules in section V.

H. The officers elected by the county convention shall constitute the Executive Committee of the GCDCC. The duties of the Executive Committee are as follows:

1. The Executive Committee is charged with the execution of the county's party policies and programs between meetings of the full GCDCC.
2. The Executive Committee shall meet at least one week before the GCDCC to assist the chairman in developing the agenda for the GCDCC and to formulate policy and other recommendations for review and discussion by the GCDCC.
3. The Executive Committee may approve between meetings of the GCDCC funds to be spent on furthering the mission of GCDCC. In such cases, the Executive Committee shall report to the Central Committee at the next regular meeting the amount and purpose of said extraordinary expenditure. These amounts shall not exceed \$500.00.
4. Should the chair, or acting-chair in the chair's absence, deem immediate action necessary, the chair or acting chair shall have the authority to poll the Executive Committee or the GCDCC by email and to have a vote by email on responding to said immediate need. A majority of all voting members is all that is needed to pass business. Voting members have a set amount of time, determined by ballot administrator, to respond or their vote will not count.

#### **IV. Precinct Men and Women**

A. Precinct men and women may be elected in the primary election held in even numbered years or when there is a vacancy, be appointed by voting as described in Section V, "Vacancies."

B. The duties of a precinct men and women will be to:

1. Serve as the representative of the GCDCC in their precincts, make direct contacts with

neighbors living in their precinct, gather information about the voting patterns of people living in their precincts, and support the GCDCC by using this information to elect Democratic candidates to public office.

2. Attend the regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

3. Participate in GCDCC public events by planning or working on community events, i.e., county fair, town festivals, parades, the annual Gala fund raiser and other similar venues.

4. Serve on standing or ad hoc planning committees during each term while in office as a precinct person.

5. Identify and introduce people from their precinct or acquaintances who may become possible Democratic candidates for public office or have interest in joining GCDCC.

6. Assist with Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) activities in each election.

7. Contribute their resources such as knowledge, ideas, skills, money, suggestions and critiques to GCDCC to the extent of their self-determined ability.

8. Submit a written resignation to the GCDCC if unable to continue to perform precinct duties.

## **V. Vacancies**

A. A vacancy exists whenever a precinct committeeman or woman, officer or member, dies, resigns, becomes permanently incapacitated, or fails to maintain the qualifications of the office.

B. Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

1. Remaining members of the GCDCC shall appoint a registered voter who is a resident of the affected precinct to fill any vacancy in the office of precinct committeeman or woman; the appointment becomes effective upon filing of the appointment with the county election administrator.

2. The GCDCC shall elect a person having the necessary qualifications to fill a vacancy in any of the committee's offices not succeeded to by an appropriate alternate as provided in these rules. In the case of an officer vacancy, only precinct committeemen and committee women can vote.

3. If there are no elected or appointed precinct committeemen or women serving in the county, the state central committee shall appoint a County Central Committee.

4. A vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Vice Chair.

C. Unless otherwise specified, vacancies on any committee or board shall be filled by vote of the members of such committee or board.

## **VI. Voting**

A. Precinct committeemen and women are entitled to vote at all meetings of the GCDCC. Only precinct committeemen and women and the current Executive Committee Officers can vote at the county convention to elect officers.

C. Officers may vote at all meetings of the GCDCC

D. Other persons who may vote at regular Central Committee meetings include:

1. County officials elected on the Democratic Party ticket.
2. Democratic legislators representing all or part of Gallatin County.
3. State party executive board members residing in the county.
4. Montana executive branch officials elected on the Democratic ticket and residing in the county.
5. Registered voting members of the GCDCC.

E. Secret ballots can be used for voting on motions if requested by a majority of the members of the GCDCC.

F. No proxies will be allowed in any matter voted on by the committee (State Rule).

## **VII. Meetings**

A. Meetings are to be conducted in a civil, respectful manner.

B. Regular meetings of the GCDCC shall be held on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise planned with appropriate notice

C. Meetings of the Central Committee may be called by the chair, or by five of the GCDCC's members.

D. Reasonable notice of regular meetings or those called by the chair shall be provided by the secretary to all GCDCC members and such other persons as may be deemed appropriate.

E. The members present shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the GCDCC.

F. The chair shall provide an agenda for all regularly scheduled meetings. The GCDCC may amend the order of business by a majority vote.

G. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these rules of the county organization and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

## **VIII. Amendment and appeals**

A. These rules may be amended at any regular meeting of the GCDCC, or at a special meeting called for the purpose of amendment. These rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at such meeting. Notice regarding the rule(s) to be amended, including the exact wording of the proposed amendment(s), must be sent to all persons eligible to vote at the Central Committee's meetings at least two (2) weeks prior to such meeting.

B. Any person eligible to vote at a meeting may appeal the application of these rules to the parliamentarian, to the chair, or to the Central Committee by motion. An appeal based on a claimed conflict with state law or state party rules may be appealed through a timely written protest to the state chair.



## **Appendix – Selected Sections from the Montana Democrat Party Rules**

### **RULE 2 CITY-COUNTY CENTRAL COMMITTEES SECTION A: STRUCTURE & TERMS OF A CITY-COUNTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

1. The city, county, and Montana State Democratic Central Committees shall be organized as provided in the laws of Montana and in these rules.
2. In each county of the state there is a Democratic county central committee which consists of the duly elected or appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen of each precinct.
3. Precinct committeemen and committeewomen hold such position for terms of two years from the date of their election or in the case of appointment, until the next regularly scheduled election.
4. Those committeemen and committeewomen who reside within the limits of any incorporated city or town shall constitute ex-officio the city central committee and shall have the same power and jurisdiction as to the Democratic Party in such city affairs as the county central committee has in county matters, except to fill vacancies as provided in Rules 7, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

### **SECTION B: COUNTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE CONVENTIONS & ELECTIONS**

1. The county central committee shall meet in county convention between April 15 and May 31 of each odd-numbered year and elect the following officers: a) a county chair and vice chair, one of whom shall be a woman, and one of whom shall be a man; b) a state committeeman and a state committeewoman; c) four state central committee alternates, two of whom shall be women and two of whom shall be men. These officers serve as alternates to the chair or vice chair, or state committeeman or woman. State central committee alternates shall replace members of the same sex whenever possible. The county convention shall designate first and second alternates; d) a secretary and a treasurer.
2. Only precinct committeemen, precinct committeewomen, and current county central committee officers may vote for officers at the county convention. Officers are not required to be precinct committeemen or precinct committeewomen. The officers elected by the county convention shall constitute the executive committee of the county central committee and are charged with the execution of the county party's policies and programs between meetings of the full committee. They shall be entitled to full voting privileges at all other meetings of the county central committee.
3. Appointed precinct committeemen and committeewomen shall have the same rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities as elected precinct committeemen and committeewomen.

**SECTION C: DCCC VOTING RIGHTS** 1. The county central committee may not adopt any rules or regulations that conflict with the laws of Montana, the rules of the Montana Democratic Party or the rules of the national Democratic Party.

## RULE 7 VACANCIES & REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

### SECTION A: VACANCIES

1. A vacancy exists whenever a precinct committeeman or woman, officer or member dies, resigns, becomes permanently incapacitated or fails to maintain the qualifications of the office. A vacancy also exists whenever the State Chair, State Vice Chair, or any permanent, paid employee of the Montana Democratic Party becomes a candidate for or holds any state or national office, excluding the office of state legislator.
2. Unless specified otherwise in this rule, or in law, vacancies on any committee or board shall be filled by election by members of such committee.
3. Vacant positions shall be filled as follows:
  - a) Precinct Committeemen and Committeewomen: Remaining members of the county central committee shall elect a precinct resident to fill the vacancy.
  - b) Officers of City or County Central Committees: Vacant seats for officers not filled by an appropriate alternate already provided in these rules shall be filled by a person having the necessary qualifications for the vacant seat and shall be elected by the county central committee, except as provided in Rule 7, Section A, #3(e).
  - c) Executive Board Members: If the State Chair position becomes vacant, the State Vice Chair shall become Chair. Vacancies in the positions of State Vice Chair or board members, including National Committee Members, shall be filled by a vote of the Executive Board, subject to the notice requirements in Rule 6, Section B, #2. Nominations must be made by Board members, and candidates for vacancies must meet the same qualifications as the person formerly occupying the position. Election shall be by majority vote of the board members present and voting.
  - d) Immediate Past State Chair & Vice Chair: Vacancies in the position of immediate past State Chair and immediate past State Vice Chair shall not be filled.
  - e) No Established Central Committee: If there are no elected or appointed precinct committee persons serving in a county, the State Chair shall appoint, with the approval of a majority of the Executive Board, county central committee officers to form a new committee. The appointed officers, who must be residents of the county, may then fill vacant precinct positions as provided in Rule 7, Section A, #3(a). The appointed officers shall serve until the next county convention.

### SECTION B: REMOVAL

1. Members of the Executive Board, except the National Committeeman and Committeewoman, may be removed from office for cause by a 2/3 vote of the Executive Board at a special meeting called on 15 days written notice. The notice shall contain the charges proffered and be signed by no less than 25% of the members of the Executive Board. Prior to the vote, the accused shall be given a full hearing and the opportunity to face any accusers.

2. City or county central committee officers may be removed from office according to rules established by each county central committee, or in the absence of county rules, by a 2/3 vote of the total membership of the committee.

#### RULE 13 PROCEDURES FOR FILLING A VACANCY FOR A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR AN OFFICE WITHIN ONE COUNTY

1. Vacancies occurring among Democratic candidates that by law are to be filled by action of the county central committee shall be filled according to the provisions of this rule insofar as they do not conflict with state law.

2. Appointment of a person to fill the vacancy shall be by a majority vote of the precinct committeemen and committeewomen present at a meeting called for that purpose and publicized throughout the county. The county chair shall provide reasonable written or email notice to committee members unless the deadline for filling the vacancy as determined by the election administrator precludes such notice, in which case notification by telephone shall be required.

3. At the meeting, nominations of persons qualified to fill the vacancy may be made by precinct committeemen or committeewomen. Following the close of nominations, an election shall be held with each precinct committeeman and committeewoman voting for one person. (If more than one vacancy is to be filled at the meeting, separate votes shall be taken for each vacancy.) The person receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be reported by the county chair to the election administrator as the party nominee. If no person receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be stricken from subsequent ballots until one person receives a majority of the votes cast.

#### RULE 14 SPECIAL NOMINATING CONVENTION TO FILL A VACANCY FOR A CANDIDATE FOR A MULTI-COUNTY OFFICE

1. In the event the Democratic Party shall have to nominate a candidate for a multi-county district office, the procedures for such nomination shall be as provided in this rule.

2. The State Chair shall call a nominating convention. The State Chair or his or her designee shall preside. The convention shall choose a secretary and may adopt rules for nominating speeches, candidate presentations and other procedural matters.

3. The precinct committeemen and committeewomen from precincts within the district shall be delegates to the nominating convention.

4. The State Chair shall issue a convention call to the county chair of each county within the district. The call shall be issued so as to provide reasonable notice to the delegates. The call shall include at least the following: a) the time, date and place of the nominating convention; b) a list of the counties and precincts within the district; c) the procedures for certifying the identity of precinct committeemen and committeewomen eligible to participate; and d) the qualifications required of the person to be nominated at the convention.

5. Any delegate may nominate any Democrat meeting the qualifications provided by law for the

vacancy being filled.

6. The delegates shall cast ballots using weighted votes. Each delegate shall cast a weighted vote equal to one-half the votes cast in his or her precinct for the Democratic candidate for U.S. Representative in the most recent general election.

7. The person receiving a majority of the total votes cast shall be declared the Party's nominee. If no person receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be stricken from subsequent ballots until one person receives a majority of the votes cast.

#### RULE 15 SPECIAL NOMINATING CONVENTION TO FILL A VACANCY FOR A CANDIDATE FOR A STATEWIDE OFFICE

1. In the event the Democratic Party shall have to nominate a candidate for statewide office, the procedures for such nomination shall be as provided in this rule.

2. The State Chair shall call a meeting of the Montana Democratic State Central Committee. Reasonable written notice of the meeting shall be issued unless deadlines imposed by the Secretary of State, the laws of Montana, or other authority shall necessitate shorter notice by telephone. The notice of the meeting shall include: a) a statement that the purpose of the meeting is to fill a vacancy for the Democratic Party's candidate for statewide office, and naming the office; b) the date, time and place of the meeting; c) the procedures by which the nominee will be chosen at the meeting; d) the procedures for certifying the election of State Central Committee members not already on record with the State Chair; and e) the qualifications required of the person to be nominated at the meeting.

3. Only members of the Montana Democratic State Central Committee shall be entitled to participate in the meeting, except that the State Central Committee may adopt rules allowing nominating speeches by other persons and may agree to hear presentations by candidates for the nomination. Following the close of nominations, the members of the Montana Democratic State Central Committee shall vote. The person receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared the Party's nominee. If no person receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the name of the person receiving the fewest votes shall be stricken from subsequent ballots until one person receives a majority of the votes cast.

4. The State Chair and Secretary shall sign a certificate of nomination naming the person selected and shall deliver the original to the Secretary of State.

#### RULE 16 SUBMISSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FILLING A VACANCY IN THE LEGISLATURE OR IN A BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1. In the event the Democratic Party shall have to recommend to county commissioners a list of candidates to fill a vacancy in the legislature, or in the office of county commissioner, as provided by law, the procedures for compiling such list (and a second list, if needed) shall be as provided in this rule.

2. Vacancy in a district entirely within one county. a) following any necessary consultation with the county commissioners, the county chair shall call a meeting of the county central committee, providing reasonable written or email notice, or notifying members by telephone if four days written notice

cannot be afforded. b) at the meeting, precinct committeemen and committeewomen shall nominate a minimum of three persons qualified to serve in the vacant office. Following the close of nominations, each committeeman and committeewoman shall cast a vote for one of the nominees. The names of the three persons receiving the most votes shall be certified to the appropriate body by the county chair as the recommended candidates of the Democratic Party.

3. Vacancy in a district comprising more than one county.

- a) following any necessary consultation with the county commissioners, the State Chair shall call a nominating convention in a convenient location in one of the counties comprising the district.
- b) reasonable written or email notice of the meeting shall be provided to all delegates; notice by telephone will be required unless at least four days written notice can be provided.
- c) precinct committeemen and committeewomen from precincts within the district shall be delegates to the joint meeting. The State Chair or his or her designee shall preside at the joint meeting.
- d) delegates shall nominate a minimum of three persons qualified to serve in the vacant office.
- e) each delegate shall cast a vote for one of the nominees. The weight of each delegate's vote shall be equal to one-half the votes received in that precinct at the last election by the person vacating the office. (The State Chair shall have final authority to assign weighted votes in instances where precinct lines, or district lines may have changed since the election, or other circumstances dictate.) Ballots marked with the proper weighted votes shall be distributed by the presiding officer through a roll call of the counties and their precincts.
- f) the names of the three persons receiving the most votes shall be certified to the county commissioners by the State Chair as the recommended candidates of the Democratic Party.

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