



# Bethlehem City Democratic Committee Bylaws

As Adopted, \_\_\_\_\_

## Definitions

- Board:** Also referred to as the “Executive Board,” shall comprise of the officers of the BDCD, being the Chair, the Female Vice-Chair, the Male Vice-Chair, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and two Trustees, if so appointed.
- Body:** Also referred to as the “floor,” is comprised of the Board, excluding the chair, and all elected Committeepersons, appointed committeepersons, and at-large committeepersons.
- BCDC:** The Bethlehem City Democratic Committee, a Political Action Committee (PAC) within the State of Pennsylvania.
- Committeeperson(s):** Refers to Elected Committeepersons, Appointed Committeepersons, and Committeepersons-at-Large, collectively, and are defined as follows:
- **An Elected Committeeperson** is one certified as elected in the year of the gubernatorial election by the relevant County Board of Elections or otherwise duly elected under Title 25 of Purdon's Statutes, the Pennsylvania Election Code. An Elected Committeeperson must be a registered Democrat residing in the precinct to which they are elected at the time of their election.
  - **An Appointed Committeeperson** is one appointed by the Chair of the BCDC, the Lehigh County Democratic Committee, or the Northampton County Democratic Committee to fill a vacant slot of an Elected County Committeeperson. An Appointed Committeeperson must be a registered Democrat residing in the precinct to which they are appointed at the time of their appointment. Their appointment is subject to the approval of the chair of their county's Democratic Committee.
  - **A Committeeperson-at-Large** is one nominated by and voted on by the Body, or appointed by one of the chairs of the Bethlehem City, Lehigh County, Northampton County Democratic Committee. A Committeeperson-at-Large must be a registered Democrat residing in the county to which they are appointed at the time of their appointment. Their appointment is subject to the approval of the chair of their county's Democratic Committee.
- Judge of Elections:** A Committeeperson who is responsible for proper and orderly voting and vote or ballot counting.

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| <b>Majority:</b>       | More than fifty percent (50%) of votes cast.  |
| <b>Quorum:</b>         | The presence of at least eight (8) members of the BCDC, no more than three (3) of which may be members of the Board.  |
| <b>Super Majority:</b> | More than two-thirds (2/3) of votes cast.   |
| <b>Super Quorum:</b>   | The presence of at least twelve (12) members of the BCDC, no more than four (4) of which may be members of the Board. |
| <b>Teller:</b>         | A Committeeperson who counts the votes in an election, vote, referendum, or poll.                                     |

### **Rule 1:**

#### **Organization**

- Section 1.1** The name of the organization shall be the “Bethlehem City Democratic Committee.” This committee will hereinafter be referred to as the “BCDC.”
- Section 1.2** No test of membership in, nor oaths of loyalty to, the Democratic Party of Pennsylvania shall be required or used that have the effect of requiring prospective or currently registered Democrats to acquiesce in, condone, or support discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, color, creed, gender, nation origin, age, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, or economic status.

### **Rule 2:**

#### **Purpose**

- Section 2.1** The BCDC is a committee of registered Democrats from the City of Bethlehem who work together to promote Democratic values and elect Democrats to local, state, and national offices.
- Section 2.2** The BCDC will work with the Lehigh & Northampton County Democratic Committees, the Pennsylvania State Democratic Party, the Pennsylvania State Democratic Committee, and the Democratic National Committee, and any other Democratic Party group whose purpose and interests align with the BCDC.

### **Rule 3:**

#### **Election and Appointment of Committee**

- Section 3.1** The Members of BCDC shall be elected at the sGubernatorial Primary by Democratic electors of their respective district and ward in the City of Bethlehem and shall continue in office for a term of four (4) years.
- Section 3.2** The Committee shall consist of two (2) Committeepersons from each ward in the City of Bethlehem, in accordance with the Bylaws of Lehigh and Northampton Counties, which at the time of adoption of these Bylaws require from Northampton County there be one male and one female Democrats and from Lehigh County two Democrats.
- Section 3.3** At-Large Committeepersons may be appointed to a vacant seat within the Committee after the Reorganizational Meeting. An appointee shall be nominated by the floor, voted upon by the Body, and be subject to approval by the respective County’s Committee Chair before confirmation. Such Committeepersons must be a resident of the City of Bethlehem and a registered Democrat. The At-Large Committeeperson must reside in the county of the voting district, but does not have to reside

within the assigned voting district. The At-Large Committeeperson shall continue in office until the term of the Elected Committeepersons expire.

**Section 3.4** A vacancy occurring by death, resignation, removal, moving out of the city, or otherwise of a member of the BCDC shall be filled by appointment for the un-expired term of such member. An appointee shall be nominated by the floor, voted upon by the Body, and be subject to approval by their County Committee Chair before confirmation.

**Section 3.5** The Chair shall submit the name of any appointee to his or her respective County Chair. If not approved by the County Chair, the appointee will still be a member of the BCDC though not of the County Committee.

#### **Rule 4:**

##### **Executive Board**

**Section 4.1** The Executive Board of the BCDC will consist of the Chairperson, Female Vice-Chair, Male Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and appointed Trustees. Each of these Executive Board members shall have one (1) vote each.

**Section 4.2** Members of the Executive Board shall be Registered Democrats residing within the City of Bethlehem, but do not need to be Committee people.

**Section 4.3** The Executive Board may conduct business of the BCDC in-between meetings, if the need arises. Such business shall be voted upon and majority rules.

**Section 4.4** All votes in-between meetings will be discussed during the Committee Business portion of the next regular meeting.

#### **Rule 5:**

##### **Election of Officers and Appointment of Trustees**

**Section 5.1** Nominations for Officers will take place at the first meeting (the Reorganizational Meeting) after the election of the Committeepersons. Any member of the Body may make such a nomination, which must be seconded by another member of the Body before proceeding to a vote by the Body present, requiring a plurality vote to pass. If there is a tie there will be a second runoff vote. If there is still a tie there will be a drawing of lots. Anyone with an intention to run for a position may speak at the meeting prior to the vote.

**Section 5.2** Chairperson, Female Vice-Chair, Male Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected in the Reorganizational Meeting, and shall comprise the Executive Board. All members thereof must be registered Democrats within the city of Bethlehem.

**Section 5.3** Two (2) Trustees may be appointed by the Chair after the election of all officers has been completed, subject to approval by a majority of the Body. No more and no less than two (2) Trustees may in place at any time.

**Section 5.4** The Election of Officers shall be by ballot properly recorded by a Judge of Elections and two (2) Tellers, and votes shall not be taken by secret ballot. The Judge of Elections and Tellers will be appointed by the current Chairperson from volunteers at the Reorganizational Meeting. Only Elected Committeepersons certified by the Northampton County or Lehigh County Board of Elections can vote for the officers at the Reorganizational Meeting.

**Section 5.5** A vacancy, occurring by death, resignation, or otherwise, in the office of Chairperson, Vice-Chair(s), Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustee shall be filled for the unexpired term of such office. The Board shall

nominate a person to fill the vacant office, and the Body shall vote on the nominee. The nomination shall be confirmed if a majority of the Body at the meeting vote in favor of it, but may only pass if there is a Quorum at that meeting. In the event that there is not a majority vote in favor of the nominee, then the Board shall vote on a new nominee to then be presented to the Body for a vote which will also require a majority in favor of the nominee to pass.

#### **Rule 6:**

##### **Removal of Officers**

- Section 6.1** Officers may be removed from office for the reasons set forth in this section by means of the procedure set forth herein.
- Section 6.2** Officers shall be removed from office automatically if they change party, endorse a non-Democratic candidate, or move out of the city of Bethlehem.
- Section 6.3** Officers shall be removed if they have four (4) unexcused absences from a meeting in a row or six (6) unexcused absences in a twelve (12) month period. The Chair shall decide if an absence is excused or not. Any member of the Body may make a motion to challenge the Chair's determination as to whether an absence is excused or not, and if passed by a majority, then such determination shall be made by majority vote of the Board. Excused absences should be given to the Chair in advance when possible. If absences by the Chair are in question, then the rest of the Board shall decide if the Chair's absences are excused or not by means of a majority vote.
- Section 6.4** An Officer may be removed for conduct unbecoming of an Officer of the BCDC. To remove an Officer for such cause, a majority of the Board must vote to bring a motion to remove along with articles of removal, which shall include the cause for such motion, to the Body for a vote, that shall not be by secret ballot, which shall pass upon a majority vote in favor of removal. Notice of such a vote by the Body must be given to the Body and the subject of the vote by means of a letter sent via email or regular mail at least fifteen (15) days prior to the vote. The vote by the Body shall take place at the next meeting after the fifteen (15) day notice has been given. Votes by proxy shall not be permitted. The subject of the vote and the Officer calling for the vote shall each have the right to select a Teller to count the votes, along with a Judge of Elections who shall be appointed by the Chair.

#### **Rule 7:**

##### **Duties of Officers and Trustees**

- Section 7.1** Chairperson – (Also “Chair”) Shall preside at all meetings of the BCDC and have general and active management of the business of the BCDC and shall see that all Bylaws, orders, motion,s, and resolutions are carried into effect. The Chairperson shall also automatically be a member of all Committees.
- Section 7.2** Vice-Chairpersons – (Also “Vice-Chairs”) Shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, preside at all meetings of the BCDC. They will complete all duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence. At least one of the Vice-Chairs shall be a member of the Get-Out-The-Vote Committee and at least one shall be a member the of the Voter Registration Committee. A Vice-Chair shall by default be the Chair of these Committees but may decline the position. Nothing contained herein shall preclude both the Vice-Chairs from being members on these Committees.
- Section 7.3** Secretary – Shall keep the minutes and record all votes of BCDC monthly meetings. They will assist the Chairperson and Vice-Chairs when requested. The Secretary shall also be responsible for announcing all meetings and the agendas therefor to the body in a timely and effective manner.
- Section 7.4** Treasurer – Shall have custody of the BCDC funds and shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the BCDC. The Treasurer shall deposit all moneys

and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the BCDC in such depositories as shall be designated by the BCDC and officers.

The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the BCDC as may be ordered by the BCDC officers, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and shall render to the Chair, at regular meetings of the BCDC, or whenever they may require it, an account of all their transactions as Treasurer and the financial condition of the BCDC. The responsibility to file all state and any other required reports in a timely manner and within all prescribed deadlines shall be the Treasurer's. The Treasurer shall be personally responsible for any fines for reports not filed within prescribed times if there is no excusable reason for doing so as determined by the remaining Board members. The Treasurer shall automatically be a member of the Fundraising Committee, and shall by default be its Chair, but may decline the position.

**Section 7.5** Trustees – Shall support all other BCDC Officers.

#### **Rule 8:**

##### **Fiscal Year**

**Section 8.1** The fiscal year of the BCDC shall be the calendar year January 1 to December 31.

#### **Rule 9:**

##### **Committees**

**Section 9.1** Standing subcommittee's shall be Fundraising, Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV), Communications, and Voter Registration.

**Section 9.2** The Chairperson can appoint special subcommittee(s) if needed.

**Section 9.3** All subcommittees shall have a chairperson selected by the Chair who is responsible for reporting to the BCDC Chairperson the activities of the committee at regular scheduled meetings of the BCDC

**Section 9.4** The BCDC Chairperson shall be a member of all subcommittees.

#### **Rule 10:**

##### **Endorsements and Conduct**

**Section 10.1** The BCDC may endorse a candidate in a general election by a vote in favor of such endorsement by two-thirds (2/3) of the Body present at the meeting when such motion is made, but only if there is a Super Quorum. Any candidate getting at least two-thirds (2/3) of such a vote shall be endorsed. The BCDC shall not endorse more than one candidate for one open position.

Votes on endorsements are to be by ballot, which shall not be secret. Every elected office shall be on the ballot. Three (3) people appointed by the Chair shall count and verify the results of these votes. The Chair may appoint themselves as one of these people.

Candidates or their surrogates may speak at BCDC meetings. The Chair can decide the amount of time a candidate/surrogate may speak.

**Section 10.2** BCDC Officers and Committeepersons may endorse democratic candidates as individuals but may not endorse using the BCDC name.

- Section 10.3** The BCDC will never, as a Committee, endorse any non-Democratic candidate for any elected or appointed office, nor shall the BCDC endorse a Democrat who is running for elected or appointed office as a non-Democrat. Cross-filed races shall be an exception to this rule.
- No support from the Committee shall be given to a write-in Democratic candidate when there are already enough Democrats on the ballot to fill it.
- Section 10.4** Should an Officer of the BCDC or any Bethlehem City Democratic Committeeperson run for elected or appointed office as a non-Democrat, he/she shall resign their BCDC office and/or vacate their Bethlehem City Democrat Committeeperson position.
- Section 10.5** Failure to abide by Section 10.4 will result in expulsion of the Officer or Committeeperson from the BCDC.
- Section 10.6** All BCDC Officers and Committeepersons will act in good faith in the interest of the BCDC. Officers, in their capacity as officers and representatives of the BCDC, must act in a manner becoming of an officer of the BCDC.

### **Rule 11:**

#### **Meetings**

- Section 11.1** Only elected or appointed Committee Members and Executive Board Members of the City of Bethlehem may vote on the business of the Committee. Proxies are allowed, but the proxy must be a Registered Democrat residing in the voting district of the absentee Committeeperson. Proxies should be in writing and submitted to the Chair.
- Section 11.2** Meetings will be monthly, January thru November, on the second Monday of each month. The Chair may reschedule or cancel a meeting under extenuating circumstances.
- Section 11.3** Robert's Rules of Orders, as most recently revised, shall govern procedures at all meetings of the BCDC. The Chair, in their discretion, may appoint a parliamentarian.
- Section 11.4** Meetings shall consist of at minimum, the following Agenda:
1. Call to Order
  2. Minutes of Last Meeting
  3. Treasurer's Report
  4. Committee Business
  5. Motion to Adjourn
- Section 11.5** There must be a Quorum to conduct any business at a meeting. A Super Quorum is required for any vote on the election, removal, or appointment of Officers, or for the Amendment of the Bylaws.
- Section 11.6** The Chair does not get to vote except to break a tie. The Chair may not make or second a motion.
- Section 11.7** The January meeting of the BCDC shall be a planning meeting.
- Section 11.8** Candidates for office and elected officials may speak at any meeting.
- Section 11.9** The Chair may put reasonable time limits on speaking time, so long as it is applied uniformly.

## **Rule 11:**

### **Amendments**

**Section 12.1** Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be written or typed and submitted to the Chairperson to be read at a regularly scheduled meeting.

**Section 12.2** The passing of an amendment requires three (3) meetings:

First Meeting: The Chairperson or a member of the Bylaws Subcommittee shall read the proposed amendment, explain it further, highlight the specific changes it makes to the current Bylaws and make a written copy available to any member of the body. The Body may discuss the proposed amendment, and shall vote on whether to proceed in the amendment process. If the vote is in favor of proceeding, notice of the proposed amendment and the schedule for its vote shall be provided to the Body promptly.

Second Meeting: The Body may discuss the proposed amendment, may propose changes to it, and may vote on those changes.

Third Meeting: If there is a Super Quorum, the final version of the proposed amendment shall be voted upon and shall pass upon a majority vote in favor of it. If there is not a Super Quorum present, the vote shall be postponed until the next meeting at which there is a Super Quorum.