

# Constitution of the Johnson County Democratic Party (As amended in Convention March 10, 2012)

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The organization hereby constituted shall be called the Johnson County Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSES AND GENERAL AUTHORITY**

Sec. 1. Purpose. The purposes of the Johnson County Democratic Party shall be:

- A. To function as an integral part of the Iowa Democratic Party;
- B. To establish and perpetuate a representative, effective, and responsible party organization;
- C. To help advance the interests of the Democratic Party in Johnson County, Iowa, in the First District of Iowa, in the State of Iowa, and nationally;
- D. To sustain and advance principles of social justice and democracy; and
- E. To uphold civil rights, civil liberties, and constitutional government generally.

Sec. 2. General Authority. The Johnson County Democratic Party is authorized to adopt such by-laws, resolutions, or other measures otherwise consistent with this Constitution as may be necessary and proper to carry out those purposes articulated in Section 1 of the Article.

## **ARTICLE III – PARTY STRUCTURE**

Sec. 1. Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party. The Johnson County Democratic Party shall be bound by the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

Sec. 2. Biennial convention. In accordance with the call of the Iowa Democratic Party Chair, there shall be held a biennial Johnson County Democratic convention, which shall be the supreme governing body of the Johnson County Democratic Party. A delegate or alternate to a Johnson County Democratic convention shall not be charged a fee or asked to sign a fee waiver. A convention delegate or alternate may be asked to make a voluntary contribution to defray convention expenses as long as such a contribution is clearly labeled as voluntary, not referred to as a fee, and not requested until after the delegate or alternate is fully registered at the convention.

Sec. 3. Central Committee. When the biennial Johnson County Democratic Convention is in adjournment, the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee shall be the governing body of the Democratic Party of Johnson County, Iowa, provided that it shall function in accord with this Constitution and with the express policies of the Johnson County Democratic Convention.

## **ARTICLE IV – CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Sec. 1. Voting Members. Every even-numbered year, each Johnson County precinct, meeting in caucus, shall elect two voting members to the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee, each to serve until the precinct caucus during the next even-numbered year.

Sec. 2. Attendance at Committee Meetings. Central Committee members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled Central Committee meetings. Infrequent absences may be excused if the member notifies the Secretary or the Chair that said member will be unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting.

Sec. 3. Removal from Central Committee Membership. The Central Committee may remove any member or officer of the Central Committee from membership for non-residency, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the county, state, or national Democratic Party. Procedures for removal from membership shall be as provided in the Bylaws.

Sec. 4. Vacancies filled by Central Committee. If a vacancy occurs on the Central Committee the position shall be filled by an Alternate Central Committee Member as per Article II, Section 3, Subsection B of the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party, or, in the event there is no Alternate, as soon as possible by a majority vote of the Central Committee at a properly called meeting. Notice of the meeting shall state that vacancies of the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee may be filled. Any person elected to a vacancy by the Central Committee shall serve until the precinct caucuses during the next even-numbered year.

## **ARTICLE V – SELECTION OF OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND COUNTY CONVENTION CHAIRS**

Sec 1. Officers. The officers of the Johnson County Democratic Party shall be a Chair, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Sec 2. Executive Committee. The Officers of the Johnson County Democratic Party, along with the Chairs of the Standing Committees specified in this Constitution, the County Convention Platform Chair, the Affirmative Action Chair, and a voting member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Central Committee as specified in Section 10 of this Article shall constitute the voting members of the Executive Committee. The President or Chair of any College Democrats organization in Johnson County shall be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee. The Parliamentarian shall be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

Sec. 3. Election of Officers. The Johnson County Democratic Central Committee shall meet and organize at the biennial organizational meeting, which shall be held within the month of March in odd-number years, or as specified in the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party or in appropriate state statute. The exact date shall be set by the Chair with the approval of the Central Committee. Notice of this meeting shall be provided to the Central Committee members no later

than 20 days before the meeting using meeting notice procedures as specified in the Bylaws. The outgoing Parliamentarian shall preside over the meeting until the election of a new Chair.

The first order of business of this meeting shall be the adoption of rules governing the election of officers, following which shall be the election of officers by majority vote. Officers shall take office immediately upon election. Following election of officers, the Central Committee shall next elect one or more Chairs of each Standing Committee by majority vote, except as specified in Sections 4 and 5 of this Article.

Upon ratification of this section by the Johnson County Convention, all Officers previously elected by the Central Committee shall continue to serve in their positions until the next reorganization meeting which shall happen in March, 2007, at which time the Central Committee shall reorganize as specified in this section.

Sec. 4. Affirmative Action Chair. The Johnson County Democratic Convention shall elect one or more Affirmative Action Chairs by majority vote of the Delegates present and voting at the Convention.

Sec. 5. Platform Chair. The County Convention Platform Chair shall serve as Chair of the Platform Standing Committee of the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee.

Sec 6. Parliamentarian. The Chair shall appoint a Parliamentarian, who need not be a voting member of the Central Committee, who shall provide guidance to the Chair on all matters of parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian shall attend all Executive Committee and Central Committee meetings, but shall not be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

Sec 7. Co-Chairs. If more than one person is elected as Co-Chair of any Standing Committee, the Co-Chairs shall determine among themselves which shall be the voting member on the Executive Committee as specified in this Article. Any other Co-Chair shall serve on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member.

Sec. 8. Qualifications. Officers and Standing Committee Chairs elected under this Article need not be members of the Central Committee; however, they shall be registered members of the Johnson County Democratic Party.

Sec. 9. Term of Office. The term of office for each Officer and Standing Committee Chair elected under this article shall begin immediately upon election by the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee, and shall continue until the next biennial organizational meeting of the Central Committee, and until the successor is elected and qualified; unless he or she is sooner removed by the Central Committee for non residency, inattention to duty, incompetence, or support of a candidate for public office who is running against a candidate nominated by the county, state, or national Democratic Party. Procedures for removal of Officers and Standing Committee Chairs shall be as provided in the Bylaws. Vacancies on the Executive Committee shall be filled as by majority vote as specified in the Bylaws. Any person so elected to fill a vacancy on the Executive Committee shall serve the remainder of the term of the officer replaced.

Sec. 10. District and State Central Committee Members. Elected members of the District and State Democratic Central Committees who reside in Johnson County shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee, without vote, except that the members of the District Democratic Central Committee who reside in Johnson County shall choose one person from among their number who shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

Sec. 11. Elected Officials. Any Democratic Party nominee holding elected office in Johnson County shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee without vote.

Sec. 12. County Convention Chairs. The Chair shall designate the temporary Chairs of the Platform, Arrangements, Rules and Nominations, and Credentials committees for the County convention, and the Temporary Chair of the convention. The persons so designated are automatically nominated for the position of permanent Chair of said committees and of the convention.

## **ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Sec. 1. Duties of Chair. The Chair shall serve as Chief Executive Officer. The Chair shall chair meetings of the Central Committee and of the Executive committee. The Chair shall, with the approval of the Central Committee, appoint ad-hoc committees as deemed necessary. Between meetings of the Central Committee, the Chair may approve expenditures in accordance with the Bylaws.

Sec. 2. Operational Plan. No later than May 15 of each odd-numbered year, the Chair shall provide to the Central Committee a two-year operational plan for the Johnson County Democratic Party prepared with the input of the Executive Committee. This plan shall become effective upon adoption by a majority vote of the Central Committee.

Sec. 3. Duties of the First Vice-Chair. The First Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence and shall otherwise assist the Chair in the performance of his or her duties, and shall chair the GOTV Standing Committee.

Sec. 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, shall otherwise assist the Chair in the performance of his or her duties, and shall chair the Community Events Standing Committee.

Sec. 5. Duties of Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for all minutes of meetings, mailings, files and records except those specifically required to be in the possession of the Treasurer. The Secretary shall prepare and maintain such minutes, documents, files and records as may be necessary to the operation of the Central Committee, and in accordance with the Bylaws. The Secretary shall maintain accurate lists of Central Committee members and Democratic Party activists which shall be transferred in good condition to the Secretary's successor in office.

Sec. 6. Duties of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall maintain records of assets, liabilities, income and expenditures of the Central Committee, and shall make reports as provided in the Bylaws. The Treasurer, with the approval of the Central Committee, shall determine who shall have custody of the funds of the Party that are within control of the Central Committee. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of all records and for the completion of a filing of all reports required by the State of Iowa. The Treasurer shall provide to each biennial County Convention written accounts for all receipts and disbursements occurring since the last biennial convention. The Treasurer shall work with the Budget Committee to prepare a biennial budget for the Party.

Sec. 7. Additional Duties of Officers. Officers shall perform other duties as prescribed in the Bylaws or assigned by the Central Committee.

## **ARTICLE VII – STANDING COMMITTEES**

Sec. 1. Establishment of Standing Committees. Standing Committees shall be established to manage the following functions:

- A. Affirmative Action
- B. Candidate Development
- C. Community Events
- D. Data Management
- E. Fundraising
- F. GOTV
- G. Membership
- H. Platform
- I. Public Relations

Upon ratification of this section by the Johnson County Convention in March 2006, existing elected Committee Chairs shall become Chairs of the Standing Committees in this section as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair. Shall become the Chair of GOTV.

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair. Shall become the Chair of Community Events.

Affirmative Action. Shall become the Chair of Affirmative Action.

Finance. Shall become the Chair of Fundraising.

Membership. Shall become the Chair of Data Management.

Except as otherwise specified, all other Standing Committee Chair positions shall be filled by election by the Central Committee at the first meeting immediately following the Convention at which this section is ratified.

Sec. 2. Inclusiveness. To the maximum extent possible, all committees shall include men, women, persons of various age groups, persons of different races, persons with disabilities, persons with different sexual orientations, and economically disadvantaged persons in reasonable

relationship to the proportional membership of these groups in the Johnson County Democratic Party.

Sec. 3. Duties and Responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the standing committees shall be as specified in the Bylaws. The responsibilities and powers of the Affirmative Action Committee shall be as provided in the Constitution of the Iowa Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE VIII – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DUTIES**

Sec. 1. Executive Committee Meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet for the purpose of carrying out the business of the Central Committee between regular meetings of the Central Committee, in accordance with the Bylaws.

Sec. 2. Authority of Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Central Committee between meetings of the Central Committee; however, if it is impractical for the Executive Committee to meet for such purpose, the Chair shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Executive Committee. No event, activity, function, or statement shall be represented as offered by or on behalf of the Central Committee without the consent of the Central Committee. The Central Committee shall have the authority to overrule the Executive Committee or the Chair by majority vote in any properly convened meeting.

Sec. 3. Biennial Budget. No later than May 15 of each odd-numbered year, the Chair shall present a biennial budget (2 year budget) to the Central Committee for its approval. The budget cycle shall run from June 1 of an odd-numbered year through May 31 of the succeeding odd-numbered year. Approval shall be by majority vote. This budget shall include estimated operating expenditures for events and revenues from fundraising activities. The budget shall be prepared by the Budget Committee, as appointed by the Chair. The Executive Committee shall approve the proposed budget by majority vote prior to its submission to the Central Committee. The Central Committee shall reserve the right to modify the budget at any time it appears necessary to do so.

Sec. 4. Audit. The Executive Committee shall cause an audit of all financial records and transactions of the Central Committee accounts to be made between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup> of every odd-numbered year, and at such other items as it may direct. A copy of each such audit shall, upon its completion be made available to each member and officer of the Central Committee.

Sec. 5. Lists. The Executive Committee may authorize the use of any lists maintained by the Johnson County Democratic Party by individuals and organizations, but shall not be required to do so. Any authorization of the use of lists shall be consistent with any provisions made in the Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE IX – ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Sec. 1. Associate Members. The following persons shall be Associate Members of the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee:

- A. All registered Democrats holding a state or county elected public office.
- B. All persons elected at the precinct caucuses in even-numbered years to be delegates to the county convention.
- C. All participants in precinct caucuses in even-numbered years placing their names on a list of persons willing to assist in activities supporting Democratic candidates in general elections.
- D. Other registered Democrats placing their names on a list of persons willing to assist in activities supporting Democratic candidates in general elections.

Sec. 2. Rights of Associate Members. Associate Members are entitled (but not obligated) to attend and speak at all meetings of the Johnson County Democratic Central Committee, but they do not have a right to vote and generally will not be provided individual notice of such meetings.

Sec. 3. Roster of Associate Members. The Data Management Chair shall maintain a roster of Associate Members, and shall honor a written request from any person to be removed there from.

## **ARTICLE X – CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Sec. 1. Regular Meetings. The Johnson County Democratic Central Committee shall hold regular meetings as provided in the Bylaws, except that a meeting shall be held at least once every three months.

Sec. 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called as provided in the Bylaws.

Sec. 3. Notice of Meetings. Notice of meetings, and the proceedings of any meeting, shall be as provided in the Bylaws.

Sec. 4. Open Meetings. All meetings of the Johnson County Democratic Party Central Committee shall be open to the public in the same manner as the meetings of a State of Iowa government agency.

## **ARTICLE XI – ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Any state or county elected official who is a registered Democrat (or any registered Democrat filling a state or county partisan office by appointment) representing part of all of Johnson County who runs as a candidate against or supports another candidate for elective office who is running against a candidate nominated by the county, state, or national Democratic Party may be sent a public letter of reprimand from the Chair. Procedures for such letters shall be provided in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XII - ENDORSEMENTS**

Sec. 1. Non-Partisan Elections. The Central Committee may endorse candidates for non-partisan office as prescribed in the Bylaws.

Sec. 2. Ballot Issues/Bond Referenda. The Central Committee may endorse a vote for or against a ballot issue or bond referendum as prescribed in the Bylaws, provided that any such endorsement is not contrary to provisions of the current Johnson County Democratic Platform..

Sec. 3. Partisan Primaries. The Central Committee shall not endorse any candidate in any partisan primary election.

## **ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended at any County Convention by a majority of the accredited delegates so assembled. All proposed amendments must be submitted to the Convention in writing, and must be delivered to the Chair of the Johnson County Democratic Party at least 14 days prior to the County Convention.