

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
of the
DEMOCRATIC CLUB
OF
LAKEWOOD
CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO

Amended September 3, 2009

PREAMBLE

We, the Democrats of Lakewood, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, united in common purpose, hereby rededicate ourselves to the principles which have historically sustained our party. Recognizing that the vitality of the nation's political institutions has been the foundation of its enduring strength, we acknowledge that a political party which wishes to lead must listen to those it would lead, a party which asks for the people's trust must prove that it trusts the people, and a party which hopes to call forth the best the nation can achieve must embody the best of the nation's heritage and traditions.

The founder of the Democratic Party, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, set forth the reasons for the creation of this country and expressed the basic tenets of democratic government:

That all persons are created equal
That they are endowed by their Creator with certain
inalienable rights
That among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of
Happiness.
That to secure these rights, governments are instituted
among people, deriving their powers from the consent of
the governed

What we seek for our nation, we hope for all people: individual freedom in the framework of a just society, and political freedom in the framework of meaningful participation by all citizens. Bound by the United States and Ohio Constitutions, and the Principles of the National, Cuyahoga, and Ohio Democratic Parties, aware that a party must be responsive to be worthy of responsibility, we pledge ourselves to open, honest endeavor and conduct of public affairs in a manner worthy of a society of free people.

Under God, and for these ends and upon these principles, we do establish and adopt this Constitution of the Democratic Club of Lakewood.

ARTICLE I
LAKEWOOD DEMOCRATIC CLUB OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Democratic Club of Lakewood, Ohio.

Section 2. Membership

Voting membership in this club shall be open to all residents of Lakewood in the State of Ohio who support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, and the Constitution, Bylaws and principles of the Democratic Club of Lakewood, Ohio. No person may be a member of nor may vote on any motion, resolution, nomination, or election at any caucus, convention, meeting, or conference of the Lakewood Democratic Club who does not meet the following qualifications or who is a member of any other political party at that time.

To be a voting member the person shall meet three requirements:

1. Shall be a resident of Lakewood, Ohio,
2. Must have attended at least three of the general monthly meetings within the last twelve months prior to the meeting in which the vote takes place,
3. Shall have paid in full his or her annual dues prior to participating in the vote. It shall be permissible to pay the dues at the general monthly meeting in which the vote takes place.

Each member must personally register at each meeting he or she attends and no proxies shall be accepted.

Non-voting membership shall be available to all persons meeting the criteria of this section being a non-resident of the City of Lakewood and who pay his or her dues.

Section 3. Qualifications

In the event that any person's qualifications as a member of the Lakewood Democratic Club must be determined, a challenge can be made by any voting member. If a challenge is made, and supported by four other voting members, the matter shall be discussed and voted on at the next regular meeting. If resolution of the challenge is necessary for elections or endorsements, the matter shall then be discussed and decided by a vote of the eligible members present at that meeting.

Section 4. Club Unity

- a. All members of the club, candidates for office, club officers, club committees and organizations, and elected Democratic officials shall support the principles of the Lakewood Democratic Club.
- b. All members of the club, candidates for office, club officers, club committees, organizations, and elected Democratic officials shall support the endorsed candidates and issues of the Democratic Club in General Elections.
- c. Any member of the club, candidate for office, club officer, club committee, organization, or elected Democratic official who fails to support (a) and (b) above may be asked to resign from any elected or appointed party position upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee. Further, said members cannot seek a party office for one (1) year from the date of the vote of the Executive Committee. Failing the resignation of said member, the Executive Committee shall remove him from office upon affirmative vote of a majority of the members.

Section 5. Constitution and Laws

Nothing herein shall conflict with the Constitution of the United States of America, the laws of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the laws of the State of Ohio, or the principles of the Cuyahoga County and National Democratic Parties. Any matter which conflicts with any of the aforesaid shall be of no force and effect. All constitutional provisions and laws of the United States and the State of Ohio are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part hereof. Each clause of this Constitution and Bylaws shall be considered separately and the illegality or unenforceability of any clause shall not affect any other clause.

ARTICLE II COMMITTEES

Section 1. Executive Committee

- a. All members of the Executive Committee shall be voting members in good standing of the Lakewood Democratic Club. The Executive Committee shall consist of elected club officers and standing committee chairpersons. In addition, elected public officials, the Lakewood City Leader, and Democratic city ward leaders shall be *ex officio*, non-voting members of the Executive Committee.
- b. Regular and special meetings of the Executive Committee shall require the presence of a majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee to transact business. A majority of the voting members present at a meeting of the Executive Committee may act legally upon all matters properly before the committee.
- c. Said Executive Committee shall have full authority to adopt such procedures for the administration of the Democratic Club as it may deem necessary and appropriate consistent with the bylaws. Any adopted procedures shall be reported to the club at the next general meeting.
- d. All members of the Executive Committee shall act in accordance with these bylaws and the procedures duly adopted by the Executive Committee. For any matters not covered by the foregoing, Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail and take precedence over any other custom, procedures or precedent at Executive Committee meetings.
- e. Unexpired terms of Executive Committee(s) members caused by whatever reason shall be filled in the same manner as the positions were originally filled.

Section 2. Standing Committees

- a. The standing committees shall be Membership, Hospitality, Communication (including web design), Fundraising, Sunshine, and those committees designated by the President. Any club member may join any standing committee. Each standing committee shall elect a chair who is a voting member of the club by a majority vote of said committee.
- b. Every September each standing committee shall elect its chair.
- c. The chair of each committee is responsible for submitting that committee's records such as minutes, attendance, and expense reports of each meeting to the club secretary.

Section 3. Meetings

- a. There shall be at least eight monthly meetings per year of the general membership. There shall be meetings of the Executive Committee as may be called by the club President for a specific purpose.

- b. Special Executive Committee meetings shall be called upon receipt by the club President of a written petition signed by no less than twenty-five percent of the voting club members and stating specifically the purpose for which the meeting is sought. The special meeting shall be held not earlier than five nor later than fifteen days after the giving of the notice. The notice shall be issued within three days after receipt of the written petition containing the required signatures.
- c. Special general meetings shall be called upon receipt by the club President of a written petition signed by no less than twenty-five percent of the voting members of the club and stating specifically the purpose for which the general meeting is sought. The special meeting shall be held not earlier than fourteen nor later than twenty-one days after the giving of the notice. The notice shall be issued within seven days after receipt of the written petition containing the required signatures.
- d. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of fifty percent of the Executive Committee members elected in the manner prescribed by this document.
- e. For the purpose of a vote at a general meeting a quorum of the general meeting shall consist of those voting members present.
- f. Any motion shall carry with a vote of fifty percent plus one of those voting unless otherwise stated by these bylaws.
- g. For any matters not covered in the foregoing, Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail.

Section 4. Endorsements

- a. To be considered for club endorsement a candidate must be a registered Democrat.
- b. The membership shall have the sole right to make endorsements. It may endorse Democratic candidates upon the affirmative majority vote of fifty percent plus one of the general voting membership present at a regular meeting at which consideration of endorsements was announced fourteen days in advance.
- c. In the event that there are more than two candidates for the same office and no candidate receives fifty percent plus one of the vote, there shall be a runoff between the top two vote getters.
- d. All endorsed candidates shall be treated equally.
- e. Endorsements shall be communicated to the general public within seven days of the endorsement vote.

Section 5. Dues

The dues shall be set each year by the Executive Committee for the next year. The Executive Committee shall have the option to discount dues for the senior citizens or youth.

ARTICLE III OFFICERS

Section 1. Eligibility for Club Office

Any person who meets the voting membership requirements of Article I, section 2, is eligible for election to club office except as hereinafter limited. There shall be no minimum age requirement for club office save where prescribed by law.

Section 2. Offices

a. President

- i. The President's duties shall be those of chief executive officer, and shall be subject to the direction of, and responsible to, the Executive Committee. The President may appoint such committees as he or she deems necessary and to call and preside at meetings.
- ii. The President of the club shall consult with and cooperate with the various Ward leaders, City leaders, the Democratic elected officials and the Precinct Committee people.
- iii. The President of the meeting may appoint such parliamentarians, sergeants-at-arms, and other assistants as he/she may deem necessary (and to call and preside at meetings) for the proper conduct of the meeting.
- iv. The President of the Executive Committee shall be authorized to act for and on behalf of such Committees and shall be empowered to conduct the business of the Lakewood Democratic Club to operate, expend monies for, and direct such offices and personnel as may be established or hired for the conduct of the activities of the Party and to administer the affairs of the Club.

b. First Vice President

The First Vice President will, in the absence of the President, assume the duties and responsibilities of the President, as herein provided.

c. Second Vice President

The Second Vice-President will coordinate the Fundraising Committee and act on duties assigned by the President.

d. Secretary

The Secretary shall be a voting member ex-officio of the Executive Committee and of all standing and special committees. He or she shall keep a true and accurate record of the minutes of all meetings of the main meetings and of the Executive Committee, keep the roll of members and the attendance at meetings of the committees, and shall perform generally all of the functions usually incumbent upon secretaries, together with such other duties as may be delegated to the position by the committee and as are prescribed by law.

e. Treasurer

- i. The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds of the party and shall render up-to-date financial reports to each meeting of the Executive Committee and general meeting. He/she and any other party officer or employee responsible for the handling of party funds shall be bonded if so required by the President of the Club.
- ii. Each calendar year the Treasurer shall make available a full and complete financial report in writing to the Executive Committee.
- iii. An audit of Club financial records shall be conducted at least once a year, and upon the death, resignation, or replacement of either the President or the Treasurer.

f. Ex-officio

The President, Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be members ex-officio of all standing and special committees of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Oath of Office

All officers for the Executive Committee shall be required to take an oath of office to support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the Constitution, By-Laws and the principles of the National and Ohio Democratic Parties, and the Constitution of the Lakewood Democratic Club.

ARTICLE IV ELECTIONS

Section 1. Election Procedure

- a. The election of new officers shall take place biannually at the general membership's June meeting. The candidates voted on for individual office shall be elected by a majority of fifty percent plus one of the general voting members present at the meeting.
- b. In the event that there are more than two candidates for the same office and no candidate receives fifty percent plus one of the vote, there shall be a runoff between the top two vote getters.
- c. In the event of any tie, the outcome will be determined by the flip of a coin.

Section 2. Notice

The nomination meeting shall be held at the May general membership meeting. The election meeting shall be at the June general membership meeting and notice shall be sent via U.S. mail to all current members fourteen days prior to each meeting.

Section 3. Term

Each officer shall serve a term of two years from June until June.

Section 4. Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, Secretary, Treasurer, or 1st Vice-President, the Executive Committee shall meet to choose a successor or interim office holder within ten days of the existence of such vacancy.

ARTICLE V
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Notice

Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws proposed under this section must be submitted in writing and copies thereof made available to members at a reasonable time prior to any general membership meeting, but not less than ten days in advance.

Section 2. Initiation

Amendments may be initiated by a simple majority of the Executive Committee or by petition signed by not less than ten voting members of the club.

Section 3. Passage

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at any general membership meeting, provided that advance notice above mentioned has been made.

Section 4. Communication

All proposed amendments shall be distributed to the membership by the Executive Committee, read, and discussed at the next general membership meeting before the vote.

Section 5. Restriction

Proposed amendments brought to members for a vote are not subject to amendments prior to the vote.

ARTICLE VI.
PREVIOUS CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

This Constitution and Bylaws supersedes any and all other previous Constitutions and Bylaws of the Lakewood Democratic Club and shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.