

# BY-LAWS OF THE CENTRE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

## Preamble

AND NOW, this 30<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2014, the following by-laws are adopted by the Democratic Party of Centre County (hereinafter “the Party”) to govern its operations. All previous by-laws adopted by the Party are hereby rescinded and considered void. These By-laws, plus those of the Pennsylvania Democratic Committee (hereinafter “State Committee”) and the Democratic National Committee (hereinafter “DNC”), are binding on all members.

## Article I – County Committee

**Section 1.** The County Committee shall consist of the elected Precinct Committee Persons from the various precincts of Centre County, members of the County Executive Committee<sup>1</sup>, and persons who are registered to vote in Centre County who are members of the State Committee and/or the DNC.

**Section 2.** The County Committee shall be the authoritative body of the Democratic Party in Centre County and in all matters of Party management not specifically covered by law or by these rules. It shall have full power and authority to act for the Democratic Party of Centre County and may delegate such power and authority to committees, subcommittees, teams, caucuses, groups, or to representative Democratic voters of or within Centre County.

**Section 3.** The County Committee shall, with the advice of the County Executive Committee, assist in the conduct of all County campaigns.

**Section 4.** The Democratic voters of each precinct of Centre County shall elect at the Spring Primary Election in years with gubernatorial elections, no more than two Precinct Committee Persons, who shall be duly registered and enrolled Democratic voters of such precinct.

- A. Write-in candidates for Precinct Committee Persons must receive at least as many write-in votes as are equal to the number of signatures required on nomination petitions to qualify as a candidate for the Precinct Committee Person. Write-in candidates that do not receive the minimum number of votes required shall be summarily stricken from the Centre County Democratic Committee after the Primary Election has been certified.
- B. The Precinct Committee Persons shall have charge of the Democratic organization in their respective precincts and shall hold office for the term of four years and until their successors are elected.
- C. If a controversy arises concerning the election of a Precinct Committee Person, the new Executive Committee shall have the power to settle the dispute; however, such judgment may be appealed to the Democratic State Committee for final decision.

**Section 5.** In the case of a vacancy in the office of a Precinct Committee Person for any precinct by reason of death, resignation, removal under Art I §12, failure to elect at a Primary Election, or any other cause, the following procedure shall be used to fill such vacancy:

1. The applicable Area Chairperson<sup>2</sup> shall submit a recommendation to the County Executive Committee within ninety (90) calendar days of such vacancy.
2. In the event the Area Chairperson does not submit a recommendation within 90 days, the County Chairperson may submit a recommendation to the County Executive Committee.
3. The County Executive Committee shall approve the recommendation by majority vote.

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<sup>1</sup> See Art II

<sup>2</sup> See Art III §2 §§A

4. If the County Executive Committee does not approve the recommendation, the process shall repeat itself with the Area Chairperson submitting a new recommendation within ninety (90) days.
- A. No vacancy in the office of Precinct Committee Person for any precinct shall be filled after the Primary Election in years with gubernatorial elections until after the closing of the quadrennial organization meeting of the County Committee<sup>3</sup>.

**Section 6.** In gubernatorial years, the County Committee shall meet on or before the sixth Wednesday following the Spring Primary Election, at such time and place as the County Chairperson may designate.

- A. Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members shall be delivered no later than seven (7) days prior to this meeting.
- B. This meeting shall be the quadrennial organization meeting of the County Committee<sup>4</sup>.

**Section 7.** In non gubernatorial years, the County Committee shall meet at least twice a year, at such time and place as the County Chairperson may designate.

- A. Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members shall be delivered no later than seven (7) days prior to this meeting.
- B. The purpose of such meeting shall be included in the written notice.

**Section 8.** Special meetings of the County Committee may be called by the County Chairperson at any time and shall be called by the County Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson at the written request of Precinct Committee members from each of at least ten precincts in the County.

- A. Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members shall be delivered no later than seven (7) days prior to this meeting.
- B. The purpose of such meeting shall be included in the written notice.

**Section 9.** By majority vote of the County Committee, any meeting shall be open to County Committee members only, to registered Democrats only, or to the general public.

**Section 10.** The members of the County Committee attending a meeting after due written notice shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 11.** Any member of the County Committee who is unable to attend in person a meeting of the Committee may appoint by proxy a Democratic elector resident in the same precinct who is not already a member of the Committee, who shall have power to attend such meeting and vote thereat as the representative of such absent member.

- A. Any such proxy shall be in writing, signed by the member giving the same, and attested by the signature of a witness.
- B. Signed proxies shall be given to the secretary prior to the chairperson calling the meeting to order, so that the proxy may be properly recorded.

**Section 12.** A Precinct Committee Person who misses three consecutive meetings, either in person or by granting proxy, without good cause, may be removed by majority vote of the County Executive Committee.

**Section 13.** Meetings of the County Committee shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure laid down in Robert's Rules of Order, as most recently revised.

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<sup>3</sup> See Art II §5

<sup>4</sup> See Art II §5

## Article II – County Executive Committee

**Section 1.** The County Executive Committee consists of:

1. County Chairperson,
  2. Vice-Chairperson,
  3. Secretary,
  4. Treasurer,
  5. the Chairperson from each geographic Area<sup>5</sup>,
  6. a representative from each geographic Area with more than 3,000 registered Democratic voters, as calculated by the current DNC and State Committee approved database, at the time of the immediately preceding primary election,
  7. the Director of Finance and Fundraising,
  8. the Director of Campaigns and Elections,
  9. the Director of Communications,
  10. up to three (3) at-large members,
  11. the President of the Penn State College Democrats,
  12. the members of the State Committee registered to vote in Centre County,
  13. the members of the State Committee’s Executive Committee registered to vote in Centre County,
  14. the members of the DNC registered to vote in Centre County, and
  15. Democratic holders of federal, state, and countywide elective offices representing residents of Centre County shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee without vote.
- A. The County Chairperson and County Vice-Chairperson shall not be of the same gender.
- B. There shall be no gender restrictions on all remaining members of the County Executive Committee.
- C. The term “*Officers*” of the County Executive Committee is defined as the County Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.

**Section 2.** The County Executive Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to all other committees, and shall perform such other functions as may be conferred by these rules, or otherwise delegated to it by the County Committee.

**Section 3.** The County Executive Committee shall be authorized and empowered to create committees to assist it in fulfilling its duties.

**Section 4.** The finances of the County Committee shall be managed at the direction of the County Executive Committee, subject to the control of the County Committee.

- A. All disbursements shall bear the signatures of the Treasurer and one of two other County Executive Committee members, who shall be selected by a majority of the Executive Committee present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee.
- B. All income and disbursements shall be itemized, reported regularly to the County Executive Committee, and open to inspection by any member of the County Committee at his or her request.

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<sup>5</sup> See Art III

**Section 5.** The County Executive Committee offices of County Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected by majority vote of the members of the County Committee present at the quadrennial organization meeting of the County Committee.<sup>6</sup>

- A. Candidates for elected officers of the County Executive Committee must be present at the time of election to be considered.
- B. The election shall be conducted in the manner prescribed by the current, out-going County Chairperson.
- C. The term of office for each position shall be for four years.
- D. There is no limit on the number of terms to which an individual may be elected.
- E. If a controversy arises concerning the election of a County Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer, the new Executive Committee shall have the power to settle the dispute; however, such judgment may be appealed to the State Party for final decision.

**Section 6.** The County Executive Committee offices of Area Chairs and Area Representatives shall be selected in accordance with Art III §2 §§A.

**Section 7.** The Director of Finance and Fundraising, the Director of Campaigns and Elections, the Director of Communications, and up to three (3) at-large members may each be recommended by the Chairperson and confirmed by a majority of the Executive Committee present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee.

**Section 8.** In the event of a vacancy in the office of County Chairperson by reason of death, resignation, removal from office under Art II §15, or any other cause, the County Vice-Chairperson shall immediately assume the responsibilities of the County Chairperson, until a replacement Chairperson is installed, using the following procedure:

- A. If less than six (6) months remains in the term of the County Chairperson, the County Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Chairperson for the remainder of the term.
- B. If six (6) months or more remains in the term of the County Chairperson, but less than one (1) year remains, then the Executive Committee, by majority vote shall fill the vacancy.
- C. If one (1) year or more remains in the term of the County Chairperson, the County Vice-Chairperson, acting as the County Chairperson, shall call a special meeting<sup>7</sup> of the County Committee with the purpose of electing a new County Chairperson.
  - (i) The election shall be conducted in the manner prescribed by the County Vice-Chairperson, acting as the County Chairperson.
  - (ii) If the newly-elected County Chairperson is the current Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer, the County Committee shall immediately elect a replacement Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer. This process shall repeat, if necessary, until the positions of County Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer have all been filled.

**Section 9.** Regular meetings of the County Executive Committee, in addition to the quadrennial organization meeting, shall be held at least once every three months.

- A. Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members of the Executive Committee shall be delivered no later than five (5) days prior to this meeting.
- B. The purpose of such meeting shall be included in the written notice.

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<sup>6</sup> See Art I §6

<sup>7</sup> See Art I §8

**Section 10.** Special meetings of the County Executive Committee may meet at the call of the County Chairperson or of any five members of the Executive Committee.

- A. Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members of the County Executive Committee shall be delivered no later than five (5) days prior to this meeting.
- B. The purpose of such meeting shall be included in the written notice.

**Section 11.** By majority vote, the County Executive Committee is authorized to open its meetings to Executive Committee members only, to the County Committee only, to registered Democrats only, or to the general public.

**Section 12.** The members of the County Executive Committee attending a meeting after due written notice, shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 13.** Any question before the executive Committee may be answered by majority vote using email or other electronic means, provided each member's vote can be documented and recorded by the secretary.

**Section 14.** Any member of the County Executive Committee who is unable to attend in person a meeting of the Executive Committee may appoint by proxy a member of the Democratic Committee, who is not already a member of the Executive Committee, who shall have power to attend such meeting and vote thereat as the representative of such absent member.

- A. Any such proxy shall be in writing, signed by the member giving the same, and attested by the signature of a witness.
- B. Properly executed proxies shall be given to the secretary prior to the chairperson calling the meeting to order, so that the proxy may be properly recorded.

**Section 15.** A County Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer who misses three consecutive meetings, either in person or by granting proxy, without good cause, may be removed from office by majority vote of the County Executive Committee.

**Section 16.** Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure laid down in Robert's Rules of Order, as most recently revised.

### **Article III – Areas**

**Section 1.** The County shall be divided into geographic Areas numbering no fewer than the number of Legislative Districts situated wholly or in part in Centre County. The Areas need not be equal in size or number or voters; however, each Area must be contiguous. The following factors shall be considered in determining the Areas:

- 1. number of registered voters,
  - 2. number of Democratic voters,
  - 3. voter turnout,
  - 4. geography,
  - 5. community interest,
  - 6. community representation,
  - 7. municipal boundaries, and
  - 8. other factors as determined to be appropriate by the Executive Committee.
- A. The Areas shall be delineated by Executive Committee action and reviewed prior to each quadrennial organization meeting.

- B. Any changes in the number and delineation of the Areas must be approved prior to the quadrennial organizational meeting by a majority vote of the executive committee present and voting at a regularly scheduled executive committee meeting, after consultation with all precinct Committee Persons and Area Chairpersons involved in the proposed change.
- C. The designation and delineation of Areas, and any changes thereto, shall include both a map showing the Area divisions and a list of the polling locations that compromise each Area.
- D. The designation and delineation of Areas, and any changes thereto, shall be attached to this document as Appendix A.

**Section 2.** During the quadrennial organization meeting of the County Committee, at the conclusion of the elections of the County Executive Committee, the County Committee shall breakup into their respective Areas for Area organization.

- A. Precinct Committee Persons from each Area will elect by majority vote their new Area Chairperson and, if applicable, their additional representatives to the County Executive Committee.
- B. The election shall be conducted in the manner prescribed by the current, out-going Area Chair. If the current, out-going Area Chairperson is not present, the election shall be conducted in the manner prescribed by a member of the newly elected County Executive Committee.
- C. Any person who is already a member of the County Executive Committee is ineligible to be an Area Chairperson or an Area Representative.

**Section 3.** Vacancies happening at any time among the Area Representatives of the County Executive Committee shall be filled by majority vote of the precinct Committee members from the Area in which the vacancy occurs at a special meeting to be called by the Area Chairperson, or, if none, the County Chairperson for that purpose.

**Section 4.** Any Area representative to the Executive Committee who misses three consecutive meetings, without good cause, may be replaced by majority vote of the precinct Committee members of that Area.

#### **Article IV – Vacancies**

**Section 1.** During a general or special election, vacancy of a Democratic candidate, due to death, withdraw of candidacy, failure to nominate during the primary election, or any other cause, shall be filled using the following procedure:

- A. A vacancy in the candidacy for State Committee Representative, County, State, or Federal elected office shall be filled and certified by action of the County Executive Committee, in accordance with and subject to existing applicable election laws and applicable rules of the State Committee.
- B. A vacancy in the candidacy for local elected office shall be filled and certified by the precinct committee members of the election district. If the local precinct committee members fail to fill and certify the nomination seven days prior to the deadline for certification under election law, the vacancy or vacancies shall be filled and certified by the executive committee.

#### **Article V - Amendments**

**Section 1.** These By-laws may be amended by following one of the two following procedures:

- A. County Committee:
  - (i) The County Chairperson shall call a special meeting of the County Committee.

- (ii) The special meeting shall only be open to members of the Centre County Democratic Committee.
  - (iii) Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members shall be delivered no later than ten (10) days prior to this meeting.
  - (iv) The proposed amendment or amendments shall be included in the written notice.
  - (v) The proposed amendment or amendments shall be adopted if approved by majority vote of those members present and voting at the special meeting.
- B. Executive Committee**
- (i) The County Chairperson shall call a special meeting of the County Executive Committee.
  - (ii) The special meeting shall only be open to members of the Centre County Democratic Committee.
  - (iii) Written notice, which may be delivered electronically, to all members shall be delivered no later than ten (10) days prior to this meeting.
  - (iv) The proposed amendment or amendments shall be included in the written notice.
  - (v) The proposed amendment or amendments shall be approved by majority vote of those members present and voting at the special meeting.
  - (vi) The approved amendment or amendments shall not be effective until thirty (30) days after written notice of such adoption, together with the text of such amendment, is made available to members of the County Committee.

### **Article VI - Effective**

**Section 1.** These By-laws shall be effective on the date first written above.

**Section 2.** These By-laws shall be made available for public inspection.

**Section 3.** In the event that any of the provisions of these By-laws are declared illegal or unenforceable, only that particular provision shall be affected by such ruling. All other provisions of these By-laws shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 4.** These By-laws shall be submitted promptly to the Executive Committee of the State Party.

**Section 5.** These By-laws shall be submitted and filed with the Centre County Office of Elections.