

## **First District Democrats Elections Committee and Endorsement Rules**

Approved at General Membership Meeting on 3/22/2023

### **A. Definitions**

- 1) The term “Chair”, “Executive Board”, “Member”, “Membership”, “Regular Meeting”, and “Special Meeting” are used as defined by the Bylaws.
- 2) The term “Elections Committee” identifies the official committee of the First District Democrats which has the purview defined in the Standing Rules. The Elections Committee shall consist of voting Members of the First District Democrats in good standing who choose to attend regular or special Elections Committee meetings.
- 3) The term “Bylaws” means the Bylaws of the First District Democrats.
- 4) The term “Standing Rules” means the Standing Rules of the First District Democrats.

### **B. Elections Committee**

- 1) An Elections Committee member is eligible to vote on endorsement recommendations after they have attended at least two (2) regular Elections Committee meetings held after the start of the calendar year and prior to the endorsement recommendation vote; an absence excused by the Committee Chair can be approved for one (1) meeting.
- 2) No candidate, immediate family member, employee of a consulting firm that provides services or counsel to candidates, or person who holds a conflict of interest to a candidate shall be eligible to vote on candidates or to observe deliberations that may provide an unfair advantage in that election. Real and potential conflicts of interest are considered narrowly, and apply on a single-office basis. Examples of a real or potential conflict of interest include a candidate voting on their own endorsement; a campaign manager voting on the endorsement of a candidate whose campaign they manage; or a person who has a financial stake in a candidate’s election. Elections Committee members are required to disclose any real or potential conflict of interest. Any Member or Elections Committee member may, at any time, raise any real or potential conflict of interest and request that this be considered by the Committee.
- 3) The Elections Committee will reach out to and invite all Members of the First District Democrats to participate in the Elections Committee and support the candidate endorsement process.

### **C. Elections Committee Endorsement Process**

- 1) The Elections Committee shall request that the Communications Committee post these Endorsement Rules on the First District Democrat’s website in a timely manner.
- 2) The Elections Committee shall identify all elections administered by state, County, or special election districts within the First Legislative District.
- 3) The Elections Committee shall review candidate filing records to identify all candidates filing for partisan offices who identify as Democrats and all candidates who have filed for nonpartisan offices. The Elections Committee shall review these and identify candidates that the Committee will consider for endorsement.

- 4) The Elections Committee shall notify candidates under consideration for endorsement and request that the candidate submit a questionnaire per the King County or Snohomish County Democrats Central Committee endorsement process. Candidates running for office in both counties are strongly encouraged to submit both questionnaires. Candidates for statewide or Federal office who identify as Democrats may be considered for endorsement regardless of whether they submit a questionnaire. Candidates for local offices who do not respond, or do not submit a questionnaire, or who decline endorsement, shall not be considered for endorsement.
- 5) If a nonpartisan judicial office is sought, no attempt shall be made to ascertain party affiliation. If a nonpartisan executive or legislative office, or a partisan office, is sought, a candidate must satisfactorily answer the question, "Are you a Democrat?" in the affirmative. Responses provided using a King or Snohomish County Democrats Central Committee questionnaire will meet this requirement.
- 6) Endorsements for the Primary Election shall not occur before the end of filing week. The Elections Committee shall make every attempt to hold the General Membership endorsement meeting prior to the due date for voter-guide candidate statements.
- 7) The Elections Committee shall recommend candidates for endorsement by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Elections Committee members present and voting, not counting abstentions.
- 8) The Elections Committee shall only recommend a single candidate for each position to the First District Democrats Members.
- 9) A candidate may request their removal from consideration for endorsement at any time during this process and prior to the actual vote by the First District Democrats Members.
- 10) If a candidate recommended by the Elections Committee for endorsement removes themselves from the endorsement process prior to the First District Democrats Members' vote then the Elections Committee may consider recommending the endorsement of another candidate. Elections Committee voting to recommend endorsement of another candidate can be done via email or electronic ballot; quorum will be fifty percent (50%) of the eligible Elections Committee members of the meeting prior to the vote.
- 11) The Elections Committee may consider new endorsement recommendations for the general election after the conclusion of the primary election, following the above rules. A candidate endorsement approved by the general membership in advance of the primary election may not be rescinded in advance of the general election except for cause per Section E.

#### **D. General Membership Endorsement Process**

- 1) The Elections Committee may present individual endorsement recommendations or a slate of endorsement recommendations for consideration by the Membership at a regular or special general membership meeting. Such recommendations constitute a motion and a second for the motion.
- 2) If the Elections Committee presents a slate of candidates recommended for consideration of endorsement by the First District Democrats Members then any voting member may move to remove a candidate from the slate. If the motion receives a second and at least

one additional vote of support, the Chair will remove that candidate from the slate and the endorsement of that candidate will be considered separately.

- 3) A motion to treat the entire slate as separate candidates is out of order.
- 4) Either unanimous consent or a majority vote of the Members present and voting is required to approve a slate of endorsements recommended by the Elections Committee.
- 5) Any Member may move to consider the endorsement of a specific candidate who was not recommended by the Elections Committee. Consideration of the endorsement of a candidate that was not recommended by the Elections Committee may be approved by a majority of all First District Democrats Members or by two-thirds (2/3) majority of Members present and voting (whichever is fewer).
- 6) All candidates for office whose endorsement is successfully moved for consideration (by either the Elections Committee or by the Members) will be allotted time to speak and answer questions at any meetings where their endorsement is recommended to the Members.
  - a. The Chair will allow candidates for state representative and state senator up to three (3) minutes to speak, and up to two (2) minutes to answer questions from the Members.
  - b. The Chair will allow candidates for all other offices up to one (1) minute to speak, and up to two (2) minutes to answer questions.
  - c. The Chair may limit the time for all speakers for an office in order to preserve time for deliberation.
  - d. The Chair will give the same amount of time to all candidates for each office; however, there is no expectation that the chair must treat all offices equally.
  - e. Speeches by candidates must focus on reasons for supporting endorsement of their candidacy and shall not address reasons for rejecting their opponent(s).
- 7) The Members may discuss the endorsement of individual candidates.
  - a. The Chair will require that all non-voting guests leave the meeting room during the Members' discussion of, and vote on, that candidate's endorsements.
  - b. The Chair will require that a non-voting candidate under consideration leave the meeting room during the Members' discussion of, and vote on, that candidate's endorsement. For candidates who are also voting Members of the First District Democrats the Chair will require that the candidate leave the room during discussion of that candidate's endorsement and then invite the candidate to return to the meeting for the vote on their endorsement.
  - c. The Chair will allow up to four (4) speakers to address the recommended endorsement of each candidate, alternating between a speaker in favor of the recommendation and a speaker opposing the recommendation in that order. The speakers supporting and opposing the recommendation must identify themselves before either may speak. The first speaker shall be a speaker in favor of the endorsement. The number of speakers opposing the endorsement recommendation may not exceed the number of speakers in favor, and the number of speakers in favor of the recommended endorsement may not exceed the number speaking in

opposition by more than one (1). Speakers supporting “no endorsement” are considered to be opposing the endorsement recommendation. Speakers need not be Members of the First District Democrats; however, speakers who are Members will be given priority over speakers who are not Members.

- d. The Chair will allow each speaker up to one (1) minute to speak.
- e. Either unanimous consent or a majority vote of the Members present and voting is required to approve the endorsement of candidates recommended by the Elections Committee. If the endorsement of an individual candidate is not agreed by unanimous consent then voting shall be by signed written or credentialed electronic ballot. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Members present and voting is required to approve the endorsement of candidates not recommended by the Elections Committee.

#### **E. Rescission of Endorsements**

- 1) An endorsement may be rescinded by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at a General Membership meeting. Any voting Member may request that the First District Democrats consider rescinding an endorsement at an upcoming meeting, but this request must include a rationale and must be made to the Chair at least seven (7) days in advance of a meeting so timely notice can be provided to the Members.
- 2) If the Chair approves a request to consider rescinding an endorsement of a candidate at an upcoming meeting, that candidate must be copied on the final call to the meeting.
- 3) In the event that an endorsed candidate withdraws, the endorsement he or she received from the First District Democrats shall immediately and automatically lapse.

#### **F. Amendment of Endorsement Rules**

- 1) Once adopted, these procedures may be amended by majority vote of the Members or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Members in attendance at any properly called meeting; however, notice that changes to the endorsements procedures will be considered must be provided to all Members at least seven (7) days in advance.
- 2) Scenarios not explicitly covered here should be governed by the First District Democrats Bylaws and Standing Rules, or be at the discretion of the Chair.