

By-laws
Gratiot County Democratic Party
Adopted August 5, 2003

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By-law Committee: Lois Ramsey, Chair
 Walt Hagen
 Trent Wilhelm
 L.D. Hollenbeck, ex-officio member

Gratiot County Democratic Party Constitution and By-Laws

Article I: Name

This organization shall be known as the Gratiot County Democratic Party. It shall consist of the County Executive officers, and all members in good standing of the Gratiot County Democratic Party.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of this organization is to promote the philosophy of the Democratic party and to elect Democrats who support this philosophy/ and further, to unite and to aide in the activities of all precinct delegates, committees, candidates and all other Democrats working to promote wide active participation in Gratiot County.

The Gratiot County Democratic Party shall be a non-profit organization and upon its dissolution, all assets and real and personal property of the Party and its committees shall revert to the benefit of the Michigan Democratic Party. No part of the income or assets of the Party shall be given to any of its members except for the reimbursement of actual expenses, reasonable compensation for services if the Party approves, or a contribution for electing a member to office if the Party so approves.

Article III. Fundamental Principles

Section 1. All public meetings of the Gratiot County Democratic Party at all levels shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 2. No tests for membership in, nor any oaths of loyalty to, the Gratiot County Democratic Party shall be required or used which has the effect of requiring prospective or current members of the Democratic Party to acquiesce in, condone or support discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 3. The time and place for all public meetings of the Gratiot County Democratic party on all levels shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons. Such meetings must be held in places accessible to all Party members and large enough to accommodate all interested persons.

Section 4. The Gratiot County Democratic Party, on all levels shall support the broadest possible participation without discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, economic status, religion, ethnic identity, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, physical appearance or disability.

Section 5. The Gratiot County Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a full description of the legal and practical procedures for selection of Gratiot County Democratic Party officers and representatives on all levels. Publication of those procedures shall be done in such a fashion that all prospective and current members of the Gratiot County Democratic Party will be fully and adequately informed of the pertinent procedure in time to participate in each selection procedure at all levels of the Gratiot County Democratic Party organization.

Section 6. The Gratiot County Democratic Party shall publicize fully and in such a manner as to assure notice to all interested parties a complete description of the legal and practical qualification for all officers and representatives of the Gratiot County Democratic Party. Such publication shall be done in a timely fashion so that all prospective candidates or applicants for any elected or appointed position within the Gratiot County Democratic Party will have full and adequate opportunity to compete for office.

Section 7. Proportional voting shall be used at any District or State level.

Section 8. All rules and by-laws of the Gratiot Democratic Party at all levels shall be consistent with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party and shall be available upon request in writing to any member of the Gratiot Democratic Party.

Section 9. The unit rule is prohibited at all levels of the Gratiot Count Democratic Party.

Section 10. No rule shall be adopted at any level of the Gratiot Democratic Party which would require a person to cast a vote or be recorded as voting contrary to that person's judgment.

Section 11. On all questions of procedure not resolved by the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party or these By-laws, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used.

Section 12. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Gratiot Democratic Party shall be of the opposite sex.

Section 13. Votes shall not be taken by secret ballot at any meeting of the Gratiot County Democratic Party at any level except for the election of officers.

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. Membership of the Gratiot County Democratic Party shall consist of

- A. All duly elected Democratic precinct delegates of this county, (Gratiot County)
- B. Members of the Michigan Democratic Party residing in this county, and
- C. The Gratiot County Democratic Committee and Officers, all of whom must be members of the Michigan Democratic Party, residents of this county and
- D. Candidates who run for countywide offices, State Senate and U. S. House shall have voting privileges in the Gratiot County Democratic Party.

Section 2. A voting member: All members in good standing shall be entitled to participate in the activities of this organization. Voting rights rest to veterans of the GCDP. All rights not reserved or given to the precinct delegates and officers and board members by law and by this Constitution and By-laws shall be vested in the regular membership.

Section 3. Precinct delegates shall be apportioned and selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Section 4. The Executive Officers of the Gratiot County Democratic Party shall be selected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Section 5. Membership in the Michigan Democratic Party is required in order to be a member of the Gratiot County Democratic Party. The Michigan Democratic Party rebates part of the dues to the Gratiot County Democratic Party. Members of the Gratiot County Democratic Party are requested to make a yearly contribution of at least \$10.00 beyond the state party contribution, if they are able to make such a contribution.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. The meeting dates, time and place for the Gratiot County Democratic Party shall be set for a two (2) year period and shall be decided at the County Organizational Convention. Seven (7) days' notice of all Gratiot County Democratic Party meetings shall be given.

Section 2. Special Meetings of the Gratiot Democratic Party. A special meeting is a separate session of an organization that is held at a different time from the regular meeting. Special meetings are called to deal with urgent matters of business that cannot wait until the next regular meeting. They can be called only by the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair. Three (3) days written notice shall be given notifying the members of the place, time, and purpose of the meeting.

Section 3. A quorum shall exist at a Gratiot County Democratic Party meeting when five (5) members and one (1) Executive Officer for a total of six (6) are present, in person.

Section 4. Subject to these By-laws, all meeting shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition), which shall be the Parliamentarian's guide for all matters not covered in the Constitution and By-laws of this organization.

Section 5. Candidates for legislative offices consisting of more than one (1) county may give written proxy to any other member of the Gratiot County Democratic Party.

Article VI. Officers, Executive Committee and County Committee.

Section 1. One third (1/3) of the Executive Committee shall automatically consist of the most recent nominees for county wide office and the county commission, and State House, State Senate and U.S. House whose districts include all or part of the county. The County Convention shall elect the balance of the Executive Committee which shall consist of twice the number of automatic members. Each even-numbered year within twenty (20) days following the November election, the delegates to the County Convention shall convene at the call of the county Chair-person for the purpose of electing part of the Executive Committee. If a vacancy occurs in the position of delegate-elected member of the Executive Committee, the remaining delegate-elected members fill the vacancy. The Executive Committee may fill a vacancy in any of its offices. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly at a regularly scheduled meeting and shall keep minutes of all meetings which shall be available to all Party members at quarterly County Committee meetings.

Section 2. Officers shall be elected in accordance with the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party within thirty (30) days of the November election. The officers are Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, each being of the opposite sex, Secretary, Treasurer. These officers will be the executive committee.

- a. Officers shall be chosen as provided henceforth. Each even-numbered year following the November election, officers shall be elected at the organizational meeting. The terms of service of an officer shall continue for two (2) years or until the selection of his/her successor.
- b. Voting members of the Executive Committee must be registered Michigan Democratic Party members for at least two (2) months prior to a meeting in order to participate.

Section 3. Within forty-five (45) days of January 1 of each odd-numbered year the Executive Committee determines the membership of the County Committee. The County Committee can elect additional officers which in its judgement are proper to carry out the purposes of the County Committee, and can fill a vacancy which may occur in the membership of the County Committee or in any of its additional offices. Between meetings of the County Committee the Executive Committee has all the powers and performs all the duties of the County Committee, including the filling of vacancies in nominations as prescribed by law.

Section 4. The Chairperson shall preside at all Executive and County Committee meetings, and have such other duties as are usual to the office of County chairperson, or that may be required by this organization. The Chairperson shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of every committee.

Section 5. The Vice-Chairperson shall be a member of the opposite sex from the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in the discharge of his/her duties, and shall temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

Section 6. The Secretary of this organization shall keep an accurate record and minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the County Committee. He/She shall keep and preserve all the books, documents, correspondence, records, minutes, effects, and any other property of this organization, and when a new secretary is elected the past secretary shall forthwith deliver to the newly elected secretary all the aforesaid items kept and preserved during his/her tenure of office. He/She shall see that proper notification is given to the Executive Committee and County Committee of their meetings.

Section 7. The Treasurer, with the other members of the Finance Committee, shall be responsible for the financial receipts and disbursements of this organization subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The funds of this organization shall be deposited in banks or other chartered financial institutions and shall be drawn upon only by checks signed by any two of the following officers: Treasurer, Chairperson, and one other member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall make financial reports to the Executive Committee as that Committee so directs and shall make them to all County Committee meetings. When a new Treasurer is elected, the past Treasurer shall forthwith deliver to the new Treasurer the funds and all the books and records kept during his/her tenure in office.

Section 8. A parliamentarian, who shall be other than an Executive Officer, shall be appointed by the Chairperson with the approval of the Executive Committee and/or the County Committee.

Section 9. All officers must contact the Chair for an excused absence. Any officer being absent for three (3) meetings in one year shall forfeit his/her office unless the absence is excused by a majority of the membership.

Article VII. Committees

Section 1. The Chairperson, subject to the approval of the majority of the membership of the county shall appoint committee members and chairpersons as the membership may deem necessary for the work of the organization except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws.

Section 2. Standing Committees shall include the following:

1. Organization and By-Laws Committee
2. Finance, subject to Section 3 below
3. Membership
4. Public Relations

5. Resolutions
6. Campaign/Candidates Committee
7. Fund Raising

Section 3. Finance Committee

1. Members shall be appointed by the Chairperson with the approval of the membership.
2. The Treasurer shall be the chairperson of the Finance Committee and with three (3) others, for a total of four (4) shall:
 - a. Supervise all incoming funds, including membership, special events, and disbursement thereof
 - b. All checks shall be signed by the Treasurer and/or one other member of the Finance Committee.
 - c. All expenses other than utility and note payments (or other regular contractual expenses already approved by the membership prior to payment).
 - d. The committee shall propose a projected two-year budget based on ? for approval of the membership at the meeting following election of officers. The committee would then have the authority to disburse funds based on the budget

Article VIII. Order of Business

The business of the organization shall proceed in the following order:

1. Roll call of officers
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Secretarial Report Minutes of the previous meeting and approval
4. Treasurers Report and approval
5. Introduction of guests and/or speaker and public comment
6. Reading of communication
7. Reports of Committees
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

Article IX. Resolutions

Section 1. Resolutions may be introduced by any of the following:

1. Members of the Democratic Party residing in the county
2. The Gratiot County Democratic Party Resolutions Committee

Section 2.

1. All proposed resolutions must be referred to the Resolutions Committee by the next meeting. That committee must act on all resolutions referred to it and report such action by the next meeting. The Executive Committee and the County Committee may act on urgent and timely resolutions provided that 2/3 of the respective committee members present and seated, votes to do so.

2. If there is an urgent need for immediate action the membership can approve an issue and forward it to the resolutions committee to be drawn up: the executive officers can authorize publication of the resolution.

Section 3. Minority reports can be filed by any member of the Resolution Committee.

Section 4. Committee approved resolutions and minority reports should be duplicated in enough quantity for distribution at the subsequent meeting.

Section 5. Resolutions passed by the Resolution Committee shall read to the general membership of the county at the next regular meeting where the action of the Resolutions Committee shall be ratified or rejected.

Article X. Amendments

Section 1. Proposals of changes or amendments to these By-Laws shall first be referred to the Organization and By-Laws Committee which shall report its recommendations to the next regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2. These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee or County Committee, present and seated, provided that written notice setting forth the proposed amendment has been given to all Party Members at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3. These By-Laws shall be in full force and effect upon their adoption and shall supersede all motions and policies of a contrary nature with the exception of those provision of Michigan Statues Annotated or the Rules of the Michigan Democratic Party.

Article XI. Vacancies

Section 1. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and/or Treasurer, the vacancy will be filled by nominations and election within thirty (30) days for the remainder of the term.

Date By-Laws Approved: August 5, 2003

L. D. Hollenbeck Chair

Amendments:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Article 9, Section 2:1 | April 27, 2004 |
| 2. Article 10, Section 2 | April 27, 2004 |
| 3. Article 7, Section 2 | February , 2007 |

By-law Terminology and Definitions:

Executive Officers: The Gratiot County Executive Officers are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Minority Reports: Minority Reports express the view of those committee members who disagree with the committee report. Whatever is not agreed to by the majority of the members present and voting at a meeting (at which a quorum consisting of a majority of the members of the committee shall be present) cannot form a part of its report. The minority may be permitted to submit their views in writing also, either together or each member separately, but their report can be presented only with general consent or by an incidental motion to receive it. The motion takes a second, is undebatable, is amendable, requires a majority, and is reconsiderable. See Roberts Rules for more information.

Unit Rule: Prohibited because it negates one person/one vote.

From the Michigan Democratic Party Rules

Assistance to Officeholders and Candidates. Effective June 1, 2002, only those officeholders and candidates who are members of the Michigan Democratic Party shall be eligible to receive election assistance of any kind from any unit of the Michigan Democratic Party at any level. Judicial officeholders and judicial candidates are exempt from this requirement.

Amended and approved: July 18, 2018