

1 **2018 Bylaws of the Lancaster County Democratic Party**
2

3 ***PREAMBLE***

4 The Lancaster County Democratic Party, hereafter referred to as the “County Party,”
5 recognizes the basic worth of all people and does not discriminate on the basis of age,
6 race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabilities,
7 ethnic background or cultural heritage. The purpose of the County Party is to serve the
8 public interest by providing the ongoing structure to ensure the election of Democrats to
9 both partisan and non-partisan offices; to retain and recruit Democrats and encourage
10 potential candidates for public office; and to provide our membership with a forum on
11 matters of political interest. The County Party also provides education and training. The
12 intention of the County Party is to approach its tasks with integrity and honor and to
13 involve as many people as possible in the process. The goal of the County Party is to
14 build a Party whose strength is in its solidarity.
15

16 ***ARTICLE I: THE CONVENTION***
17

18 The Lancaster County Democratic Party Convention, hereinafter referred to as “County
19 Convention,” as constituted and empowered by state law and the bylaws and rules of the
20 Nebraska Democratic Party and Democratic National Committee is the body that directs
21 and controls the County Party organization.
22

23 ***Section A. Authority***

24 The County Convention’s authority shall be supreme in relationship to the power of the
25 County Party officers, hereinafter provided for. After the adjournment of the County
26 Convention, the direction and control of the County Party organization shall be vested in
27 the Central Committee. In the absence of a convened quorum of the Central Committee,
28 the Executive Committee shall have direction and control as defined in Article III.
29

30 ***Section B. Organization***

31 The organization and temporary rules of the County Convention and the appointment of
32 all Convention Committee chairs shall be determined by the County Chair with the
33 approval of the Central Committee. Delegates shall register in accordance with the
34 method adopted by the Central Committee conforming to the requirements by the
35 Nebraska Democratic Party and the Democratic National Committee.
36

37 ***Section C. Quorum***

38 Forty percent (40%) of the registered delegates shall constitute a quorum to convene the
39 County Convention. The quorum, once established, shall stand for the remainder of the
40 convention.

1 **Section D. Convention Business**

2 The County Convention shall:

- 3 1. Enact rules of the convention.
- 4 2. Elect county convention officers, as provided in Article I.
- 5 3. Elect County Party officers, as provided in Article III.
- 6 4. Elect members of the Central Committee.
 - 7 i. Eligible persons who are willing to serve on the Central Committee shall sign a
 - 8 form stating their intent to serve along with their contact information. The form
 - 9 shall include the duties and responsibilities of membership. The nominees shall
 - 10 be presented for approval by the convention. A majority vote of the convention
 - 11 shall be required to be elected to the Central Committee.
- 12 5. Elect delegates and alternates to the Nebraska Democratic State Convention from each
- 13 legislative district.
- 14 6. Consider and act upon any proposed bylaw amendments.
- 15 7. Consider and act upon a proposed platform.
- 16 8. Consider such other business as may come before it.

17
18 **Section E. County Convention Officers**

19 The County Chair or her/his designee shall temporarily preside over the County
20 Convention until the election of the following County Convention officers:

- 21 1. Convention Chair, who shall preside over the County Convention;
- 22 2. Convention Secretary, who shall take minutes and record all official acts of
- 23 the convention;
- 24 3. Sergeant at Arms, who shall maintain order during the convention and assist
- 25 in other duties as assigned by the Convention Chair.

26
27 **Section F. Convention Committees**

28 Prior to the convening of each County Convention, the Chair of each Convention
29 Committee shall be appointed by the County Chair with the approval of the Central
30 Committee.

31
32 The five standing committees of each County Convention shall be:

- 33 1. Planning Committee. The Planning Committee shall assist the County Chair with
- 34 logistical arrangements in preparation for the County Convention. It will also
- 35 review and recommend the rules and order of business to be adopted by the
- 36 County Convention and shall file such recommendations with the Convention
- 37 Secretary.
- 38 2. Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee shall prepare and file the
- 39 names and addresses of all delegates duly elected to the County Convention. It
- 40 will also determine the qualification of any registering delegates to be seated by
- 41 the County Convention in accordance with Nebraska Democratic Party
- 42 requirements.

- 1 3. Nominations/Elections Committee. The Nominations/Elections Committee shall
2 oversee all aspects of the elections including nominations, and the counting of
3 votes. Persons interested in declaring as a candidate for any County Party Officer
4 shall contact the Chair of the Nominations/Elections Committee by the deadline
5 of fourteen days in advance of the Convention. However, nomination of
6 candidates may be received from the floor at the appropriate time. The Executive
7 Committee Officers shall each be elected by a majority vote of those present and
8 voting at the County Convention. The order of election shall be Chair, Associate
9 Chair, Second Associate Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- 10 4. Bylaws Committee. The Bylaws Committee shall review and recommend changes
11 to the Bylaws to be adopted by the County Convention and shall file such
12 recommendations with the Convention Secretary.
- 13 5. Platform and Resolutions Committee. The Platform and Resolutions Committee
14 shall prepare and recommend a platform and resolutions to be adopted by the
15 County Convention and shall file such recommendations with the Convention
16 Secretary.

17
18 ***Section G. Adjournment***

19 The County Convention may be adjourned only by a majority vote of those present and
20 voting.

21
22 ***ARTICLE II: CENTRAL COMMITTEE***

23
24 ***Section A. Definitions***

25 The Central Committee shall be composed of the elected County Party officers, Central
26 Committee members elected at convention or otherwise elected under these Bylaws
27 (collectively referred to herein as “Central Committee members”).

28
29 ***Section B. Authority***

30 When the County Convention is not in session, the Central Committee shall meet at least
31 monthly, excluding the month of December. It shall have the direction and control of the
32 County Party organization and shall determine, set, and formulate the policies of the
33 County Party as set forth in the County Party Bylaws and Standing Rules and to deal with
34 those issues that require action by the County Party organization. The Central Committee
35 may overrule an action of the County Chair or the Executive Committee by a majority
36 vote.

37
38 The Central Committee may by a 2/3rds vote to amend the Bylaws on matters governing
39 the operation of the Central Committee itself found in Articles II through V.

40
41 The Central Committee shall have the authority to establish rules, procedures and policies
42 to govern itself effectively and to carry out the duties of the County Party organization.

1 ***Section C. Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Members of the Central***
2 ***Committee***

3 It is the duty and responsibility of a Central Committee Member to conduct activity
4 consistent with the purpose of the County Party organization.

5 Requirements to serve as a member on the Central Committee are as follows:

- 6 1. Be a registered Democrat residing in Lancaster County.
- 7 2. Abide by the Rules and Bylaws governing the Lancaster County Democratic
8 Party.
- 9 3. Voting members of the Central Committee of the Lancaster County Democrats
10 shall participate in a minimum of 2 of the following:
 - 11 a) Participate actively in County Party functions as a member of a
12 subcommittee as defined in Article V;
 - 13 b) Take an active role in helping elect Democrats to office in Lancaster
14 County by running for office, helping on campaigns, and/or recruiting
15 others to do the same.
 - 16 c) Be a monetary donor to the Lancaster County Democratic Party.
- 17 4. Members shall not personally endorse any candidate who is not a registered
18 Democrat running against a candidate who is a registered Democrat.
- 19 5. Attend all regularly scheduled Central Committee meetings or be excused in
20 advance by the Chair in accordance with Article II, Section G.

21
22 ***Section D. Quorum***

23 Forty Percent (40%) of the members of the Central Committee shall constitute a quorum.
24 Once reached, a quorum shall be in effect until adjournment. When a quorum shall not be
25 present, the Central Committee members may continue to meet as an advisory committee
26 to the Executive Committee.

27
28 ***Section E. Special Meetings***

29 Special meetings of the Central Committee may be called by the County Chair, or by a
30 petition of 25 percent of the members of the Central Committee. Members of the Central
31 Committee must be notified no less than five days prior to such a meeting and be
32 provided with an agenda.

33
34 ***Section F. Election and Terms of Office***

35 When the convention is not in session the Central Committee may nominate and elect
36 additional members of the Central Committee. A motion may be made at the beginning
37 of the meeting to seat those persons who have attended at least two consecutive meeting
38 of the Central Committee and are attending their third consecutive meeting. Such
39 candidates must also meet the requirements of serving on the Central Committee.

1 ***Section G. Removals***

2 A member of the Central Committee who fails in those duties, as defined in Article II,
3 Section C, may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members voting with a
4 quorum present. Notice of impending dismissal must be given to the person in question
5 no less than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the vote.

6
7 Central Committee members who have two consecutive unexcused absences are deemed
8 automatically removed from the Central Committee. Any member who was removed
9 automatically may, upon his/her return to the Central Committee, be granted the
10 opportunity to appeal to the Central Committee and explain his/her absences. Upon a
11 majority vote he/she may be reinstated to the Central Committee effective at the
12 following meeting.

13
14 Prior to adjourning each regularly scheduled Central Committee, the Secretary shall
15 identify those inactive Central Committee members whose removal from the Central
16 Committee for non-compliance with these Bylaws will be voted upon at the subsequent
17 Central Committee meeting, and report in the minutes any members automatically
18 removed because of two consecutive unexcused absences.

19

20 ***ARTICLE III: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE***

21

22 ***Section A. Definition of the Executive Committee***

23 The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the officers of the County Party. The
24 Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Central Committee on those matters
25 requiring action but where convening a Central Committee meeting would be impractical.
26 Such actions of the Executive Committee shall be presented for ratification by the Central
27 Committee at the next Central Committee meeting.

28

29 ***Section B. Officers***

30 The officers of the County Party shall be a Chair, Associate Chair, Second Associate
31 Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

32

33 ***Section C: Terms of Office***

34 The terms of the officers of the County Party shall begin with adjournment of the County
35 Convention, and shall extend to the convention of the next biennial County Convention,
36 unless resignation, removal or death shall come first.

1 ***Section D: Duties and Responsibilities***

2
3 County Party Officers must attend or be excused in advance at all regularly scheduled
4 Central Committee meetings and Executive Committee meetings.

5
6 The Executive Committee shall create an annual budget to be presented and approved by
7 the Central Committee.

8
9 The Executive Committee shall arrange for implicit bias training and harassment training
10 that shall be on the agenda for the January Central Committee meeting in odd numbered
11 years.

12
13 1. *County Chair*. The County Chair, in addition to any powers and responsibilities that
14 may be elsewhere specified, shall:

15 a. Establish such sub-committees as he or she deems appropriate.

16 b. Appoint the chairs of the sub-committees with the approval of the Central Committee.

17 The chair may not appoint anyone to chair a subcommittee who is also a county party
18 officer, or appoint anyone who is a family member of the chair. Family member means
19 anyone who is the spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, grandchild, or grandparent, by
20 blood, marriage, or adoption. unless approved by a 2/3 vote of the Central Committee.

21 c. Supervise the organizing and conducting of the County Convention and meetings of
22 the Central Committee, including appointment of temporary presiding officials of the
23 County Convention.

24 d. Preside at meetings of the Central and Executive Committees.

25 e. Direct day-to-day activities of the County Party organization; however, the Chair shall
26 take no action contrary to any specific directive of the County Convention or Central
27 Committee.

28 f. Represent the County Party under authority and direction of the Central Committee.

29 g. Set the time and place of the Central Committee and Executive Committee meetings
30 each month.

31 h. Assign duties to Executive Committee Officers as needed

32
33 2. *Associate Chair*. The Associate Chair, who must be of a different gender than the
34 Chair, shall:

35 a. Assume the powers and responsibilities of the County Chair if the office of County
36 Chair falls vacant.

37 b. Serve as representatives of Executive Committee at Standing Committee meetings, as
38 assigned by the Chair.

39 c. Fulfill other duties as assigned by the Chair.

40
41 3. *2nd Associate Chair*. The duty of the Second Associate Chair, who may be any gender,
42 shall be to:

43 a. Serve as representative of Executive Committee at Standing Committee meetings, as
44 assigned by the Chair.

45 b. Fulfill other duties as assigned by the Chair.

46

1 4. *Secretary*. The Secretary shall:

- 2 a. Keep the minutes of the Executive and Central Committee meetings including, but not
- 3 limited to, requirements in Article II Section G.
- 4 b. Maintain a list of the current Central Committee members and their attendance.
- 5 c. Handle correspondence with elected officials.
- 6 d. Make provisions for retaining records for reference and historical purposes in a way
- 7 that is accessible to current and future members of the County Party.
- 8 e. Fulfill other duties as assigned by the Chair.

9
10 5. *Treasurer*. The Treasurer shall receive, keep and disperse the funds of the County
11 Party, as directed by the Central Committee. The treasurer assumes the fiduciary
12 responsibility of prudent handling of County party funds and must ensure that these
13 monies are not commingled with other accounts.

14
15 ***Section E. Vacancies, Removals and Replacements***

16 In the event that an office of the County Party shall fall vacant, notice shall be given to
17 the Central Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting. On the meeting the
18 month after the vacancy is announced, the Central Committee shall then accept
19 nominations and elect a replacement to serve the remainder of the term of office. A
20 majority vote is necessary to be elected as an officer of the County Party.

21
22 If any officer of the County Party fails to attend to the duties of office as defined in
23 Section D, notice of impending dismissal will be given in writing to the person in
24 question no less than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the vote. That person's position
25 may then be declared vacant by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Central Committee
26 members present and voting.

27
28 If any county party officer becomes a candidate under state law for elected office in the
29 State of Nebraska and they are running against another Democrat in good standing with
30 the Central Committee, they shall take a leave of absence from their duties related to the
31 county party office, until such a time that they no longer have a Democratic opponent.

32
33 ***ARTICLE IV: SUB-COMMITTEES***

34
35 Committee chairs shall serve as nonvoting members of the Executive Committee and
36 shall attend all Executive Committee meetings.

37
38 ***Section A. Special Committees***

39 ***1. Audit Committee***

40 The Audit Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the Chair, and
41 approved by the Central Committee, to examine the books no less than biennially and
42 whenever there is a transfer of records. The committee shall report its findings at the
43 regularly scheduled Central Committee meeting in October in even numbered years, and
44 at the first Central Committee meeting subsequent to completion of an audit following a
45 transfer of records.

1 **2. Review Committee**

2 The review committee is the primary investigative body of the Lancaster County
3 Democratic Party. It shall be convened to investigate and recommend action with respect
4 to candidates for office, party officers, and Central Committee members in accordance
5 with Review Committee procedures.

6
7 The Review Committee shall be established biennially by the Central Committee. This
8 committee shall be composed of the County Party Chair, the Associate Chair, and five
9 additional members, at least one of whom is a minority as defined by the DNC, and at
10 least one who is not a member of the Central Committee. The Review Committee shall
11 be gender balanced within one.

12
13 If a member of the Review Committee is under review he/she shall not participate on the
14 Review Committee.

15
16 The purpose of the Review Committee is twofold:

17
18 1) To review those rare circumstances where the County Party may be required to
19 disavow a candidate running as a Democrat in a primary election, in a non-partisan race
20 in the general election, or if there are criminal charges against a candidate in a partisan
21 general election.

22
23 2) To provide a mechanism to discipline County Party Officers and Central Committee
24 members whose actions undermine the election of Democrats or other actions that
25 undermine the County Party, including but not limited to; members who publicly endorse
26 candidates who are not registered Democrats and who are running against a candidate
27 who is a registered Democrat.

28
29 The Review Committee shall have the authority to recommend disavowal of candidates.
30 The Committee shall also have power to recommend censure or removal of County
31 Officers and Central Committee members.

32
33 Any Central Committee member may request that the Review Committee be convened.
34 Upon the request, a majority vote of the Central Committee or the Executive Committee
35 shall convene the Review Committee to review the person. Discussion by the Central
36 Committee or Executive Committee of such a request must be conducted in executive
37 session with non-members excluded. The request to convene the Review Committee and
38 the discussion and activities of the Review Committee shall be confidential unless a
39 recommendation for disavowal, censure, or removal is made by the Review Committee.

40
41 All recommendations made by the Review Committee shall be presented at a Central
42 Committee meeting. Approval of any recommendations for disavowal, censure, or
43 removal shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members present and voting.

1 **Section B. Standing Sub-Committees**

2 The Chair of each Standing Committee shall be appointed by the County Chair. All
3 members of the Central Committee should serve on at least one standing committee.
4 Each Standing Committee shall issue a report of its activities at each Central Committee
5 meeting.

6
7 **1. Public Relations Committee**

8 The Public Relations Committee may publish the *Lancaster County Democrat*, produce
9 the cable television show, and maintain a social media presence on behalf of the County
10 Party organization.

11
12 **2. Membership Committee**

13 The Membership Committee is responsible for maintaining and developing membership
14 for the County Party organization. The Membership Committee shall host at least one
15 social event per quarter and coordinate party outreach at community events. The
16 Membership Committee shall distribute a packet of information for all members of the
17 Central Committee.

18
19 **3. Fundraising Committee**

20 The Fundraising Committee is responsible for generating revenue for the County Party
21 organization. The Fundraising Committee shall host at least one fundraiser per quarter,
22 including the annual Patriots’ Dinner. The Fundraising Committee shall also be in charge
23 of recruiting sustaining donors to the Party.

24
25 **4. Issues Committee**

26 The Issues Committee is responsible for reviewing, researching, and vetting specific
27 political positions and making recommendations to the Central Committee. The Issues
28 Committee may also hold fora on relevant political issues in Lancaster County.

29
30 **5. Candidate and Elected Officials Committee**

31 The Candidate and Elected Officials Committee shall recruit candidates for office in
32 Lancaster County. The Committee shall conduct events and coordinate services and
33 resources for candidates, elected officials, and potential candidates for public office in
34 Lancaster County.

35
36 **6. Technology Committee**

37 The Technology Committee shall maintain and evaluate the technological needs of the
38 County Party. The committee shall maintain the county party’s operation of its electronic
39 presence, voter file management, and provide related technical training as necessary.

40
41 **Section C. Ad Hoc Committees**

42 Additional committees may be established for a specific purpose and a defined period of
43 time by appointment of the County Chair, County Convention, or Central Committee.

1 **ARTICLE V: SUPPORT OF CANDIDATES**

2
3 **Section A: Purpose**

4 The primary purpose of the County Party is to elect Democrats to partisan and non-
5 partisan offices in Lancaster County. The County Party will provide support in
6 appropriate forms to Democrats running for office.

7
8 **Section B: Party Resources**

9 Party resources are those materials, physical or intellectual, that are produced by the
10 Lancaster County Democratic Party or on its behalf or at its request and which are funded
11 by the Lancaster County Democratic Party.

12
13 **Section C: Endorsement**

14 1. Endorsement Defined: Endorsement by the County Party means the public
15 recommendation of a Democrat running for electoral office. Endorsement does not mean
16 the equitable use of party resources.

17
18 2. Endorsement given: All Democrats running for office should expect the endorsement
19 of the Lancaster County Democratic Party unless the Central Committee votes to
20 withhold the endorsement of a candidate. However, the county party will only endorse a
21 democratic elected official running for reelection unless the central committee decides to
22 remain neutral by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

23
24 **Section D: Withholding Endorsement and/or Resources.**

25
26 Under certain circumstances party endorsement and/or resources may be withheld from a
27 candidate who is a registered Democrat. These circumstances may include, but shall not
28 be limited to, a candidate whose opponent is an incumbent Democrat a candidate who has
29 not been an active Democrat, a candidate whose campaign organization is dominated by
30 and supported by other political parties, or a candidate who has failed to report his or her
31 financial status to the Federal Election Commission or the Nebraska Accountability and
32 Disclosure Commission.

33
34 Party endorsement and/or resources may only be withheld upon a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote by the Central
35 Committee.

36
37 **Section E: Party Officials**

38 In order to prevent the actual or appearance of unfair advantage County Party Officers
39 shall maintain strict neutrality in an election contest with more than one Democrat. This
40 section does not apply in the case of an incumbent running for reelection, or in the case
41 that the Central Committee has voted to withhold the endorsement of a candidate.

1 **ARTICLE VI: OFFICIAL ACTS**

2
3 Business transacted at the County Convention in accordance with the official rules then
4 in force shall be the official acts of the Lancaster County Democratic Party. Beyond the
5 acts of the County Convention, only the Central Committee of the County Party shall
6 have the authority to determine official acts and positions of the County Party. At no time
7 shall any other individual or body, no matter how constituted, be authorized to represent,
8 or to hold itself to represent, the Lancaster County Democratic Party.
9

10 **ARTICLE VII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

11
12 All questions of parliamentary procedure shall be determined in accordance with the most
13 recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except as may be provided by
14 these Bylaws, or by resolution of the Central Committee or County Convention.
15

16 **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

17
18 These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and
19 voting at the County Convention, with a quorum established, or by the Central
20 Committee on matters pertaining to its own governance, as provided by these Bylaws.
21 Proposed amendments shall follow the election of Convention officers and officials, and
22 the adoption of Convention rules. Once approved, the adoption of amendments shall be
23 effective immediately.
24

25 **ARTICLE IX: DISSOLUTION**

26
27 The County Party may be dissolved according to the laws of the State of Nebraska. In the
28 event of dissolution, an audit shall take place, after which all remaining moneys, items,
29 and equipment shall pass to the Nebraska Democratic Party.