

Schoharie County Democratic Committee By-Laws and Rules

Passed on September 22, 2022

A. Mission

The Schoharie County Democratic Committee will promote the creation of a robust, vibrant, and inclusive Democratic Party within Schoharie County, by communicating with residents and supporting Democratic candidates with education, training, and campaign assistance.

B. Powers and Duties

1. The Democratic County Committee of Schoharie County, New York, ("County Committee") is constituted as provided by law, for the administration of the affairs of the Democratic Party in Schoharie County, New York, and shall exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred upon it by law as a whole, when in session, and by such other committees in the interim between sessions as may be hereinafter provided.

B. Membership

1. The County Committee shall be composed of at least two but not more than four members for each election district within the County of Schoharie.
2. Each member shall be elected biennially in even-numbered years at the first regularly held primary for that year and shall, unless incapacitated or otherwise prevented, hold office until the next election has been completed.
3. Each member shall be a resident of the county and the assembly district from which, or in the assembly district containing the election district in which such member is elected, pursuant to Section 2-104(1) of the New York Election Law or any subsequent governing provision of state law, a qualified elector therein, and an enrolled member of the Democratic Party.
4. A member may resign by submitting written notification of resignation to the Chair of the County Committee, notwithstanding the provisions of rule B-2.
5. If a town has less than two members, it will be considered a "Vacancy." Vacancies in the membership of the County Committee shall be filled at a duly called County Committee meeting by the majority of the weighted votes cast by the members,

excluding abstentions. A person elected to fill such vacancies shall take office immediately.

6.

If a member misses two consecutive meetings without prior notice, personally offered via phone, email, or text, to both the chair and the secretary, that member will be referred to the Membership committee. That committee shall post an official notification to the member in question regarding their lack of attendance and notify them that they may be removed. If the member fails to respond with an adequate reason for their absence within three weeks then the sub-committee can refer a recommendation for removal from office. The County Committee may then remove them with a majority vote per NYS elections law. That seat can then be filled at the next SCDC meeting.

C. Meetings and Voting

1. Regular meetings of the County Committee shall be held in the months of January, March, May, July, September, November and within ten (10) days following any Democratic Party primary election at such time and place to be determined by the Chair with proper notice to the members. The meeting dates, times, and locations for a calendar year shall be set at the November meeting of the previous year by a vote of the majority of the members present. The calendar dates, times, and locations may be amended at any meeting by a vote of the majority of the members present. One meeting each year may be held virtually, provided that phone participation is available.

3. Virtual or online attendance options for meetings will be available to all members, with the understanding that physical attendance is better for communication and group dynamics. Virtual participants will be able to vote on motions, which will be clearly stated and typed before they are voted on. Virtual participants may not be able to fully participate in the conversation.

2. Notice for all regular meetings shall be made 7 days in advance via email, and shall include a draft agenda from the Chair, and the minutes from the prior meeting.

3. In the event that a particular meeting for any of the above months is not approved by the committee the meeting shall be held the fourth Tuesday of said month at 6:00 at the Middleburgh Emergency Shelter. In the event of public health guidance, or when agreed to by a majority of members, use of a virtual or online format such as Zoom, which

allows for phone and computer connection, shall be allowed with connection details provided to all committee members at least seven (7) days in advance.

4. Additional meetings may be called by petition of 1/6th the members of the County Committee or a vote of the majority of the Executive Committee, provided all members are notified at least seven days in advance. The petition can be completed with physical signatures or legally authorized digital signatures, such as DocuSign.

5. The voting power of each member shall be in proportion to the party vote cast in the election district (s)he represents for governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election, or as provided in Section 2-104 of the New York Election Law or any subsequent governing provision of state law; unless otherwise required by state law, each member shall cast a number of votes that coupled with the other members votes of that district shall equal twice the total number of Democratic votes cast for governor at the last gubernatorial election as shown by the official final canvass of the County Board of Elections or other undisputed tally of said results. A member may cast or split the votes s(he) is entitled to cast in any manner, except that no fractions or portions of votes may be cast; any votes not cast shall be considered abstentions.

6. Unless the County Chair elects to proceed immediately to a roll call of members present, the Chair may present a motion, resolution, or any other matter to the committee by any method of voting and if a result is announced by the County Chair, such result shall be considered and deemed to be approved by the required number of roll call votes unless any member present during the consideration or voting upon said matter shall request prior to or immediately after said decision (or as soon as the member can be recognized by the Chair) that a roll call vote be taken; otherwise all matters shall be considered by a roll call vote of the members present, except that matters may be considered by an alternative method (e.g. division of the assembly, secret ballot, voice vote, etc.) if said alternative method is first approved by a roll call vote in the proportion necessary to pass the impending matter.

7. The presence of twelve members of the County Committee from at least six different towns shall constitute a quorum at any duly called meeting of the County Committee.

8. Proxy voting is allowed under the following conditions: in the event that a member of the County Committee is unable to attend a duly called County Committee meeting, that member may choose to designate a proxy. To do so, they must submit written, signed notice, to the Chair, Secretary, and to the Committee member intended as their proxy, designating that Committee member to cast votes on their behalf at the specific meeting that they cannot attend. Such notice must be received either in paper form or via email

no less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting. An individual member may designate their proxy vote no more than two times per calendar year for regularly scheduled meetings and may designate their vote for any two (2) non-regularly County Committee meetings.

9. The chairperson can appoint a "Parliamentarian" whose role in a meeting will be to ensure that Robert's Rules are followed.

D. Organization

1. The officers of the County Committee shall be a Chair, two Vice-Chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, all of whom shall be elected at the organizational meeting as prescribed by state law. Officers shall not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in a single position. Any officer or committee chair may be removed by the majority vote of the full committee at any 2 consecutive committee meetings. If an officer or chair is removed via majority vote the committee will then move to elect a replacement.

2. The officers shall assume office immediately after their election and shall serve until their successors have been elected.

3. The roles of the officers shall be as follows:

- A. The Chair of the Schoharie County Democratic Committee ("Chair") shall draft agendas, run meetings, represent or designate a representative for regional, state and national events, act as a consensus builder between the officers and committee chairs in order to foster cooperation and further the goals of the organization. They shall also preside over the County Executive Committee ("Executive Committee"). The Chair of the County Committee shall not serve as the Schoharie County Board of Elections Chair and/or as an Elections Commissioner. In the event that the County Committee Chair is appointed by the Schoharie County Board of Supervisors to one of those positions, they must either decline that appointment or resign as County Committee Chair within 24 hours. Failure to resign as County Committee Chair will automatically remove them as Chair and a new Chair shall be elected at the next meeting.
- B. The Vice-Chair shall, in the absence of the Chair, fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the chair. Will assist in the organization and communication with the town clubs.
- C. The Second Vice-Chair shall organize and assist with standing committees and fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the first Vice-Chair in their absence.

- D. The Secretary shall maintain official documents of the County Committee, record official minutes of County Committee and Executive Committee meetings, and email those minutes to County Committee members 48 hrs after the conclusion of the meeting. The Secretary shall be responsible for filing all relevant documents with the State Board of Elections as needed. In the event that documents are not filed, any member may file them.
- E. The Treasurer shall maintain the accounts of the County Committee, making sure that proper safety measures are in place to prohibit fraud including but not limited to dual signature requirements, a yearly audit of the books and a yearly expenditure report given to the full committee.

4. In the absence of any officer or upon their failure to serve, a temporary substitute shall be elected to fill the vacancy for the particular meeting then convened and for the purpose of the said meeting and business transacted thereat, such substitute shall have all the powers of the officer they replace, except that the Vice-Chair, if they are present, able, and willing to act, shall act as temporary Chair if the Chair is unable to act

5. In the event that any vacancy exists in any office of the County Committee as a result of resignation, refusal to serve, death, removal, or any other reason, or in the event any officer notifies the committee that s/he will resign upon election of a successor, an election to fill such vacancies shall be held at the next duly called meeting provided that email notices are sent at least seven (7) days before such meeting to each County Committee member clearly stating that such election shall be held; if no duly called meeting is scheduled to be held within thirty-five (35) days from the time that such vacancy begins to exist, the Chair, or the Secretary, if the Chair's office is vacant or the Chair has failed to act within fifteen (15) days after the vacancy has begun to exist, shall cause a meeting to be called within thirty (30) days from the time the vacancy begins to exist with email notices sent at least seven (7) days before such meeting, clearly stating that such election shall be held.

E. Committees

1. The County Committee shall have four standing committees and a County Executive Committee. The chair(s) of each standing committee shall be elected from and by the membership of the County Committee, and shall serve on the Executive Committee. All members of the County Committee and non-committee Democratic members will be eligible to serve on standing committees. Standing committee meetings will be held in months between full committee meetings at a time and place designated by the standing committee chair. Should two people be elected to serve as co-chairs of any committee, they will each get ½ of a vote in the Executive Committee. Each standing

committee shall take minutes of its meeting and make those minutes available to the County Committee in advance of its next regular meeting.

2. The County Executive Committee shall consist of nine (9) members, specifically all duly elected officers and standing committee chairs.

A quorum shall consist of five (5) or more members of the Executive Committee not including ex-officio members. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the full County Committee when such County Committee is not in session but subject to the rules of said Committee. It shall carry out the resolutions of the County Committee and shall, between meetings of the County Committee, administer the affairs of the Schoharie County Democratic Party. It shall also function as a steering committee, meeting quarterly to assess progress on the goals set out at a biannual planning meeting it shall hold, with all County Committee members invited to participate.

3. The Executive Committee shall meet upon the call of its Chair on one (1) day notice, or by written request of a majority of the members upon forty-eight (48) hours' notice. The Executive Committee members can vote by text, upon request of the chair.

4. The Executive Committee shall act as a Finance Committee of the Schoharie County Democratic Committee under the following limitations:

a. No disbursements over \$500 may be made without the approval of the full County Committee.

B. Any disbursements under \$500 must be reported at the next meeting.

5. The Executive Committee shall duly report all actions and proceedings before it to the County Committee and shall cause such reports to be read at the next meeting of the County Committee provided that a copy of said proceedings shall be available at said meetings for any committee member to examine.

6. The County Committee's standing committees shall be:

a. The Communications committee shall be responsible for operating County Committee social media, website, email and media outreach including press releases and function as the public relations arm of the committee, subject to the rules of the committee as adopted by the County Committee. The communications committee may, at its discretion, produce campaign and/or YouTube videos.

- b. The Membership and Organizing committee shall be in charge of member data, internal polling, engaging and contacting democrats on a regular basis across the county to build capacity for the County Committee. It is authorized to lead canvassing projects and conduct outreach to new residents, young voters, or any other demographic it deems as strategic.
- c. The Campaign and Fundraising committee shall recruit candidates for Town or higher office, will work directly with the state committee on races and be embedded in campaigns, consistent with election law. It shall also research best fundraising practices, and run 1-3 fundraisers each year.
- d. The Social committee shall organize and foster events for the County Committee. Recognizing that members need, to know and trust each other to work together, the social committee will organize and foster events that will allow members to share food and experiences, as well as raise the awareness about the SCDC among the progressive members of the community. The social committee will work to create the traditions that help an organization thrive. These could include organizing pot-lucks before or after the monthly meetings, planning an annual banquet and picnic, and sponsoring concerts. It could also include several political/social events, such as an annual "Knock-toberfest" where a day of door knocking is followed by dinner, a yard-sign distribution picnic, a postcard party, etc.

7. The County Committee Chair may appoint any other ad-hoc non-standing committees deemed necessary, or they may be created by a majority vote of the County Committee. The Chairs of these committees shall not serve on the Executive Committee.

F. Town Rules

1. In each town in Schoharie County there shall be a Democratic Town Committee composed of the members of the Schoharie County Democratic Committee representing the districts contained in said town as described in Section 6-108(1) of the New York Election Law or any subsequent governing provisions of state law and who shall serve until their successors are chosen.

2. Subject to the provisions of Section 6-108 and 6-116 of the New York Election Law and any other additional or subsequent governing provisions of state law, the Democratic Town Committee, or the Schoharie County Democratic Committee if said Town Committee fails to act, shall have the power to fill any vacancies in party nominations of candidates for town offices, regardless of the reason that such vacancies exist (including, but not limited to, failure to hold a caucus, failure to file a

designating petition or certificate of nomination, failure to name a committee vacancy on a designating petition, death, resignation, declination, disqualification, adjudication, etc).

3.Candidates for elective town offices shall be nominated by caucus called by the Democratic Town Committee pursuant to the Election Law.

Nominations and endorsements of candidates enrolled in another party, or in no party, may be made if, and only if, there are no Democrats currently enrolled or who have recently changed enrollment to the Democratic party, present or not present, who express interest in the office for which nominations are being accepted.

4.If the Town Democratic Committee has not duly called the caucus by the 15th day before the last day to file petitions of nominations, a duly enrolled Democrat who is a resident of the Town, may post notices of such meeting.

5.Caucuses shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order Revised, until and unless other rules of procedure are adopted, and the Town Committee, or a majority of the County Committee members for that town present at the caucus in the event that the Town Committee fails to act, shall designate a person who shall call the meeting to order for the purpose of electing a chairman of the caucus.

6.A Town Committee may adopt its own rules, but no rules shall be valid which shall conflict with the by-laws and rules of the County Committee, and the County Committee rules shall take precedence over any town rules.

G. Amendments

1.These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the County Committee present at two consecutive meetings at which there is a quorum, provided a copy of the proposed amendment shall be sent with a notice of the meeting, provided that the provisions of Section 2-114 of the New York State Election Law, or any other provision of the Election Law shall supersede the provisions of this paragraph.

H. General Provisions

1.The Election Law of the State of New York shall control all matters not herein before specifically provided for.

2.Unless otherwise provided for, Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall prevail at any meeting of the County Committee, or in the interim thereof.