

Bylaws of the Democratic Women of Comal County, Texas

“Civility is claiming and caring for one’s own identity, needs and beliefs, without degrading someone else’s in the process.” Spath and Dahnke, “Reclaiming Civility in the Public Square”

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Democratic Women of Comal County (DWCC).

Article II: Purpose

The purpose the Democratic Women of Comal County shall be to support the needs of the Democratic Party by

- Providing a welcoming, active community for members and potential members to learn about Democratic values, candidates, and issues in a supportive, friendly environment;
- Sharing accurate information with the community at large about the Democratic Party and its values through education, publicity, and social events;
- Promoting civility in political discourse;
- Supporting women and children’s causes and encouraging women candidates;
- Helping to elect Democrats by sponsoring fundraising and by working to increase voter registration and Democratic participation at the polls. (*“Democracy is not a spectator sport.”*)

Article III: Political Election Policy

Section 1: Primary Candidate Support: This organization shall not officially endorse or support the candidacy of any person for any public office prior to nomination by the Democratic Party, or give its influence as an organization to the cause of any candidate or faction of the Party other than in a general election campaign or uncontested primary. It shall strive to introduce primary candidates to the members and to the community.

Section 2: General Election Candidate Support: This organization shall actively support by appropriate means the nominees of the Democratic Party in local, state and national elections.

Article IV: Membership

Section 1: Eligibility: Any individual wishing to support the purposes of this organization is eligible for membership in the Democratic Women of Comal County.

Section 2: Dues: Membership dues shall be determined by the voting membership and shall become due in January of each year. Membership shall run January through December. New members who pay dues after October 31 of each year will maintain the membership for the remaining two months of the current year, as well as all of the next year.

Section 3: Voting Members: Members whose dues are current shall be entitled to vote on DWCC business. A member is entitled to vote as soon as dues are paid.

Article V: Elections

Section 1: Elected Officers: The duly elected officers of the DWCC shall consist of a President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2: Qualifications: All officers shall be dues-paying members in good standing.

Section 3: Nominations: The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President in September and shall consist of at least three members. It shall present the proposed slate of officers at the general membership meeting in October. Nominations may be taken from the floor at the annual meeting in November.

Section 4: Election: At the annual meeting the election of officers shall take place after all nominations have been made. If there is more than one candidate for an office, the vote shall be by written ballot. Officers must receive a simple majority of the votes from voting members present. If there are multiple candidates and no one receives a majority, there will be a runoff between the two top candidates.

Section 5: Term of Office:

- a. Officers will take office in January, after being elected at the November annual meeting, and serve for one (1) year with the option of being re-elected for an additional term.
- b. If an elected officer resigns or otherwise fails to fulfill the requirements of such office, the General Board shall appoint a replacement officer to serve out the remaining months of the term of office.
- c. If the President resigns or otherwise fails to fulfill the requirements of that office, including working to further the goals of the DWCC, the First Vice-President shall serve as President for the remaining months of the term of office. After consultation with the president, a 2/3 vote of the General Board would determine if a President has not been adequately fulfilling her duties.

Section 6: Email: Email may be used to give the membership the opportunity to vote on any issue.

Article VI: Officers and Duties

Section 1: President: The President

- a. shall preside over general membership and board meetings of the DWCC and shall serve as an ex officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee;
- b. shall create the written agendas for both board and general membership meetings, and decide on any variances therefrom;
- c. shall appoint the chairs of all committees and establish special committees as needed;
- d. shall serve as the official spokesperson for the DWCC and work to accomplish its goals;
- e. may make and approve expenditures on behalf of the Organization up to the amount agreed upon by the General Board. The Treasurer shall provide a monthly expenditure report of these expenditures to the membership;
- f. shall serve on the Executive Board as past-president for one year after leaving office.

Section 2: First Vice-President: The First Vice-President

- a. shall perform the duties of the President when the President is unable to do so, including representing the President at an activity, meeting or event;
- b. shall oversee committees as assigned by the President;
- c. shall perform all other duties as assigned by the President.

Section 3: Second Vice-President: The Second Vice-President

- a. shall chair the Program Committee;
- b. shall perform all other duties as assigned by the President.

Section 3: Secretary: The Secretary

- a. shall record and maintain the minutes of both the general membership and board meetings, and send out to the membership minutes of the previous meeting at least one week prior to the next meeting;
- b. shall schedule locations for board and membership meetings;
- c. shall perform all other duties as assigned by the President.

Section 4: Treasurer: The Treasurer

- a. shall collect dues and account for all income and disbursements, and shall accurately maintain the financial records of the organization;
- b. shall make monthly reports of the organization's finances to the membership and the board;
- c. shall make or oversee approved expenditures of this Organization and shall obtain the signature of one additional officer for expenditures over an amount agreed upon by the General Board;
- d. shall make appropriate reports to the Texas Ethics Commission and the Internal Revenue Service and any other agency if necessary to keep the organization in good legal standing;
- e. shall chair the Budget committee, which will consist of at least two other members, to draw up a budget for the next fiscal year. This will be presented for discussion by the membership at the October meeting and voted on at the annual meeting in November.

Article VII: Boards and Meetings

Section 1: General Membership Meetings:

- a. Regular general membership meetings shall be held once a month on the same day of the week and month at a time and location to be determined by the General Board. All regular meetings shall be open to the public.
- b. The President shall have the authority to set reasonable limits on the time and frequency that an individual may speak on any given issue.
- c. The annual meeting of the Organization shall be held at the November general meeting. The primary business of this meeting is to conduct the following:
 1. The election of officers,
 2. The adoption of an annual budget,
 3. Other business that is presented at the meeting.

- d. A majority of the Executive Board may call a special meeting of the membership upon a minimum notice of seventy-two (72) hours to the membership.
- e. A quorum of at least fifteen (15) voting members is necessary to conduct business in a general or special membership meeting.

Section 2: Executive Board

- a. The Executive Board consists of the president, first vice-president, second vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past-president.
- b. Meetings can be called into session by the President when the President feels it is necessary to handle business, particularly when General Board membership is not easily available.
- c. A quorum of the Executive Board will consist of at least four (4) members.

Section 3: General Board

- a. The General Board consists of the Executive Board members plus the chairs of the standing committees. It is requested that a representative from the Comal County Democratic Party be present at meetings or that a written report on current CCDP issues be brought.
- b. Except as is provided herein, the General Board shall manage the affairs of the DWCC and work to accomplish its goals.
- c. Meetings shall be held at a designated time and place at least once a quarter (four times a year) to oversee the business and direction of the organization and help the President plan the general meetings as needed. Meetings shall be announced to the membership in advance and be open to all voting members.
- d. The General Board shall establish standing rules (a.k.a. operating procedures) that will not be in conflict with the bylaws.
- e. Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of General Board members as deemed necessary.
- f. A quorum for General Board meetings shall consist of a majority of its members.

Article VIII: Financial Administration

Section 1: Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the DWCC shall be from January 1 to December 31 of the same year.

Section 2: Tax Exempt Status: The organization meets the definition of a General Purpose Political Committee (GPAC) and shall be organized as such. It is designated as a 501(c)(4) organization.

Section 3: Budget Committee

- a. The President shall appoint the Budget Committee. The committee shall consist of the Treasurer and two (2) or more voting members of the Organization.
- b. All committees, officers, and project managers shall present budget requests to the Budget Committee in September.

- c. The proposed budget shall be given to all members in October, one month prior to the annual meeting.
- d. The budget shall be voted on at the annual meeting in November.

Section 4 Audit: The President shall appoint an Audit Committee to audit the books and present a report at the annual meeting.

Section 5 Expenditures:

- a. The General Board shall be authorized to approve expenditures for projects not previously approved by the membership or not previously approved in the annual budget and considered essential prior to the date of the next meeting of the DWCC. In no event shall the General Board approve an expenditure in excess of 20% of the then existing treasury balance without the approval of the membership.
- b. Contributions to candidates, donations to the Comal County Democratic Party, and donations to local charities and organizations shall be voted on by the membership.

Article IX: Committees

Section 1: The ***Audit, Budget and Nominating Committees*** are deemed necessary for the smooth and legal running of the organization. They are usually of only a few months duration and are described elsewhere in these bylaws:

Section 2: *Standing committees* are deemed necessary to accomplish the goals of this organization. The chairs of these committees are appointed by the President (unless otherwise stated) and are voting members of the General Board. Basic purposes for these standing committees are as follows:

- 1. ***Membership*** – to recruit and maintain new members through various programs such as training, information distribution and other welcoming programs, and to maintain accurate records on members and guests.
- 2. ***Communications*** – to work with the secretary to communicate with members about upcoming events and issues of interest; to promote the DWCC to the public in order to establish a positive relationship within the community about the organization.
- 3. ***Program*** – to plan programs for chapter meetings (chaired by the Second Vice-President).
- 4. ***Fundraising/Events*** – coordinate fundraisers and events to generate funds and establish a positive relationship throughout the community.
- 5. ***Political Education*** – to work with the program chair to educate the members and the public about politics, the party, issues and candidates. Duties would include managing political content and links on the website, and organizing voter education (and registration) to help members and the public become more effective politically.

Section 3: *Special Committees* may be established by the President as needed for particular issues or events. The chairs of special committees will not be voting members of the General Board until approved of by the membership as official members of the General Board.

Article X: Amendments

These bylaws may be amended upon a 2/3 vote of the voting membership present at any general membership meeting as long as the changes have been presented to the voting membership at least one month in advance of that meeting.

Article XI: Parliamentary Authority

The rules in the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

Article XII: Adoption

These bylaws shall be introduced to the membership a month before a vote takes place on their adoption. These bylaws shall become effective following passage at a general meeting by a 2/3 majority vote of the membership present, at which time all prior constitutions and bylaws of the Organization are deemed null and void and of no further effect.

These Bylaws were officially adopted by a vote of the Democratic Women of Comal County membership at the September 8, 2017 meeting.