



CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE WARD 7 DEMOCRATS

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Ward 7 Democrats, in order to promote unity among the Democratic residents of our precincts, to promote a framework for the expression of the public and civic concerns of the citizens of Ward 7, the District of Columbia and the Nation, and to promote the general welfare of our community through active participation in a partisan political organization, do hereby establish these by-laws.

ARTICLE I: NAME

1. The name of the organization shall be Ward 7 Democrats.
2. No person or organization shall use the name of this organization in any manner which may indicate an official sanction, statement, endorsement, or action of the organization without prior authorization by the majority of the membership of the organization present and voting at a General meeting, or, if authorization is required between General meetings, by a majority of the Executive Committee members.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of the Ward 7 Democrats to meet the following objectives:

1. Contribute to the growth and influence of the Democratic Party in Ward 7.
2. Increase Democratic party membership and voting responsibility in Ward 7.
3. Cooperate with the initiatives, programs, and functions of the D.C. Democratic State Committee.
4. Increase citizen knowledge of, and participation in, the political processes of the Ward, the District of Columbia, and the Nation.
5. Establish and maintain communication with all segments of Ward 7.
6. Collaborate with democratic political organizations in other wards of the City.
7. Support Democratic Party nominees for public office.
8. Establish and maintain harmony within the Ward 7 Democrats.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1. Members of the organization must be registered Democrats who reside in Ward 7. No person who meets these criteria shall be denied membership in the organization for reason of race, national origin, religious belief, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. The Ward 7 Democrats shall actively recruit and seek to maintain members from all precincts in the Ward.
2. A member may be identified by his/her voter registration card or name appearing on the D.C. Voter Registration rolls.
3. Whenever a member ceases to reside in Ward 7 or changes party affiliation, s/he is no longer entitled to membership in the organization. **Cessation of membership terminates on the date that the member is no longer a resident of Ward 7.**

ARTICLE IV: OFFICEERS

I. Structure

1. The elected officers of the Ward 7 Democrats shall be the Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson, Second Vice Chairperson, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant at Arms.
2. The officers of this organization shall be elected by the membership at the Convention as provided in Article VII of these By-laws.
3. The term of office shall be two (2) years. Officers may be re-elected. Each officer shall hold office until a successor has been duly elected.

A. Eligibility for Office

- a. To be eligible for elected office in the Ward 7 Dems, a candidate must have maintained a primary domicile/residence for at least one year in Ward 7; and
- b. attended at least four Ward 7 Dems general meetings prior to the General Body meeting where names are placed in nomination

II. Attendance at meetings

- (a.) Officers who cannot attend a General meeting or Executive Committee meeting shall notify the Recording Secretary or the Chairperson at a reasonable time, **through a phone call or electronic communication**, prior to the meeting.
- (b.) If an officer is absent, without notification, from three (3) consecutive General or Executive Committee meetings, the Executive Committee may declare that position vacant. The Corresponding Secretary shall provide the officer with written notification of this section. The officer's failure to respond within 10 days of the notice shall be considered a resignation.

II. Procedures for Removal for Cause

- (a.) Any member can file a complaint with the Executive Committee which calls for the removal of an officer, for causes deemed detrimental to the purpose and operation of the organization. The Executive Committee shall make a recommendation regarding removal of an officer for cause to the membership at a General meeting.
- (b.) The proposed action to remove an officer must be included in the meeting notice to the membership. The officer shall be notified in writing by certified mail at least two (2) weeks prior to the General meeting at which charges will be brought against him/her. The officer shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be fairly heard by the membership regarding the charges.
- (c.) Removal may take place only upon formal motion duly seconded at the General meeting. After such motion has been duly seconded, the matter shall be deemed properly before the membership for discussion and vote, including consideration of the issue of whether cause deemed sufficient for removal has been shown.
- (d.) A majority of those present and voting at the meeting must affirm removal of the officer.
- (e.) When an officer is removed at a General meeting and the officer is not present, the Corresponding Secretary shall notify the person removed in writing within two ((2) weeks following the meeting in which the action was taken. The letter shall be sent by certified mail and state the cause of removal, the effective date, and be forwarded to the officer's last known address.
- (f.) A vacancy in any office shall be filled by recommendation of the Executive Committee, subject to the approval of a majority of the members at the General meeting at which the Executive Committee makes its recommendation. Persons appointed shall complete the unexpired term being filled.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

1. **Chairperson.** The Chairperson shall: have the general powers and duties incident to the Office of Chairperson; preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee, and of the members; develop the agenda for the Executive Committee and General meetings; carry out all orders and resolutions; coordinate the work of the officers and committees to promote the purposes of the organization; co-sign checks; plan, with the assistance and input of the Executive Committee, the Annual Convention; appoint all committee chairpersons with the approval of the Executive Committee, and be the spokesperson for the organization.
2. **First Vice President.** The First Vice Chairperson shall: in the absence of the Chairperson, generally act as the Chairperson, with all powers of and subject to the restrictions imposed upon the Chairperson; perform such duties assigned to him/her by the Chairperson; perform all duties of the Chairperson in instances

where the Executive Committee declares the Chairperson refuses to perform his/her duties OR if the Chairperson is disabled by injury or illness, until such time as the Executive Committee finds the disability or refusal of the Chairperson to perform his/her duties no longer exists.

3. **Second Vice President.** The Second Vice Chairperson shall in the absence of the Chairperson and First Vice Chairperson, perform duties as defined under Article V, Section 2.
4. **Recording Secretary.** The Recording Secretary shall: attend all General, special, and Executive Committee meetings and keep a record of all in attendance (sign-in sheet); maintain the minutes of all meetings; maintain a record of committees; maintain a notebook in which the By-laws are kept; shall perform such other duties as, from time-to-time, may be assigned by the Chairperson. Finance reports from all activities of the organization shall be given to the Recording Secretary.
5. **Corresponding Secretary.** The Corresponding Secretary shall: notify officers, committee chairpersons, and members of Ward 7 Democrats meetings; and, upon the direction of the Chairperson, assist the Chairperson in receiving and responding to correspondence, press releases or printed materials.
6. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall: have the responsibility for all funds of the organization; deposit funds in a bank selected by the Executive Committee; keep full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements; issue a voucher for all checks for withdrawal of funds from the organization; issue receipts for monies received and checks for expenses; co-sign all checks and vouchers of the organization as may be ordered by the Executive Committee, or majority of members; and present a financial report at General and Executive Committee meetings. The Treasurer shall perform general accounting procedures relative to the Office of the Treasurer and such other duties as may, from time to time, be assigned by the Chairperson. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.
7. **Sergeant-at-Arms.** The Sergeant at Arms shall: preserve order at all meetings and insure all persons voting are registered Democrats residing in Ward 7.

ARTICLE VI: NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

1. At least 60 days in advance of the Convention, the Chairperson shall appoint a five- member Nominating Committee for the purpose of nominating candidates for office. Officers are not eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee.
2. The Nominating Committee shall make a report at the General meeting preceding the Convention. The report shall include: election procedures; a sample ballot; and the names of members who submitted a written declaration of candidacy for office to the Nominating Committee. Candidates may be nominated by a member from the floor of the meeting at which the Nominating Committee makes its report, provided that the nominee is present to accept the nomination or, if not present, has consented to the nomination in writing.

3. The Nominating Committee shall prepare the election ballot. It shall include the names of the declared candidates for each office and a blank line for write-in candidates for each office. The order of the names on the ballot will be determined - by drawing candidates' names from a container. The first name drawn will appear first on the ballot and so on.

ARTICLE VII: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Officers shall be elected at the Convention held in March of odd-numbered years.
2. The District of Columbia Democratic State Committee shall conduct and monitor the election and certify the results.
3. Notice of the election shall be given at least 30 days in advance, and it shall be widely publicized throughout the Ward.
4. All registered Democrats who reside in the Ward may vote. Voting shall be by secret ballot prepared by the Nominating Committee.
5. Outcomes for each office shall be determined by a majority of the votes cast for that office. If there are more than 2 candidates for a given office, a plurality of the votes cast for a candidate will determine the outcome.
6. Officers-elect shall assume their duties upon certification of the election by the DC Democratic State Committee.

ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the elected officers and Chairpersons of all Standing Committees. The Ward 7 Councilmember, if a Democrat, all members of the D.C. Democratic State Committee who live in Ward 7, and the Chairperson of the Ward 7 Young Democrats shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. Voting members of the Executive Committee shall be the elected officers, ex-officio members and Chairpersons of Standing Committees.
2. The Executive Committee is the instrument for implementation of the policies and activities of the organization. Between meetings of the general membership and in emergency situations, the Executive Committee shall have the power to conduct the affairs of the organization, subject to review by the members, as may be required in furtherance of the interests and purposes of the organization.
3. The Executive Committee shall meet prior to each General meeting and establish an agenda for the meeting.
4. The Executive Committee shall report and may make recommendations to the members at General meetings.

5. The Executive Committee shall present a proposed annual plan and budget at the first meeting following the Convention.
6. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at any time by the Chairperson, or at least one-third (1/3) of the voting members of the Executive Committee provided a written petition is submitted to the Chairperson stating the purpose of the meeting. Each member of the Executive Committee shall be given 48 hours notice in advance of a special meeting, except in an emergency in which case at least 24 hours notice must be given.
7. A quorum exists for an Executive Committee meeting when one-third (1/3) of the Committee's voting members, at least one of whom is a presiding officer, are present. Ex-officio members not under the authority of the Ward 7 Democrats do not count in determining a quorum, as provided in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
8. Any action taken by the Executive Committee may be modified or rescinded by a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at a General meeting.

ARTICLE IX: PRECINCT REPRESENTATIVES

I. General

1. Each precinct shall have one representative to serve as a liaison to the Ward 7 Democrats in order to promote involvement in the party; facilitate voter registration and education; encourage Democrats to vote; and to assist with communication of Ward 7 Democrats events and other activities of interest to Democrats residing in Ward 7.
2. Each precinct representative shall be elected every two years at the Convention (see Article XI). Precinct Representatives must be registered Democrats residing in the precinct s/he represents. The procedures for nominating and electing Precinct Representatives for office shall be the same as those for Officers (see Articles VI & VII) except that candidates to serve as Precinct Representative may receive votes only from the registered Democrats residing in the precinct they seek to represent.

II. Duties of Precinct Captains

- a. Organize and implement activities designed to encourage residents of the precinct to register as Democrats, in conjunction with Voter Registration and Education efforts conducted by the Ward 7 Democrats.
- b. Ensure that registered Democrats in the precinct receive voter education information as developed and published by the Ward 7 Democrats.
- c. Organize and conduct "get out the vote" efforts in primary and general elections in order to ensure the maximum turnout of Democrats in the precinct.

- d. Disseminate information to Democrats in the precinct on Ward 7 Democrats monthly General meetings in order to encourage and facilitate attendance and participation.
- e. Recommend ideas for conducting voter registration and encouraging voter turnout that not only can be implemented, but can be shared with other Precinct Representatives as well.
- f. Ascertain and share with the Chairperson of the Ward 7 Democrats issues of concern and interest to Democrats residing in the precinct.
- g. Recommend Democrats in the precinct to serve as members of committees of the Ward 7 Democrats.
- h. Attend meetings of Precinct Representatives to share information and to report on progress in achieving established objectives.

ARTICLE X: MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

1. General meetings of the organization shall be held monthly except for August. **The Chairperson may cancel meetings under his or her discretion due to extenuating circumstances, such as inclement weather, venue inaccessibility, or public health emergencies. However, immediate notice must be sent to the membership of any cancellation.** The date, time, and location of general meetings shall be established by the Chairperson with input from the Executive Committee. Notice of the meeting must be provided at least one week in advance.
 - a. Written notice that states the place, day and hour of any meeting of the State Committee shall be delivered to each member personally, by mail or electronically through e-mails or text message.
 - b. If mailed, the notice of a meeting shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the US mail and addressed to the member's address as it appears on the official record.
 - c. If transmitted electronically, the notice of meeting shall be deemed delivered when sent to the contact address provided by the member.
2. Special meetings of the organization may be called by the Chairperson, a majority of the Executive Committee, or fifteen (15) members of the organization. Notice stating the purpose of such meeting must be provided 3 days prior to the date of the meeting.
3. All meetings shall be held in a facility accessible to the public.
4. A quorum for each meeting shall be fifteen (15) members inclusive of a presiding officer. Once a quorum has been announced, the meeting shall continue until it is adjourned.
5. An agenda consisting of all items of business for each meeting shall be prepared by the Recording Secretary as directed by the Chairperson and Executive Committee. At the beginning of a meeting, any member may make

a request to the Chairperson to have an item placed on the agenda. Any item not printed on the agenda shall be considered with the consent of a majority of the members present and voting.

6. Meetings may be rescheduled by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
7. The Chairperson may cancel any regular meeting, **without extenuating circumstances**, if any of the following conditions exist:
 - a. There is no business requiring a meeting,
 - b. No quorum will be possible for a meeting, or
 - c. Another meeting of the Committee will be held within forty (40) days of the date on which the regular meeting would have been held.
8. **Virtual or Remote Meetings are permissible and shall adhere to the same protocol as in-person meetings, except that voting shall be done electronically. Any votes that require secret or anonymous ballot shall be conducted through an electronic survey, to be received by the Chairperson and Recording Secretary, for tallying.**

ARTICLE XI: ANNUAL CONVENTION

1. A Convention shall be held in March of every year for members to receive information about the state of the Ward 7 Democrats and issues relevant to the Ward, City, and Nation. The Convention may also adopt a platform for implementing designated goals and objectives. Officers and Precinct Representatives shall be elected at the Convention in odd-numbered years. See Article VII.
2. The Chairperson; with input from the Executive Committee, shall appoint a committee to plan the Convention.

ARTICLE XII: VOTING PRIVILEGES

1. Each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
2. For in person meetings, a member must cast his/her vote in person and not by proxy.
3. **For remote or virtual meetings, a member must cast his or her vote directly via electronic submission, and not by proxy.**
4. In order to vote at any meeting or election, an individual must be registered as a Democrat and be a resident of Ward 7.

ARTICLE XIII: NOTICES

1. Notice may be given by mail, e-mail, fax, telephone, or in-person.
 - a. **Mailed** - shall be deemed to have been given on the 2nd day following that on which the notice was postmarked. In proving notice was given, it is sufficient proof when the notice was addressed to the member's address as it appears in the membership records of the Ward 7 Democrats.
 - b. **E-mail or fax** - shall be deemed to have been given on the 2nd day following that on which the notice was sent. In proving notice was sent, it is sufficient proof when the record copy of said notice contains the member's e-mail address or fax number as it appears in the membership records of the Ward 7 Democrats.
 - c. **Telephone** - shall be deemed to have been given when conveyed either directly or via voice mail message. The date and time of the telephone call shall be documented and submitted to the Recording Secretary. Such documentation shall indicate whether the person was reached directly or a message was left (either with someone or through voice mail).
 - d. **In person** - shall be deemed to have been given when conveyed to the receiving person. When delivered in person, every effort will be made to obtain the signature of the person receiving the notice.

ARTICLE XIV: COMMITTEES

1. There shall be the following Standing Committees of the organization:
 - a. **Budget & Finance** - proposes an annual budget, monitors budget implementation, oversees all assets and liabilities of the organization, and presents monthly status reports at General membership meetings.
 - b. **Issues and Policy** - responsible for educating the membership about any proposed Federal or District of Columbia legislation, initiative, or referendum of interest to the membership. Also, may propose resolutions to the membership setting forth positions on issues.
 - c. **Voter Education & Registration** - works to increase participation in the electoral process, and publicizes and implements strategies for advancing Ward 7 Democrats and Democratic Party participation in the Ward.
 - d. **By-laws** - periodically reviews the By-laws and proposes amendments to the Ward 7 Democrats. Also, receives proposed amendments from the membership and proposes a course of action to the Executive Committee and General membership.
 - e. **Fund-raising** - directs the planning for activities and projects to provide funds in accordance with the annual budget and financial projections of the organization.
2. Additional Standing Committees may be added by amendment

to the By-laws

- a. The duties of the Standing Committees shall be established by the Chairperson with the approval of the Executive Committee. Standing Committee Chairpersons shall report to the Executive Committee, and may report at any membership meeting.
- b. The Chairperson of each Standing Committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Ward 7 Democrats with the approval of the Executive Committee. The Standing Committee Chairpersons are members of the Executive Committee.
- c. Ad hoc Committees: The Chairperson, the Executive Committee, or the General membership may create additional committees as may be deemed necessary.

ARTICLE XV: ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES

1. Prior to any election conducted by the District of Columbia Board of Elections and Ethics, the Ward 7 Democrats may hold a meeting for purposes of public endorsement.
 - a. The Membership may vote to endorse Party candidates for the offices of Congressional Delegate, Mayor, Chairman and At-Large Members of the DC Council, Statehood Senators and Representative, National Committeeman, National Committeewoman, Alternate National Committeeman and Alternate National Committeewoman.
 - b. Voting shall be by open ballot.
2. The meeting must take place at least thirty (30) days before the election.
3. The Ward 7 Democrats must conduct a forum prior to, or in conjunction with, any endorsement meeting. Such forum shall be designed and conducted to elicit the views of candidates on issues of importance to Ward 7 Democrats.
4. A quorum for an endorsement meeting shall be the same as for any other Ward 7 Democrats General meeting (See Article X Section 4).
5. Endorsement for Democratic Party office or for nomination as the Democratic candidate for office shall require a majority of those present and voting. A candidate for any particular office who receives a majority of the votes cast for that office shall receive the endorsement of the Ward 7 Democrats.
6. Voters may vote for "no endorsement." If on the first ballot, no candidate receives a majority, there shall be no further voting. A vote for "no endorsement" shall always count equally with a vote for a candidate.
7. The Ward 7 Democrats may make financial and in-kind contributions to its endorsed candidates, as well as distribute sample ballots denoting the official endorsed candidates.
8. Straw Polls. The Executive Committee may vote to hold a Straw Poll for a Democratic Primary Election in the upcoming Calendar year.

ARTICLE XVI: FISCAL YEAR

1. The organization's fiscal year shall begin April 1 and end March 31.

ARTICLE XVII: BOOKS AND RECORDS

1. The organization shall keep accurate and complete records of accounts and minutes of the meetings of its membership, Executive, Standing and Ad hoc Committees.
2. Any member of the organization may inspect the organization's records for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

ARTICLE XVIII: PARLIAMENTARIAN

1. The Chairperson shall appoint a Parliamentarian. That person must be approved by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a General meeting.
2. The Parliamentarian shall attend all meetings of the organization and advise the presiding officer on questions of parliamentary law and matters of procedure.

ARTICLE XIX: GOVERNING PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

1. In the absence of specific provisions in these By-laws, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the conduct of meetings, parliamentary procedure, duties of officers, and other aspects of this organization.

ARTICLE XX: AMENDMENTS

1. The By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership present and voting at a General meeting, or a special meeting called for that purpose, provided such amendment has been presented to the By-laws committee for research and recommendation to the membership.
2. Notification of such recommended amendment(s) shall be given to the membership at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting for action.

ARTICLE XXI: EFFECTIVE DAY/SEVERABILITY

1. All provisions of these By-laws shall go into effect upon the vote of two-thirds of the members voting at a General membership meeting at which a quorum is present.
2. If any article or section is ruled unacceptable by the DC Democratic State Committee, or a court of law, the remainder of these By-laws remain in force.

ARTICLE XXII: RELATIONSHIP TO THE DEMOCRATIC STATE COMMITTEE

1. It is recognized that the District of Columbia Democratic State Committee (DCDSC) is the governing body of the District of Columbia Democratic Party. The Ward 7 Democrats shall be chartered by the DCDSC as an official affiliate of the District of Columbia Democratic Party. Once election of Ward 7 officers has been certified, the Ward 7 Democrats Chairperson shall serve as a member of the DCDSC.

Date Ratified: _____

Ward 7 Democrats
Derek Ford, Chairperson