

COLUMBIA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE
Bylaws, Adopted March 2, 2015
Amended June 6, 2016

ARTICLE I.
Name

1.1 The name of this organization shall be the Columbia County Democratic Committee, hereinafter to be referred to as the "Committee." All members, officers, and subdivisions of the committee are subject to these Bylaws and to the Charter and Bylaws of the State Committee of the Democratic Party of Georgia, hereinafter referred to as the "State Committee."

ARTICLE II
Governing Authority and Duties

2.1 The Committee shall be the governing authority of the Democratic Party in Columbia County.

2.2 Duties of the Committee shall be:

- To promote a positive image of the Democratic Party in the local community,
- To promote the development of Party organizations and activities,
- To seek and encourage qualified candidates for public office,
- To support Democratic nominees,
- To perform such primary and election functions as required by law,
- To maintain appropriate records,
- To promote and add logistical support to the State Affirmative Action Program,
- To perform such other duties as may be required by the State Committee,
- To elect State Committee members,
- To determine Party Districts and Apportionment, and
- To raise funds for the above purposes.

ARTICLE III.
Membership, Committee Districts, and Election of Members

3.1 Any person who resides in and is registered to vote in Columbia County, and who shall declare himself or herself to be a Democrat, shall be entitled to membership in the Democratic Party of Columbia County.

3.2 Any member of the Columbia County Democratic Party is eligible to be elected to the Committee.

3.3 The Committee shall have four (4) districts coinciding with County Commission districts, with (10) Members per district.

Amended June 6, 2016. See BL11.2.1

Election of Committee Members.

3.4.1 One half of the district committee posts and one-half of the at large posts shall be elected in gubernatorial election years and one-half shall be elected in Presidential election years. In the very first election after organizing, all the posts shall be elected. One-half the posts shall end in the next gubernatorial election year and the other one-half shall end in the next Presidential election year.

3.4.2 Committee members are to be elected by a Party District Caucus.

3.4.3 Such Caucus shall be held within 45 days following the General Primary. The Caucus is called by the Chair. If the Chair fails to call a Caucus, the Executive Committee by simple majority shall set the time and place of the Caucus.

3.4.4 The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected without the necessity of a run-off.

3.4.5 Public notice of the election shall be given by publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the County at least once a week for the four weeks preceding the closing of qualifications for such office. Advertisement shall be on any existing website and by email notification to the general membership.

3.4.6 Only Columbia County Democratic Party members who reside in a particular County Commission District and who are registered to vote may vote as a Member from that District. All members must provide a copy of their voter registration card or otherwise prove their physical and legitimate address of residence in Columbia County.

3.4.7 The Chair shall appoint chairs of Party District Caucuses.

3.5 Members shall take office on the 1st day of the 1st month after their election, and shall serve for 4 years, unless affected by reapportionment, or until the time at which their appointment would normally end if elected between cycles.

3.6 Dues. Reasonable dues for members may be set, upon due deliberation and majority vote of the committee. No member will be denied participation for failure to pay.

3.7 Emeritus Members. The Committee may elect an individual who is at least seventy (70) years old and has at least ten (10) years of continuous active membership on the Committee, by majority vote to Emeritus status. Election to Emeritus status will be by simple majority of members present at the meeting in which the names are submitted.

3.8 All members with voting privileges must be registered to vote in Columbia County

ARTICLE IV
Officers and Executive Committee

4.1. Per Ga BL 7.6.1 The Committee shall elect officers no later than December 31 of even numbered years, to take office January 1 of the following year, or immediately following the election, whichever is earlier. The new Chair shall immediately upon taking office notify the State Committee Chair and the Congressional District Chair of his/her election. In the first year of formation officers will be elected by the Committee members immediately following the Party District Caucus.

4.2. The election of Officers will be conducted in December of even numbered years. Nominations will be allowed from the floor. All nominees will be offered the opportunity to speak 3-4 minutes before ballots are cast. At least two persons shall count the ballots. Paper ballots that are signed by the individual voter will be collected. A majority vote is required. Voting will continue until a candidate has received a majority vote. Ballots shall be retained by the secretary for two years. The "Committee" shall elect from its membership a Chair, four (4) Vice-chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. When possible, at least one of the Vice-Chairs shall be of the opposite gender of the Chair. At the pleasure of the Chair, the immediate Past-Chair of the Committee can be included as a non-voting member to obtain his/her counsel. The person receiving the majority of votes (one more than half of the people voting) for election to an office shall be declared elected.

4.3. Each officer shall serve a 2-year term though nothing herein shall prevent an officer from running for re-election.

4.4. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers who shall act on behalf of the Committee between Committee meetings.

4.5. The Chair shall set the Executive Committee meetings. They will meet monthly at least ten (10) days prior to the monthly party meeting at an established date, time and place for the purposes of collectively establishing and setting the agenda for the monthly Committee meeting and to conduct such other business as may be required. When there is a change in time, date or location of the meeting, the Committee should be notified in advance of the Executive Committee meeting. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chair to conduct Committee business upon receipt by all members of written notice 5 days prior to such meeting. Such notice may be given electronically.

4.6. Secretary The secretary shall be responsible for taking minutes at all County Party, County Committee and Executive Committee meetings and for presenting those minutes at the succeeding meetings of those respective groups. The Secretary shall be designated as the official record-keeper for the Committee.

4.7. The Treasurer shall prepare a monthly financial report and provide said report to

the Executive Committee prior to the Executive Committee meeting. Said financial report shall be provided to the Committee Members at the next regularly scheduled County Committee meeting. The treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining accurate up to date records of all expenditures and income to the party account and for depositing and disbursing funds in accordance with the budget and other approved expenditures. All funds received or dispersed must go through the Party bank account. The treasurer will provide a written report of such to the Executive Committee at scheduled meetings and to the Committee at scheduled meetings. The treasurer shall have authority to disburse budgeted funds to authorized members consistent with the approved budget and the receipt of funds consistent with projections. Any expenditure not included in the annual budget requires full committee approval. The Treasurer shall provide receipts for all income and shall require and maintain receipts for all expenditures. The Treasurer will be a member of the Finance Committee.

4.8. The Executive Committee shall prepare a budget on an annual basis for approval by the Committee no later than December 31st. The budget shall include the anticipated receipts and expenses on a timeline. Approval by the Committee is required for the budget and for any modifications to the budget during the calendar year.

4.9 All expenditures drafted on the Committee bank account shall bear the signature of the Treasurer and either the Chair or the first Vice Chair. Each expenditure shall be accompanied by a voucher detailing expense amount, check number, authorization and purpose.

Duties of Officers

4.10 *Chair*, The Chair shall have over-all responsibility for the County Party affairs and shall be the official spokesperson for the Party subject to the provisions of the State Charter and these Bylaws and to such directives as may be given from time to time by the Executive Committee. The chair shall be the head of the Committee and will preside at Party, Committee, and the Executive Committee meetings. The Chair shall have the specific responsibility to formulate each year, with the Executive Committee, a Strategic Plan and a budget for the Party for that year and to present that plan for approval by the Committee. The annual budget shall be divided into quarters based upon projected revenues and expenses. At the end of each quarter the budget will be reviewed for adjustment based upon variations from predictions.

4.11 *Secretary*, The secretary shall be responsible for taking minutes at all County Party, Committee and Executive Committee meetings and for presenting those minutes at the succeeding meetings of those respective groups. The Secretary shall be designated as the official record-keeper for the Committee. The secretary will maintain current membership rolls, and records of all official correspondence. The secretary will have approval to make expenditures for office supplies within the approved budget

4.12 *First Vice Chair* for Bylaws, Compliance and Parliamentary procedure. The First Vice Chair shall act as Chair and shall act in behalf of the Chair, in the absence of the Chair and shall

have the authority, powers and duties of the Chair. They shall ensure compliance with the State Party Charter and State and County Bylaws through inquiry, review, and recommendation of remedy.

4.13 *Second Vice Chair* for Field Activities shall perform outreach to the community in the form of canvassing, recruiting poll watchers, voter registration and contact, phone banking, yard signs, GOTV, etc.

4.14 *Third Vice Chair* for Candidate Recruitment and Support, and Finance will oversee activities of those committees to provide for fund raising activities in support of party expenses and to provide for identification of opportunities to recruit, develop and assist Democratic candidates for office.

4.15 *Fourth Vice Chair* for Community Relations shall maintain a strong community presence and increase party visibility through forums, community service, or Letters to the Editor and will oversee Publicity and Membership activities. .

4.16 Upon expiration of term, all officers will turn over all records and official documents to their successors. All funds will be audited prior to transfer of finances.

ARTICLE V.

Vacancies

5.1 All vacancies in Committee Posts or Officers shall be filled for the remainder of term by election by the remaining Committee members, provided at least three such members remain.

Removal Procedures

5.2 Committee members and officers may be removed by the Committee for cause, with reasonable notice, and with the opportunity to be heard, by a 2/3 vote of the Committee provided a 40% quorum is met.

5.3 Any person subject to removal shall receive written notice of the alleged reasons for removal.

5.4 The removal procedure shall be conducted by a subcommittee appointed by the County Committee Chair. Where the Chair is the subject of the removal procedure, the subcommittee shall be appointed by a majority of the other County Committee Officers.

5.5 The person to be removed shall have the right to be informed of all persons who will be witnesses against him/her and who will testify in support of the charges against him/her, at least ten days before a hearing on said charges before the full Committee.

5.6 The person to be removed shall have the right to counsel and to present all

witnesses, documents and arguments in support of his/her position. The subcommittee which has tendered the charges may likewise have counsel and present witnesses, documents, and arguments in support of its position.

ARTICLE VI

Committee Functions, Records, and Certification

6.1 The Committee shall maintain records of all financial transactions, kept on a calendar year basis, and a list of unpaid obligations. Financial records shall be audited each year with a report provided to the Committee no later than the March meeting following the end of the organization year.

6.2 Filing of Records. The Chair of the Committee shall report directly to the State Committee Chair and shall file therewith a list of Committee membership; all rules, regulations, bylaws and charters of affiliates; an annual report of activities or minutes; the location and signatories of Committee bank accounts; file an annual Certified financial statement signed by the Chair and Treasurer identifying the current financial status and all other required information to the State Party; and certification by the Committee Chair that the Committee duly constituted and organized is following sound financial operating procedure. Such filing(s) shall be made in accordance with Ga BL 7.7.6.

6.3 Certification of Officers and Membership. The list of members and officers shall be certified in writing by the Secretary and verified/attested by the Chair.

ARTICLE VII.

Meetings and Voting

7.1 A meeting of the Columbia County Democratic Committee will be held monthly to conduct business. This meeting shall be open to the public.

7.2 The Committee Chair may call special meetings. Where meetings are not held in a previously designated time and place, all members shall be provided written notice at least 10 days in advance. Only Committee members in good standing shall be eligible to vote at Committee meetings.

7.3 Emergency Meetings.
Emergency meetings may be called by the Chair upon ten (10) days notice.

7.4 Quorum.
A quorum for conduct of Committee business shall be at least 40% of the filled County Committee seats.

7.5 No person shall be entitled to more than one vote. Secret ballot shall be permissible only when electing Committee members and State Convention Delegates.

7.6 All meetings of each body of the Committee shall be open to the public unless the

Committee votes to go into Executive Session.

7.7 Unless otherwise provided for, Robert's Rules of Order most recently revised shall govern the conduct of all meetings.

ARTICLE VIII Committees

8.1. The Committee shall provide for the following standing committees: Affirmative Action, Membership, and Finance.

8.2 The Chair creates any Committees deemed necessary

ARTICLE IX General Provisions

9.1 There shall be no discrimination in the conduct of Committee affairs on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, color, handicap, national origin, or age.

9.2 The Committee, and affiliates, are prohibited from supporting a Democratic candidate who has opposition during a primary or Democratic opposition during a special election.

9.3 No Committee member shall use his or her office to support (1) any Democratic candidate in a contested Democratic primary election or (2) any candidate who has Democratic opposition in a special election.

9.4 No Committee member shall publicly support another candidate other than the Democratic nominee in a General Election.

9.5 The endorsement of, support of, or contribution to a candidate of another party or to an opponent of the Democratic nominee may result in the expulsion of such person from the Committee.

9.6 Any contributions by the Committee to a candidate for public office shall be accompanied by a cover letter, which shall state in substance, " This contribution is made on the express condition that, after election, you remain a member of the Democratic Party. Your acceptance and/or use of this contribution is your acknowledgement and contract that should you win election yet at any time prior to the end of your term change parties or leave the Democratic Party, you will repay these amounts."

9.7 The Committee shall seek reimbursement of any contribution, whether real or in-kind, made to a candidate who qualifies for office as a Democrat and, after qualification, switches to another party.

9.8 The Committee may recognize and allow affiliation of such county organizations

as it may deem appropriate.

**Article X
Election duties**

10.1 Board of Election Member. In accordance with Georgia Election Code shall be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Committee.

10.2 Poll Officer. In accordance with Georgia Election Code and Ga BL7.7.2 poll officer that conduct primaries and elections shall be recommended by the Committee to the Columbia County Elections Superintendent.

10.3 Poll Watchers. In accordance with Georgia Election Code and Ga BL 7.7.3, two official poll watchers may be designated by the Committee for each precinct for each election.

**ARTICLE XI.
Amendments**

11.1 These Bylaws may be amended at any Committee meeting where a quorum is present with approval by a 2/3 vote of those present, provided at least thirty (30) days written notice of said amendments has been provided to all Members.

11.2 **Amendments Adopted**

11.2.1 Adopted June 6, 2016

Amends BL3.3

BL3.3 The Committee shall have four (4) districts coinciding with County Commission districts, with (10) member per district.

Adopted and approved by the Columbia County Democratic Committee, this Second the day of March, 2015.

Signed

Deborah M. Fisher
Chair
Columbia County Democratic Committee

Signed

Lynda Luden
Secretary
Columbia County Democratic Committee