

# **ROANE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

## **BYLAWS**

### **Roane County, Tennessee**

**Revised December 16, 2010**

#### **ARTICLE I. NAME AND OBJECT**

**SECTION 1:** The name of this organization shall be the Roane County Democratic Party.

**SECTION 2:** The object of this organization shall be to promote the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party, and to aid in the election of Democrats and Democratic nominees for public office.

#### **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1:** Eligibility. All residents of Roane County, Tennessee who are registered to vote in this county and who believe in the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party are eligible to become members of the Roane County Democratic Party.

**SECTION 2:** Nondiscrimination. Membership in the Roane County Democratic Party shall not be denied because of race, color, sex, religion, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin. Accommodations shall be made to provide access to meetings, events, and functions for members with disabilities and special needs as feasible.

#### **ARTICLE III. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**SECTION 1:** Governance. The governance and direction of the affairs of the Roane County Democratic Party shall be vested in the Roane County Democratic Executive Committee (the "Executive Committee") and in the officers of the Roane County Democratic Party, as hereinafter set forth in these bylaws, subject to the laws of the state of Tennessee and such rules as may be established by the Tennessee State Democratic Executive Committee.

**SECTION 2:** Party Responsibilities. The Roane County Democratic Party shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) Planning and conducting all county meetings and conventions.
- (b) Keeping and maintaining records of all Democratic Party meetings and business.
- (c) Supporting the duly selected nominees of the Democratic Party.

#### **ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**SECTION 1:** Membership.

- (a) The Executive Committee shall be composed of a man and a woman elected from each district or precinct or ward, plus those who become Executive Committee members pursuant to Article VIII, Section 8 (Officers). If there is difficulty filling Executive Committee positions, then those empty seat(s) should be filled at-large for the respective district, precinct or ward. Representation should be balanced if possible. The Executive Committee shall set the Executive Committee representation as either: district, precinct, or ward at least thirty (30) days prior to the Reorganization and County Convention. The official districts, precincts, and wards observed in these bylaws shall be those set by the Roane County Election Commission.

**SECTION 2:** Manner of Election. The Executive Committee members shall be elected at a *County Convention* called for the purpose of electing Executive Committee members at a date determined by the State Democratic Executive Committee.

**SECTION 3:** Resignations. The resignation of any member of the Executive Committee shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if no time is specified, then it shall take effect upon receipt of such resignation by the Chair or Secretary.

**SECTION 4:** Vacancies. A vacancy shall be filled by nomination from the membership. Any vacancies occurring in the Executive Committee may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Executive Committee members present at any regular meeting, even though less than a quorum of the Executive Committee exists. In the event of a vacancy, whether resulting from a resignation, expulsion or failure of any (*district or precinct or ward*) to elect its Executive Committee members, the remaining members of the Executive Committee in attendance at any subsequent meeting may fill those Executive Committee positions from members of the Roane County Democratic Party who reside in that (*district or precinct or ward*) and who meet the same requirements of a duly elected member as prescribed in Section I.

**SECTION 5:** Attendance. An Executive Committee member who fails to attend four (4) consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee, without an excuse satisfactory, as prescribed in Section 7, to the majority of the members of the Executive Committee in attendance, shall be removed from the position and the position shall be declared vacant.

**SECTION 6:** Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the Executive Committee members present shall be the act of the Executive Committee, unless a greater number be required by law or by these bylaws.

**SECTION 7:** Sanctions or Expulsion

- a) Notice and Opportunity to be heard. The Executive Committee may vote to impose sanctions on, or expel a member, but only if written notice is given that the issue will be taken up at the meeting prior to the meeting on which such action is voted. The member in question must be given written notice, and an opportunity to be heard.
- b) Automatic Expulsion. A member of the Executive Committee shall automatically forfeit his/her membership in said committee (and the position shall be declared vacant) for the following reasons:

- i. In the event he/she qualifies for political office as an Independent in a partisan race or representing any political party other than Democratic Party and opposes a duly qualified Democratic nominee.
- ii. If he/she has four (4) unexcused absences during a term. An absence is excused if notice is given to the Chair or the Secretary prior to the start of the meeting and the reason for the absence is one of the following:
  - a) illness;
  - b) family illness or death;
  - c) business or out of town.

No notice is required for automatic expulsion. If item i. or ii. is met, then the member is expelled and shall be removed from the Executive Committee membership roll. Expulsion does not necessarily mean the individual is not welcome in the Party, but is instead an effort to keep adequate membership and participation to conduct party business.

- c) Discretionary Sanctions or Expulsions. A member may be expelled at the discretion of the Executive Committee if a pattern of non-attendance is established, even if such absences are excused. Sanctions may be imposed against a member, or he/she may be expelled at the discretion of the Executive Committee, for demonstrating disloyalty to the Democratic Party, either in the form of a public announcement of support of a candidate of another party in a pending election, or by working for or giving financial support to any such candidate running against a duly nominated candidate of the Democratic Party. The Executive Committee shall not impose discretionary sanctions or expel a member unless and until such a member is given an opportunity to be heard and three-fourths (3/4) of the membership present and voting concur in a discretionary sanctions or expulsion.

## ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

**SECTION 1: General.** All meetings of the Roane County Democratic Party or of the Executive Committee shall be well publicized in countywide media at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting. Posting of meetings on the official Roane County Democratic Party website constitutes the definition of well publicized in countywide media and satisfies publicity requirements at a minimum. All meetings shall be held at convenient times and locations, and shall be open to the general public and media representatives (*except where legal counsel otherwise indicated based upon a legal need for a closed meeting*).

**SECTION 2: Regular Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held either monthly or quarterly, or when called by the Chair or by one-third (1/3) of the Executive Committee members. The frequency of regular meetings (either monthly or quarterly) shall be decided by the Executive Committee by Executive Order once per year.

**SECTION 3: Special Meetings.** If more than sixty (60) days have passed since the last previous meeting, and if the Chairperson has not called a meeting, any ten (10) members may call a meeting by notifying all Executive Committee members at least seven (7) days prior to such a meeting. If fewer than sixty (60) days have passed since the last previous meeting, fifteen (15) members may call a special meeting provided seven (7) days prior notice is given by mail to the Executive Committee membership. Any notification of a

meeting must include time and location.

**SECTION 4:** Quorum. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Executive Committee. If less than a quorum is present at a meeting of the Executive Committee, a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting.

**SECTION 5:** Convention Meeting. A regular meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held without other notice than this bylaw immediately after, and at the same place as, the convention. The Convention meeting shall be conducted per Article VI, Conduct of Conventions. The regular meeting of the Executive Committee shall be for the purpose of the biannual review of the Bylaws and for entertaining any proposed amendments to these Bylaws under the newly established Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall make known, 30 days prior to this meeting, that the Bylaws are available for review upon request or through other public means, if applicable. The meeting's agenda shall also include establishing plans for Executive Committee meeting times and schedules in accordance with Section 2, Regular Meetings (i.e. monthly or quarterly), as well as other business deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE VI. CONDUCT OF CONVENTION**

**SECTION 1:** Convention. The provisions for the holding of the county convention shall be as follows:

- a) The convention shall be well publicized in the local news media. At least fourteen (14) days prior notice must be given.
- b) All members of the Roane County Democratic Party who are registered voters and residents in Roane County, and who attest they are bona fide Democrats by execution of affidavits or affirmations to that effect, are eligible to vote at the convention and to be candidates for the Executive Committee. See ARTICLE VII regarding Officer eligibility.
- c) The Chairperson shall appoint an adequate number of Sergeants-at-arms to assure that only bona-fide Democrats are present for the voting process. The Secretary or duly appointed representative shall verify the affirmations of all attendees.
- d) Separate elections shall be held for each Executive Committee position. If the Chair or a Chair-appointed Convention Committee institutes any specific Convention rules, those rules shall comply with and shall not supersede the requirement of these bylaws. The official bylaws cannot be waived or dismissed during the Convention.
- e) The convention shall be called to order by the incumbent Chair of the Roane County Democratic Executive Committee or designee. The Convention shall then divide into caucuses, divided by political area (*either district or precinct or ward*) as decided by the Executive Committee prior to the convention. Separate elections shall be held for each Executive Committee position. One man and one woman shall be elected as an Executive Committee member from each political area (*either district or precinct or ward*). A plurality shall prevail for each election. In the case of a tie, a runoff between those tied shall be held to decide the winner. In each caucus, a chair shall be selected and the chair shall then call for nominations for each Executive Committee position.

After the nominations cease, the ballot is closed and the elections shall commence. Upon the completion of the election of the Executive Committee members, the convention shall reassemble and each political area (*either district or precinct or ward*) shall report the two Executive Committee members who have been elected from that political area (*either district or precinct or ward*).

- f) The following Oath will be give to all Officers and Executive Committee members: "I (name) do hereby solemnly promise, before my fellow Democrats, to fulfill the duties of the office to which I have been elected, to the best of my abilities. I further promise that if for any reason I cannot perform these duties I shall resign so that a replacement may be obtained.

The convention shall then adjourn, as its business has been completed.

## **ARTICLE VII. PROXIES**

**SECTION 1:** No Proxies Allowed. No proxy shall be allowed at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

**SECTION 2:** Unit Rule. No voting by the unit rule shall be allowed at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

**SECTION 3:** Open Voting. All votes shall be public and shall not be by secret ballot.

## **ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1:** Officers. The officers of the Roane County Democratic Party shall be County Chair, County Vice-Chair (additional Vice-Chairs optional), Secretary, and Treasurer, and City Chairs (Kingston City Chair, Harriman City Chair, Rockwood City Chair, and Oliver Springs/Oak Ridge City Chair), all of whom shall be elected by the Roane County Executive Committee for a two (2) year term, or until their successors are duly elected and qualified.

**SECTION 2:** Election of Officers.

- a) The officers shall be elected by a simple majority of the members of the Roane County Democratic Executive Committee present at the meeting held immediately following the convention. In the event a majority is not achieved, a run-off election shall be held until a majority prevails, with the candidate with the fewest votes being dropped from the next ballot. A complete list of all officers and Executive Committee members shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Tennessee Democratic Party within ten (10) days after their election.
- b) Any former Executive Committee member who was sanctioned, expelled, or failed to meet the attendance requirements during their most recent term on the Executive Committee is not eligible as a candidate for any office of the Roane County Democratic Party Executive Committee. Eligibility may be restored by petitioning the Executive Committee for reinstatement after demonstrating a good faith effort during the previous two years. This petition must be brought before the Executive Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting at least thirty 30 days prior to the next convention.

- c) In order to qualify for the office of County Chair, the candidate must have attended a minimum of four (4) official meetings of the Roane County Democratic Party Executive Committee during the immediate past two-year period, as verified by the Secretary's attendance records and/or minutes.

**SECTION 3:** Vacancies. Vacancies in any office for any reason may be filled by the Executive Committee for the unexpired portion of the term.

**SECTION 4:** County Chair. The chair shall preside over any convention, which may be called, and over the meetings of the Executive Committee. He/she shall perform all duties incident to the office of chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Executive Committee members from time to time.

**SECTION 5:** County Vice-Chair. In the absence of the chair or in the event of his/her death or inability or refusal to act, the vice-chair shall perform the duties of the chair, and, in so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all restrictions on, the chair. He/she shall perform all duties incident to the office of vice-chair and such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the chair or by the Executive Committee. In the absence of the vice-chair, the second vice-chair steps up to perform the duties of the vice-chair.

**SECTION 6:** Secretary. The secretary shall:

- a) keep the minutes of the Executive Committee;
- b) keep the minutes of any conventions which may be held;
- c) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of law and these bylaws;
- d) be custodian of the records of the Executive Committee;
- e) keep membership records and have general charge of membership books of the Executive Committee; and
- f) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the chair or by the Executive Committee, or which may be required by law.

**SECTION 7:** Treasurer. The treasurer shall:

- a) have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds and securities of the Party from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such monies in the name of the Roane County Democratic Executive Committee in such bank or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws;
- b) keep and maintain, open to inspection by any member of the Executive Committee at all reasonable times, adequate or correct accounts of the funds and transactions of the Executive Committee, which shall include all matters required by law;
- c) disburse the funds of the Executive Committee as he/she may be ordered by the Executive Committee;

- d) render to the chair and secretary, or to the Executive Committee, whenever it may require or request it, an account of all his/her transactions as treasurer, and a statement in form satisfactory to it, showing the financial condition of the Executive Committee;
- e) register with the State Election Commission; and file any and all reports required by the State Election Commission (SEC) and Federal Election Commission (FEC);
- f) in general, perform all of the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the chair or Executive Committee; and
- g) if required by the Executive Committee, give a bond, to be paid for by the Executive Committee, for the faithful discharge of his/her duties, in such sum and with such corporate surety or sureties as the Executive Committee shall determine.

**SECTION 8: City Chairs.** The City Chairs shall ensure their respective city is organized to support the principles of the Democratic Party, candidates, and officers. City Chairs shall perform all duties incident to the office and such other duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Executive Committee. City Chairs shall include a Kingston City Chair, Harriman City Chair, Rockwood City Chair, and Oliver Springs/Oak Ridge City Chair. City Chairs shall provide support to their respective Executive Committee members in the development of their political areas.

**SECTION 8: Officers Not Required to be Members.** It is not required that the officers be members of the Executive Committee. Any officer who is elected by the Executive Committee who is not an elected member of the Executive Committee shall, upon his/her election as an officer, become a voting member of the Executive Committee.

**SECTION 9: Neutrality.** No officers shall openly support a candidate in a Democratic Primary, so that the officers present neutrality to maintain party unity. This provision shall not be constructed to limit the Executive Committee with regard to nominations determined in Convention, or shall it be construed by implication nor otherwise to limit or to prevent any individual member acting in an individual or private capacity from supporting any candidate in a primary of the Democratic Party. In so doing, each member of the Executive Committee must refrain from affixing his/her official party title to any correspondence and/or literature on behalf of any candidate for any office during the Democratic Party Primary election.

**SECTION 10: Members Must Support Nominees of the Democratic Party.** No person shall be an officer or member of the Executive Committee if he/she shall not support nominees of the Democratic Party. Failure to support the nominees of the Democratic Party shall be cause for removal. Officers may be removed under this Section by the Executive Committee by a simple majority of those present at any regular meeting or any meeting called for that purpose after at least ten (10) days prior notice to all members of the Executive Committee.

**SECTION 11: Resignations.** The resignation of any officer of the Executive Committee shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or if no time is specified, then it shall take effect upon receipt of such resignation by the chair or secretary.

**SECTION 12: Executive Committee Members.** Each man and woman elected as an

Executive Committee member shall represent their political area (*either district or precinct or ward*) on the Executive Committee to ensure their respective political area is organized to support the principles of the Democratic Party, candidates, and officers including: organizing poll workers, fundraising, voter registration, and get-out-the-vote campaigns and events.

## **ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1:** Committees Appointed By County Chair. The county chair may establish committees, that are composed solely of Executive Committee members, or partly Executive Committee members and partly others, as he/she deems appropriate.

**SECTION 2:** Term of Office. Each member of a committee shall serve at the pleasure of the person or entity creating the committee, but no longer than until the next convention or until the committee is terminated, whichever occurs first.

**SECTION 3:** Removal of any Member of the Committee. Any member of any committee may be removed by the person or persons authorized to appoint such member whenever, in their judgment, the best interest of the Party shall be served by that removal.

## **ARTICLE X. ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS**

The regular order of business at Executive Committee meetings shall be as follows:

- a) Call to Order
- b) Invocation (optional)
- c) Pledge of Allegiance
- d) Roll call
- e) Reading and approval of the minutes of previous meeting
- f) Treasurer's report
- g) Reports of committees
- h) Resolutions
- i) Unfinished business
- j) New business
- k) Elections (if necessary)
- l) Announcements
- m) Adjournment

## **ARTICLE XI. RESOLUTIONS**

All proposed resolutions must be submitted to the chair at least one (1) week prior to a meeting. Emergency resolutions may be brought before the body by consent of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present.

## **ARTICLE XII. CONTRACTS AND EXPENDITURES**

**SECTION 1:** Contracts; Expenditures; Bill Retention. The Executive Committees shall operate under an approved budget, set no later than July of each year. Except in the case of an emergency for items not designated in the budget, no expenditures or bills shall be

made or contracts entered into which purport to obligate the Executive Committee unless such expenditures or contracts are authorized by a majority vote of those present at a duly called meeting at which a quorum is present. An exception for expenditures obligating the Executive Committee of less than One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00) may be authorized by the chair of the Executive Committee. The treasurer shall present a monthly-itemized statement of income and expenditures to Executive Committee members. All paid bills shall be retained by the treasurer for a period of two (2) years.

**SECTION 2: Audits.** Auditors may be designated by the Executive Committee, who shall audit and examine the books of account of the Roane County Democratic Party and shall certify to the Executive Committee the annual balances of the books which shall be prepared at the close of the fiscal year by, or under the direction of, the treasurer.

### **ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

The current edition of Robert Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern meetings of the Executive Committee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws and any special rules of order which may be adopted.

### **ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended or substituted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Executive Committee at any meeting of the Executive Committee called for the purpose of amending these bylaws.

### **ARTICLE XV. RULES**

The Roane County Democratic Party is a constituent party of the Tennessee Democratic Party. The Roane County Democratic Executive Committee is an organization created by the State Democratic Executive Committee, with the State Democratic Executive Committee having full authority in all matters over the Roane County Democratic Executive Committee. Any conflict between the county bylaws and the bylaws of the Tennessee Democratic Party, the bylaws of the Tennessee Democratic Party bylaws prevail.

**ELECTED OFFICERS PLEDGE OF ACCEPTANCE FOR THE  
ADOPTED BYLAWS**

We hereby witness the acceptance of the newly adopted bylaws of the Roane County Democratic Party. We have agreed to abide by these bylaws while serving as an officer of the Roane County Democratic Party.

President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice-President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_