

# CONSTITUTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF DUBUQUE COUNTY, IOWA

## Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be the Democratic Party of Dubuque County, Iowa; also known as Dubuque County Democrats.

## Article II – Aims and Purposes

The aims and purposes of this organization, hereinafter referred to as the “Party”, shall be to encourage effective government at all levels, to promote democratic ideals, and to defend social justice and civil liberty. The Party shall seek to provide a representative and responsible Democratic Party in Dubuque County, and to advance the interests of the Iowa Democratic Party and the Democratic Party of the United States of America. To achieve these ends, the Party shall have those duties, responsibilities, and powers that are consistent with these objectives.

## Article III – Authority

This Constitution shall be the supreme governing document of the Party, limited by and subject to the laws of the United States of America, the laws of the State of Iowa, and the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

## Article IV – Central Committee

Section 1      Composition. The Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Dubuque County, Iowa, hereinafter referred to as the “Central Committee”, shall be the governing body of the Party. The Central Committee shall be comprised of the members elected pursuant to this Article IV, hereinafter referred to as “Central Committee Members,” and the Executive Board of the Democratic Party of Dubuque County, Iowa. The Central Committee shall be entitled to vote on all policy matters not in conflict with the Code of the State of Iowa or the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

Section 2      Even-Year Caucus and Elections. In every even-numbered year, each Dubuque County precinct, meeting in caucus pursuant to the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party, shall elect a minimum of two (2) voting Central Committee Members, and may elect up to a maximum of twelve (12) voting Central Committee Members. The term of office for each Central Committee Member shall begin immediately upon election and shall continue until a successor is elected at the next Even-Year Caucus or until such Central Committee Member is removed sooner pursuant to the Constitution or Bylaws of the Party.

Section 3      Biennial Organizational Meeting & Caucus. In every odd-numbered year, the Central Committee shall meet and organize at an off-year caucus, which shall take place between March 1 and April 1.

Section 4      Central Committee Member Vacancies. If a vacancy shall occur in Central Committee membership, the position shall be filled by an alternate member, or, in the event that there is no alternate, by election pursuant to the Bylaws of the

Party. Any person who fills such vacancy shall serve until a successor is elected at the next Even-Year Caucus or until such person is removed sooner pursuant to the Constitution or Bylaws of the Party.

Section 5 College and Young Democrats. Recognizing the young citizens of Dubuque County who contribute to and desire involvement in the political process, and further recognizing that the Party desires to give our young citizens an expanded forum to present their ideas, it is hereby established that each recognized College or Young Democrats organization in Dubuque County may elect two associate members to the Central Committee. An associate member shall have all of the rights and privileges of the regular Central Committee Members except the right to vote at Central Committee meetings. The rights of associate members shall include but not be limited to the right to participate in all debates of the Central Committee and the right to be named to and fully participate in standing and ad hoc committees. Associate members shall serve until the start of the next Even-Year Caucus or until such associate member is removed sooner pursuant to the Constitution or Bylaws of the Party.

#### **Article V – Executive Board**

Section 1 Composition. The Executive Board of the Democratic Party of Dubuque County, Iowa, hereinafter referred to as the “Executive Board”, shall be comprised of the officers of the Party, the immediate past Chair of the Party, the chairpersons of the standing committees established by the Bylaws of the Party, and the County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chair. If someone holds more than one seat on the Executive Board, they shall nonetheless have only one vote.

Section 2 Duties. The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Central Committee between its business meetings, fix the hour and place of meetings, prepare the agenda for the business meetings of the Central Committee, develop policies and activities that will assist the Party in achieving its aims and purposes, including the funding of local candidates between business meetings (up to \$500/each), and shall perform such other duties as are specified in these bylaws.

#### **Article VI – Officers**

Section 1 Election and Composition. The officers of the Party shall be elected by the Central Committee Members at the Biennial Organizational Meeting & Caucus. The officers shall consist of a Chair, a First Vice-Chair, a Second Vice-Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and other officers as the Central Committee may determine. The officers shall have voting privileges equal to those of the Central Committee Members, with the exception of the Chair, who may vote only in the event of a tie. A person may be, but need not be, both an elected Central Committee Member and an elected officer, however a person who is elected in

both of such capacities shall nonetheless have only one vote. The term of office for each officer shall begin immediately upon election and shall continue until a successor is elected at the next Biennial Organizational Meeting & Caucus or until such officer is sooner removed pursuant to the Constitution or Bylaws of the Party.

Section 2

Duties of the Chair. The chair shall preside at all Central Committee and Executive Board meetings and shall have general charge and control over the affairs and business of the Central Committee, the Executive Board, and the Party generally. The Chair, may, with the approval of the Central Committee, appoint ad hoc committees as deemed necessary. The Chair will, in coordination with the National and Iowa Democratic Party, determine and drive a cohesive message to be disseminated by the Community Engagement Committee. The Chair shall evaluate the priorities of spending policies and make recommendations to the Central Committee through the Executive Board. The Chair, in coordination with the Treasurer, shall develop and carry out fundraising plans approved by the Central Committee to meet the budgetary needs of the Party. The Chair shall appoint at each December Central Committee meeting a special committee of three members to audit the Treasurers' books for the year that is ending. At least one appointee must not have served on the committee the preceding year and one with bookkeeping or auditing experience is sought but not required. The auditing committee shall meet with the Treasurer during the subsequent January, after the calendar year books have been closed. The committee shall report its findings and recommendations at the February Central Committee meeting.

Section 3

Duties of the First Vice-Chair. The First Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair. In the event that the Chair is unable or unwilling to serve out his/her term, the First Vice-Chair shall fill the office of Chair and serve the unexpired term. The First Vice Chair shall be an ex-officio member of each standing and ad-hoc committee. The First Vice- Chair shall answer questions or research answers to questions in concert with the County Rules & Nominations Chair at Central Committee meetings concerning the Dubuque County, District and/or Iowa Democratic Party's Constitution and Bylaws and review the Central Committee's constitution, Bylaws and standing resolutions with the County Rules & Nominations Chair. The First Vice-Chair shall maintain the Party digital accounts, including but not limited to social media, listserv, and Party emails. The First Vice-Chair shall designate and work with the Webmaster to maintain the Party website. The First Vice-Chair shall delegate access to the Party accounts as needed. The First Vice-Chair shall assist the Second Vice Chair in the performance of his or her election-time duties.

Section 4

Duties of the Second Vice-Chair. The Second Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of both the Chair and the First Vice-Chair. The Second Vice-Chair shall be directly responsible for voter registration and other voting and Election Day activities, including finding caucus locations and precinct chairs and secretaries.

Section 5 Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall prepare and maintain all minutes of meetings, documents, files, and records as may be necessary for the operation of the Central Committee, the Executive Board, and the Party generally. The Secretary shall be responsible for all mailings and notices required by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Party. The Secretary shall maintain an accurate list of the Central Committee Members.

Section 6 Duties of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep account of all monies of the Party, shall deposit all monies received in such banks or depositories as the Executive Board shall designate, and shall make payments only on written order signed by the Chair. The Treasurer shall prepare a written report prior to each regular meeting of the Central Committee, which report shall include a record of all receipts and disbursements subsequent to the last such report. The Treasurer, in coordination with the Party Chairperson, shall: a. Prepare and submit a written budget annually for the Central Committee's approval, and review and approve budgets from all standing committees. b. Review budget status monthly to assure conformity to the budget and fundraising goals. c. Collect information concerning donor profiles for the purpose of fundraising and submit it to the Chairperson. The Treasurer shall prepare an annual financial report upon the close of each calendar year and shall present such report at the first regular Central Committee of the New Year. The Treasurer shall be bonded in an amount determined by the Executive Board.

Section 7 Vacancies. If a vacancy shall occur in any office, the position shall be filled by election pursuant to the Bylaws of the Party. Any person elected to a vacant office shall serve until a successor is elected at the next Caucus or until such person is sooner removed from office pursuant to the Constitution or Bylaws of the Party.

### **Article VII – Meetings**

The regular meetings of the Central Committee shall occur at least once every three (3) months in accordance with the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party. Other meetings shall be held pursuant to the Bylaws of the Party.

### **Article VIII – Bylaws**

The Bylaws of the Party may be adopted and amended by approval of a majority of those present and voting at a regular meeting of the Central Committee following at least two (2) weeks notice of the proposed Bylaws and the time and place of the meeting. The Bylaws shall be in conformity with this Constitution.

### **Article IX – Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution must be presented and circulated in writing at a regular meeting of the Central Committee and then approved by two-thirds of those present and voting at the next

two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Central Committee. Substantive changes in circulated wording shall be out of order at the approval meetings. Non-substantive changes in circulated wording must be approved by two-thirds of those present and voting at an approval meeting.

Amendment Section. [For brevity's sake, only the most recent resolution approving an Amendment to this Constitution and By-laws will be listed here].

Whereas the Dubuque County Democratic Central Committee has determined that the Constitution & Bylaws of the Party should be amended as follows:

Revising the description of the Candidates & Campaigns Committee; deleting the Finance, Information, Permanent Organization, Publicity, Research, Special Events, Volunteer, and Youth Outreach Committees; and adding the Community Engagement, Data and Analytics and Development Committees.

Now, having been introduced at the February 2025 Central Committee meeting for its first reading and the March 2025 Caucus for its second reading; therefore it is resolved by the Dubuque County Democratic Central Committee to approve this amendment following its third and final reading at its March 2025 Biennial Organizational Meeting.

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**BY LAWS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF DUBUQUE COUNTY, IOWA**

**Article I - Membership and Elections**

Section 1 Vacancies on the Executive Board shall be filled by nomination from the chair at one Central Committee meeting and ratification by the Central Committee at the next Central Committee meeting. Vacancies on the Central Committee shall be filled by nomination at one Central Committee meeting and ratification by the Central Committee at the next Central Committee meeting.

Section 2 A majority vote of those present and voting shall be required to elect anyone to any office or any precinct vacancy. In the event of more than one nomination, the election may be by signed ballot.

Section 3 All elections involving three or more candidates shall be conducted as follows:

- a. If each candidate receives more than 10% of the votes cast, the candidate with the least number of votes shall be eliminated and the balloting continued with those remaining.
- b. On any ballot any candidate receiving less than 10% of the votes cast on that ballot shall be eliminated from further balloting.
- c. Balloting shall continue in this manner until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on a ballot and is declared elected.

Section 4 When a vacancy occurs in a Central Committee position- committee person or officers the vacancy shall be announced at the first available meeting of the Central Committee. The vacancy may be filled in accordance with the provisions of the by-laws at any Central Committee meeting subsequent to its announcement in a Central Committee agenda.

Section 5 Central Committee members represent the precinct from which they were elected. If a Central Committee member changes residence to another precinct, his/hers membership shall transfer to the new precinct by a simple re-affirmation vote at the next Central meeting. If the precinct they want to transfer to is already at full capacity, they shall become an Alternate Central Committee Member from that precinct. The vacancy created by a member moving out of his/her precinct shall be announced and the election of the successor shall be carried out according to the Provisions of these Bylaws. If the precinct has alternates, alternates will move up to fill the Central Committee member vacancy in the order they were elected to the Central Committee as alternates.

Section 6 The Central Committee may, by a sixty percent (60%) vote of the members present, remove from office any committee person or officer who publicly supports any candidate other than the one nominated by the Democratic Party, for inattention to duty (failure to attend three consecutive Central Committee meetings without notice), incompetence or non-residency.

Section 7 Any member of the Central Committee who has reason to believe another Central Committee member or Executive board member has violated the rules or bylaws of this Central Committee, may file a written, signed complaint with the Executive Board or Party Chairperson.

Upon receipt of any such complaint, the executive board shall meet and investigate such complaint within 15 days. The accused has the right to face the accuser at this point in the process. If the complaint is found to be valid, the Executive Board shall bring the complaint to the attention of the Central Committee for action at the next regular meeting of the Central Committee. The Executive Board may, at its discretion, recommend action to be taken by the Central Committee.

Any questioning of the integrity or ability of a person to serve as a member of officer of the Central Committee before following these procedures shall be out of order at any meeting of the Dubuque County Central Committee.

All allegations shall remain confidential until determined valid.

The decision of the Executive Board may be appealed to the Central Committee by either party. Such appeal shall be filed in writing with the Chairperson or Secretary within 10 days of the Executive Board report to the Central Committee.

All complaints shall be discussed only under Executive Session of either the Executive Board or Central Committee.

Section 8 All applications for associate membership with the Central Committee must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board. Associate membership will be granted by majority approval of the Executive Board.

## **Article II - Standing Committees**

Section 1 At the precinct caucuses in even-numbered years, each precinct shall elect members and alternates to the Platform Committee and the Committee on Committees. At their first organizing meeting following the caucuses, the Committee on Committees shall divide into Arrangements, Credentials, and Rules and Nomination. The Chairs of each of these committees are standing positions elected by the members or alternates seated in place of members of each committee. The Chairs may be consulted and may recall their committees as needed between conventions. Their terms shall end at the first organizational meeting following the next precinct caucuses in even-numbered years.

Section 2 The County Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Chair is elected at the County Convention. The County DEI Chair may recruit county members of the State Constituency Caucuses living in the county to serve on the County DEI Committee. The Constituency Caucuses include the Arab-American, Armed Forces/Veterans, Asian & Pacific Islander, Black, Climate Change/Environment, Disability, Labor, Latino, Native American, Progressive, Rural, Senior/Retirees, Stonewall, and Women caucuses. Any other interested Democrats in the county may also join the County DEI Committee.

Section 3 Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall be appointed by the County Chairperson with the approval of the Central Committee at the regular Central Committee meeting immediately following the Biennial Organizational Meeting & Caucus. The term of office for the standing committee chairpersons expires with the term of the County Chairperson or until such Committee Chair is sooner removed pursuant to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Party.

Section 4 Standing committees are expected to meet at least quarterly, report monthly to the Central Committee, file written activity reports at least quarterly to the Secretary and submit an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Section 5 There shall be a Candidates and Campaigns Committee whose duties shall be:

- a. Aid and assist candidates running on Democratic values for all levels of elected office in Dubuque County.
- b. Develop a field plan which will be the coordinated effort between candidates and the County Party.
- c. Be available to create canvassing walk lists using VAN and MiniVAN, create

- phone banks and scripts, and aid creation of messaging and talking points as needed for candidates.
- d. Coordinate advertising, mail programs, door knocking materials, and all printed and created materials by the county party to promote candidates.
  - e. Coordinate with candidates to determine financial needs of campaigns and advise the Party in planning on how to assist the campaigns.
  - f. Provide training for candidates as needed.
  - g. Coordinate candidate events within the community and coordinate with the Community Engagement Committee to maintain a calendar of events, which includes community, party, and candidate events.
  - h. Ensure candidates events and messaging is promoted by communicating media and public relations needs to the Chairperson and Community Engagement Committee.
  - i. Compile a list of Democratic office holders and general election candidates with their preferred contact information - which shall be made available to Central Committee members and the public through the Website and other media.

#### Section 6

There shall be a Community Engagement Committee. Members include the Community Engagement Chairperson, appointed by the Party Chairperson and other members selected by the Community Engagement Chairperson. The Community Engagement committee shall:

- a. Manage Party social interactions, creating a more streamlined process to engage with volunteers, young democrats, clubs and constituency caucuses, hold social events, and organize community events.
- b. Build and retain a volunteer base for the Party.
- c. Grow relationships with the Dubuque community including working with elected officials to build presence and visibility in the community.
- d. Coordinate to ensure Party events and functions are promoted, covered, and recapped on social media and other media.
- e. Welcome new residents of Dubuque County and promote the work of the local Democratic Party.

#### Section 7

There shall be a Data and Analytics Committee. Members include the Data and Analytics Chairperson, appointed by the Party Chairperson, and other members selected by the Data and Analytics Chairperson. The Data and Analytics committee shall:

- a. Provide the Dubuque County Democratic Party with a data driven approach to better inform decisions.
- b. Guide campaign decision-making with data-driven insights using the analysis of VAN data, electoral results, and voter segments.
- c. Measure campaign effectiveness and track key performance indicators during campaigning and post-election by analyzing results.
- d. Gather data and make it available to other committees as needed.
- e. Conduct data analysis as requested by the Chairperson.
- f. Aid the Chairperson by advising in allocating financial resources effectively across different campaign activities.



- Section 8 There shall be a Development Committee. Members include the Development Chairperson, appointed by the Party Chairperson and other members selected by the Development Chairperson. The Development committee shall:
- a. Build a strong bench of qualified candidates for elected and appointed positions within local government and within the Dubuque County Democratic Party.
  - b. Develop leadership skills within the party at all levels, and ensure a diverse and inclusive leadership pipeline.
  - c. Create a means of evaluation to screen and assess potential candidates.
  - d. Develop and implement training programs and workshops on campaign management, fundraising, public speaking, media relations, and other essential skills.
  - e. Provide mentorship and coaching opportunities for aspiring leaders and foster a culture of support within the party.
  - f. Recruit and nominate precinct committee persons for vacancies that may occur within the Central Committee.
  - g. Promote community engagement, partner with community organizations to identify and develop local leaders, and engage with diverse communities within the party's constituency.

### **Article III - General Rules and Regulations**

- Section 1 All public announcements and publicity releases officially pertaining to the Central Committee shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson who may delegate that responsibility to any member of the Dubuque County Democratic Party who is qualified to handle such publicity.
- Section 2 Central Committee shall not raise money for or contribute money to Democratic candidates in primary elections. Central committee members may as individuals however, raise money for and contribute to Democratic candidates in primary elections.
- Section 3 Regular meetings of the Central Committee (CC) shall be held on the second Tuesday of each month commencing at 7:00 p.m. at a place designated in the meeting notice. On rare occasions, when the CC meetings will be held on a different date, the Chairperson, Secretary and Community Engagement Committee shall make every effort to notify the CC members of any changes in meetings through email notices, and/or phone calls. The Webmaster will update any last minute changes on the Website's calendar.
- Section 4 Special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson within 12 days of a petition signed by at least 10 members of the organization setting forth the matters to be considered at said meeting. The Executive Board or Chairperson may also call a special meeting. The Secretary shall send email notices to those with email addresses. Depending on the time, the Secretary with help of the Community Engagement Committee, will make an effort to contact all Central Committee Members, informing them of the meeting and/or meeting change, at least seven

days in advance. The notice shall include an agenda of the meeting. At special meetings it shall be out of order to consider items not listed on the agenda of the call for a special meeting.

- Section 5 All procedural matters not covered in the Constitution and bylaws shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of Roberts Rules of Order Revised.
- Section 6 Twenty voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting. Motions shall carry by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- Section 7 These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of those in attendance at any meeting provided two (2) weeks email or postcard notice of the proposed change of the Bylaws was sent to all members.
- Section 8 Provisions of these Bylaws may be waived at any duly announced meeting to permit passage of a motion contrary to some provision of the Bylaws provided a motion to waive the specific provisions for the stated reason(s) receives a two thirds affirmative vote of the members present and voting.
- Section 9 The Central Committee, the Executive Board and the Committees created by them shall refrain from endorsement of candidates in primary election contests; however members of the Central Committee may as individuals support qualified Democratic candidates of their choice in such ways as they may decide would be in the best interests of the Democratic Party.
- Section 10 No person shall hold more than one seat on the Executive Committee, nor cast more than one vote, nor shall there be any voting by proxy or absentee ballot.
- Section 11 The Central Committee may pay general and special election campaign costs of a candidate following an election only with the approval by two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
- Section 12 Policies not addressed by the Constitution or the Bylaws, but which are ongoing, shall be designated as Standing Resolutions attached to these documents. These policies can be updated at any Central Committee meeting and must be reviewed within three months following the election of each new County Central Committee.
- Section 13 Open Meetings. The “Open Meetings Law” requires all members and other interested individuals and the media be provided with an agenda which clearly identifies all items to be acted upon and that the public be allowed to attend the meetings. The Dubuque County Democratic Central Committee and county conventions and their sub-committees shall follow these rules with the following two exceptions.

1. If 90% of the members present and voting declare an item to be too urgent to allow waiting for the next meeting, action may be taken even though it was not clearly identified in the agenda.
2. "Political Strategy" is a reason for going into closed session in addition to those cited in the "Code of Iowa."

## STANDING RESOLUTIONS

### CENTURY CLUB

The names of contributors to the Century Club shall be kept confidential, not used for any other purpose by the Dubuque County Democratic Central Committee nor given to any other organization except as required by Iowa Law.

### ELECTION YEAR END BALANCE

Every effort shall be made to maintain a minimum balance of \$1000 on December 31 in order to ensure sufficient funds to meet routine expenses and to provide seed monies for fund raising activities.

RECIPROCITY - Mutual sharing of a particular kind of proprietary information between the Party and a candidate of campaign. The candidate or campaign retains ownership and control of its own data and its data cannot be provided to other candidates or campaigns without the owner's permission. If an incumbent doesn't run for re-election or if a candidate loses a primary, data, which they shared with the Party, becomes the property of the Party.

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- For Elected Party officials and standing committees: any Party use.
- For Democratic candidates in partisan elections, Democrats elected to partisan office, and Presidential campaigns: any campaign use limited only by reciprocity. Century Club lists are not distributed (see above).
- For the Iowa Democratic Party: limited to what is approved by the County Chair.
- For constituency groups, which have endorsed Democratic candidates and been recognized as friendly by the Executive Board: Voter Registration File.
- Requests shall be prioritized in the order received by the Secretary.
- The Executive Board shall determine if and when fees are appropriate to Specific requests for information.

### EMERGENCY SPENDING:

Normally all spending shall be in accordance with the budget approved by the Dubuque county Democratic Central Committee. Occasionally circumstances require an unbudgeted expenditure before the matter can be brought before the Central Committee. This is designated as an emergency expenditure.

The County Chair may authorize emergency expenditures of \$100 or less. If the emergency exceeds \$100, the Chair shall make every reasonable effort to obtain approval of a majority of the Executive Board. The County Chair shall not make an expenditure of over \$100 if a majority of the Executive Board objects. All emergency expenditures shall be reported as such to the Central Committee at its next meeting.