

# RULES of the WINDSOR DEMOCRATIC PARTY

as adopted by the Caucus of the Windsor Democratic Party on January 9, 2014

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## ARTICLE ONE – DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE

### Section 1.1 – Election, Number, and Term

**1.1.1 Primary Election.** A primary for the election of Windsor Democratic Town Committee members shall be held on the first Tuesday in March of every even-numbered year.

**1.1.2 Membership Maximum.** The maximum number of Town Committee members shall be the greater of: (a) one member for each one hundred fifty registered Democrats, or major fraction thereof, based on the most recent voter enrollment list published by the Windsor Democratic Registrar of Voters; or (b) 65 members.

However, the Town Committee, at a meeting called for that purpose, by majority vote of those members present and voting, may increase the maximum number of its membership, provided that all new members shall be duly elected and begin their term the first Monday following the next Town Committee primary date in the state election calendar.

**1.1.3 Legal Notice of Primary and Caucus.** The Chair of the Town Committee shall cause to be published legal notice of the primary in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town of Windsor at least fifty-six days before the date of such primary.

Party endorsed candidates for town committee membership shall be selected by the enrolled members of the Windsor Democratic Party at a Caucus. Notice of the time, place and purpose of such Caucus shall be given by the Chair at least 5 days but not more than 15 days in advance of the Caucus by publishing such legal notice in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town of Windsor.

**1.1.4 Term.** The terms of Town Committee members shall commence on the first Wednesday following the date at which they are legally elected, and they shall serve for two years, or until their successors shall have been chosen, but not more than twenty-six months. The term of all members shall end on the same day.

**1.1.5 Statutory Provisions.** Whenever the above rules and procedures conflict with, or are amended by, applicable statutes in Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the statutory provisions shall control and shall be observed by the Town Committee.

**1.1.6 Honorary Members.** The Windsor Democratic Town Committee may elect, by a majority vote of its members present and voting, honorary members of the Town Committee, who may receive notices of Town Committee meetings and party events and other similar privileges, but who shall not enjoy any voting rights.

## **Section 1.2 – Function and Duties of the Town Committee**

**1.2.1 The Town Committee.** The Windsor Democratic Town Committee constitutes the governing body of the Windsor Democratic Party, except when a Caucus of the Windsor Democratic Party is in session. The Town Committee is authorized to take such action as may be necessary or desirable to carry out the decisions of the Caucus and the Windsor Democratic Party and to promote the aims and principles of the party at the national, state and local levels.

The town committee members shall be the liaison between party officials and registered Democrats in Windsor. It shall work for the election of Democratic candidates for local office and assist the national and state party organizations in the election of their candidates and the education of the voters. It shall help formulate and disseminate statements of party policy.

It shall participate in other activities as the membership deems appropriate.

**1.2.2 Duties of the Town Committee Member.** Every town committee should:

- (a) perform those reasonable duties expected of every Town Committee member, as may be designated from time to time by a majority vote of the Town Committee, to carry out its functions;
- (b) support the candidates of the Democratic Party, particularly Democratic candidates for municipal office in the Town of Windsor; and
- (c) vote at general elections and referendums.

## **Section 1.3 – Town Committee Vacancies**

The Town Committee may, but is not required to, fill any vacancy on the Town Committee arising from any cause, including a failure to elect, by a majority vote of the entire Town Committee membership. However, any such vote to fill a Town Committee membership shall be preceded by a report of the Nominations Committee, pursuant to Section 1.5.4 of these Rules, which may or may not recommend election of specific candidates or other action.

## **Section 1.4 – Officers**

**1.4.1 Meeting to Elect Officers.** Not more than thirty (30) days following the day fixed for the holding of a primary for the election of Town Committee members, or at such other time as prescribed by the Connecticut General Statutes, the Chair of the Town Committee, in office immediately prior to the day of said primary, shall call a meeting of the newly elected Town Committee for the purpose of electing officers of the Town Committee. If the Town Chair fails to call such meeting by the end of the prescribed thirty (30) day

period, the Vice Chair in office at the time of the primary shall call the meeting within 48 hours.

**1.4.2 Officers.** The members of the Town Committee shall elect, by a majority of those members present and voting, a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The officers of the Town Committee shall be elected from within the Town Committee membership. The Chair, with the approval of the Town Committee, may appoint a Deputy Treasurer who will not be an officer of the Town Committee.

**1.4.3 Term.** Officers so elected shall hold office for the term of the Town Committee electing them.

**1.4.4 Duties of the Officers.** The Chair shall preside over the meetings of the Town Committee and expedite its business and agenda. The Secretary shall prepare and distribute to the Town Committee, both draft unapproved minutes and minutes as approved following any corrections and revisions, of all meetings; as well as any other official certifications. The Treasurer shall administer the funds of the Town Committee, prepare brief monthly reports, and comply with all relevant statutory filing and reporting requirements.

Each of such officers shall have such further duties incident to his or her office as provided by statute, by state party rules, by these Rules, and as the Town Committee may from time to time provide by written Resolution duly-adopted by a majority vote of the Town Committee.

The Vice Chair shall perform any and all duties of the Chair whenever there is a vacancy in the office of Chair, or whenever the Chair is absent or otherwise unable to act. If the office of Vice Chair is vacant, or the Vice Chair is absent or otherwise unable to act, the Treasurer, followed by the Secretary, shall perform those duties.

**1.4.5 Secretary's Filing and Town Committee List.** Within one week after the organization of the newly-elected Town Committee and its officers, the Secretary shall file with the Secretary of the Democratic State Central Committee a list of the names and addresses of the members of the Town Committee, and its Officers, and the name and address of the Democratic Registrar of Voters.

The Secretary shall also maintain, and make readily available, a current and accurate list of the town committee membership, together with their contact addresses and telephone numbers, as provided by the members. The Secretary shall also maintain, and make available, copies of all duly-adopted Resolutions of the Town Committee.

**1.4.6 Removal; Vacancies.** Officers of the Town Committee may be removed for cause from their official position by a majority vote of the entire Town Committee membership. No officer may be removed from office unless he or she has been provided at least 20 days

written notice of the time and place of a town committee meeting whose agenda will include a vote on such removal.

Prior to the vote, the officer shall be provided the opportunity to defend his or her conduct, in person or in writing.

Vacancies in any office or position shall be filled by an election conducted in the same manner as provided by Section 1.4.2, after the entire Town Committee membership has been provided at least twenty (20) days written notice of the vacancy. The 20 day notice may be waived by an affirmative vote of two-thirds vote of the entire Town Committee membership.

## **Section 1.5 – District Organization; Sub-Committees**

**1.5.1 District Captains.** Each voting district may designate a District Captain, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Town Chair. District Captains shall meet with district members periodically to coordinate the field operations of the Town Committee within their respective districts, and perform such other duties as may be designated by a Resolution duly-adopted by the Town Committee.

**1.5.2 Composition of the Nominations Committee.** There shall be a Nominations Committee consisting of the four Town Committee officers; a member of the Town Council selected by the Council Democratic caucus; a member of the Board of Education selected by the Board of Education Democratic caucus; and five at-large members of the Town Committee who are nominated by the Chair, or by any other Town Committee member, and approved by a majority of the Town Committee members present and voting. The Town Committee may also elect one or more Alternates to the Nominations Committee who may act and vote in place of any absent Nominations Committee member. Any member or alternate of the Nominations Committee who is a candidate for office shall recuse themselves from participation in any evaluation of the candidates for that office by the Nominations Committee.

The Nominations Committee shall be reconstituted every April or May following the commencement of the new term of the Town Committee. The Town Committee Chair shall act as Chair of the Nominations Committee until it elects its own Chair and during any vacancy.

**1.5.3 Duties of the Nominations Committee.** The Nominations Committee shall meet to evaluate all interested persons for nomination to municipal office, to convention delegations, and to Town Committee membership, and report to the full town committee with its general or specific recommendations. If so directed by the Town Committee, the Nominations Committee may also evaluate candidates to appointed boards and commissions and to any multi-town legislative or judge of probate office representing Windsor. The report shall include a general discussion of the selection process followed

by the Nominations Committee, and the selection criteria and factors evaluated. The Town Committee may establish, by Resolution duly adopted by a majority vote of the entire town committee membership, specific selection criteria. The Nominations Committee shall make diligent attempt to interview all persons interested in nomination to municipal office.

**1.5.4 Meetings of the Nominations Committee.** The Nominations Committee shall meet no less than quarterly, prior to the scheduled Town Committee meetings in January, April, July and October, to review all relevant vacancies and candidacies for town office, and prepare its report to the full Town Committee. Deliberations (but not candidate interviews) of the Nominations Committee may be held in executive session but the voting results shall be disclosed.

**1.5.5 Other Special Committees.** The Town Committee may create and appoint any ad hoc Advisory Committee, composed of any Town Committee members or other registered Windsor Democrat, to investigate, study, or execute any special matter or business the Town Committee deems proper. It may also create Standing Committees to organize and discharge certain tasks, such as: recruitment, voter registration, election campaigns, publicity, fundraising, hospitality and cheer, and other activities.

Any policies or actions recommended by an Ad Hoc Committee or a Standing Committee shall be approved by a majority vote of the Town Committee members present and voting.

## **Section 1.6 – Meetings of the Town Committee**

**1.6.1 Regular Monthly Meetings.** The Town Committee shall regularly meet on the first Thursday of each month, unless a different regular meeting date is scheduled by the Town Committee, or a meeting is cancelled for good cause. The Town Committee shall conduct the lawful business of the party as defined by the state party rules and these Rules. The Town Committee may request that state and local Democratic elected officials provide a report to the Town Committee at its meetings.

Regular meetings of the Town Committee shall be held in the evening, and at a time it determines and announces in advance (currently 7:30 pm). The Town Committee shall meet in a convenient and accessible place, including but not limited to, space at Windsor Town Hall, unless otherwise directed by the Town Committee.

**1.6.2 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Town Committee may be called by the Chair or upon written request presented to the Chair signed by one-third of the total membership of the Town Committee. In the event of a call for a special meeting, the Chair shall cause at least three days notice in writing to all members of the Town Committee of the time, place, and purpose of such special meeting. However, an emergency special meeting may be called with less than three days notice, but only where immediate action is required to protect the electoral interests or other urgent interests of the Windsor Democratic Party.

**1.6.3 Agenda of Special Meetings.** No business shall be taken up at a special meeting not announced on the written call of the meeting. However, prior to the formal written call by the Chair, the Chair shall inform the town committee of the intention to call a special meeting, and its purpose. Members shall be afforded one day (24 hours) to request the inclusion of additional business items to the special meeting agenda. The Chair shall retain the discretion to include or exclude such requests, except where one-third of the total membership of the Town Committee has signed such a request.

**1.6.4 Quorum; Voting.** Two-fifths (40%) of the number of actual elected members of the Town Committee (not the maximum number allowed by Section 1.1.2) shall constitute a quorum at any meeting. If the Secretary or Chair orally certifies to the meeting that a quorum has been duly established, then all minutes and reports may thereafter be approved, and any other agenda business transacted, during the next 60 minutes, without further quorum certification.

A majority vote of the Town Committee means a majority vote of those members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum has been established, and shall determine any action by the town committee EXCEPT where these Rules or other legal authority specify a majority or supermajority vote of the entire membership.

Town committee voting by secret ballot is prohibited.

**1.6.5 Open Meetings.** All meetings of the Windsor Democratic Party, and its subcommittees, shall be open to all registered members of the Democratic Party. However, deliberations (but not candidate interviews) of the Nominations Committee may be conducted in executive session, open only to members of the Nominations Committee. The time and place for all meetings of the Windsor Democratic Party shall be publicized fully and in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons.

**1.6.6 Meeting Notices.** Notice of regular meetings of the Town Committee may be given at any time by email or by first class mail, preferably 2 or 3 days in advance of the meeting date. Every member of the Town Committee shall provide the Officers of the Town Committee with prompt notice of any changes in their mailing address, email address, and telephone numbers. Notice of a special meeting shall be given by email, by first class mail, or by hand delivery. Action taken at any meeting shall not be invalidated due to a failure of notice.

With respect to every notice requirement in these Rules, the day of email transmission, or postmark, or in-hand delivery, as the case may be, and the day of the meeting or caucus, shall be excluded in the calculation of notice.

**1.6.7 Guidelines for Meeting Agendas and Conduct of Business.** The Chair, with the assistance of the other officers, shall prepare and distribute to the membership, a Meeting Agenda designed to facilitate and guide the expeditious conduct of essential business.



Minutes and subcommittee reports, proposed resolutions and other items requiring a vote of the Town Committee should be sent in advance of the meeting whenever possible.

The Business Agenda portion of the Meeting Agenda comprises: (a) action on meeting minutes, subcommittee reports, routine and electoral treasury business, and other similar matters, and shall be completed within the first 30 minutes of the meeting, if not sooner, to the greatest extent feasible; (b) followed by action on proposed resolutions, if any; and then by (c) new business. These Business Agenda items shall have priority and shall be completed within 60 minutes, if not sooner, to the greatest extent feasible.

The Report Agenda portion of the Meeting Agenda may include reports from elected local and state officials, guest speakers, detailed policy discussions and other informational reports and shall follow the conclusion of the Business Agenda, to the extent time permits, or be scheduled for special meetings or for other times that do not conflict with the Business Agenda.

The Town Committee shall endeavor to follow these guidelines but they may be suspended by the Chair due to exigent circumstances or for other good cause.

### **Section 1.7 — Full Participation**

The Democratic Town Committee shall encourage full participation by all Democrats in the candidate selection process and in all party affairs, and shall endeavor to widely publish and promote its procedures, and its mission: to recruit, elect, and support qualified Democratic candidates for public office. To this end, the Town Committee shall make diligent effort to utilize available electronic means, such as the internet and television, to provide broad public notice of its meetings and other affairs to all Windsor Democrats.

## **ARTICLE TWO — ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES**

### **Section 2.1 — Definitions**

As used in these rules, "municipal office" means any elective office under the charter of the Town of Windsor, and the offices of Registrar of Voters and Town Committee member. The other terms used in these Rules shall have the same meanings as described in Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

### **Section 2.2 — Nomination of Municipal Officers**

**2.2.1 Caucus to Endorse Candidates.** The Democratic Party members, at a caucus called for that purpose, shall, by a majority vote of the registered Democratic members present and voting, select candidates for each municipal office. At Caucus meetings, any eligible person may be nominated from the floor.

**2.2.2 Party Primary.** The candidates selected by the caucus shall be declared and designated in the primary for such office as the party-endorsed candidates. Such party endorsed candidate shall be the nominee of the Democratic Party in the general election if no opposing candidate has filed a valid primary petition in accordance with the applicable provisions of Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

### **Section 2.3 — Nomination of Delegates to a Convention**

**2.3.1 Selection of Convention Delegates.** The Town Committee, by majority vote of those present and voting, shall select delegates to each convention for multi-town office equal to the number of delegates to which the Town is entitled under the state rules of the Democratic Party.

**2.3.2 Alternate or Proxy.** Each delegate to a convention, elected in conformity with law and with these Rules, may in writing designate an alternate delegate or a proxy to act for him in his absence. The delegates to any convention may elect a chair and the chair shall be notified of any alternates to the convention. If the delegation fails to elect a chair, or if there is a tie vote in such election, the Chair of the Town Committee may appoint a delegation chair or dissolve the tie vote, as the case may be.

**2.3.3 Delegate Vacancy.** If a vacancy arises in a delegate convention due to the death, disability or resignation of a delegate, or for any other cause, the Chair of the Town Committee may appoint a new delegate to fill that vacancy, consistent with State party rules and any other applicable law.

### **Section 2.4 — General Provisions**

**2.4.1 Certification of Party Endorsements.** The Chair and the Secretary of the Town Committee shall certify to the Town Clerk the names and street addresses of all party-endorsed candidates selected as provided above, the title of the office or position as committee member or delegate for which each person is endorsed, and the date upon which any primary is to be held, and otherwise shall comply with any other applicable provisions of Title 9 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

**2.4.2 Tie Vote.** In the event that a vote taken on the selection of a party-endorsed candidate results in a tie, such tie vote shall be dissolved by the vote of the Chair of the Town Committee, but this provision shall not affect his right to cast any vote as a member of the town Committee to which he is otherwise entitled.

**2.4.3 Primary Candidate Vacancy.** If a party-endorsed candidate for nomination to a municipal office, prior to twenty-four hours before opening of the polls at the primary, dies or, prior to the day of the primary, withdraws his name from nomination, or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold office or position for which he is a candidate, an endorsement may be made to fill such vacancy by the Town Committee. The Chair and the Secretary of

the Town Committee shall immediately certify the endorsement to fill such vacancy to the Democratic Registrar of Voters.

**2.4.4 General Election Vacancy.** If a nomination has been made for a municipal office and the nominee thereafter but prior to twenty four hours before the opening of the polls on the day of the election for which such nomination has been made, dies, withdraws his name, or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold the office for which he has been nominated, a nomination to fill such vacancy may be made by the Town Committee. The Secretary of the Town Committee shall immediately certify the nomination to fill such vacancy to the Secretary of the State and to the Town Clerk.

**2.4.5 Plurality Vote.** The nominee of the Democratic Party for municipal office, members of the Town Committee, and the delegates to conventions, shall be determined by a plurality of votes cast in the primary.

**2.4.6 Acting Chair and Secretary of Caucus.** At any caucus of the Windsor Democratic Party, the Chair of the Town Committee shall act as Acting Chair, and the Secretary of the Town Committee shall act as Acting Secretary, until the Caucus has selected a permanent Chair and a permanent Secretary. The caucus may adopt specific rules to govern voting procedures and the conduct of business at the caucus.

## **ARTICLE THREE — PROCEDURES**

### **Section 3.1 — Parliamentary Procedure**

All Caucuses and Town Committee meetings shall be conducted according to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when superseded by statute, state party rules, these rules, or specific rules adopted by the Caucus or Town Committee meeting.

### **Section 3.2 — Special Caucuses**

Special Caucuses may be called for any lawful purpose by a majority of the Town Committee or by not less than then five percent of the registered Democratic voters in the town. The call for any such special caucus shall be in writing and signed by each of the persons issuing the same, and notice of the time, place, and purpose of said special caucus shall be given to all registered Democratic voters in the town, at least five days in advance of such caucus, by publication in a newspaper having a circulation in said town and by posting a notice in a public place.

### **Section 3.3 — Amendments**

**3.3.1 Amendment by Caucus.** These Rules may be amended in any caucus, by majority of those present and voting, with due notice of the amendment given in the call for said caucus.

**3.3.2 Amendment by Town Committee.** When changes in the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut or changes in the Democratic State Party Rules make amendment to these rules necessary, the Democratic Town Committee may do so by a two-thirds vote of its entire membership.

### **Section 3.4 — Severability**

Each provision of these rules shall be considered a separate unit for purposes of severability.

## **Certification**

### **Adoption of Amendments to the Rules of the Windsor Democratic Party**

**Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 9-375, I hereby certify that comprehensive amendments to the Rules of the Windsor Democratic Party were duly adopted at a Caucus of the enrolled members of the Windsor Democratic Party held at Windsor Town Hall on January 9, 2014, to be effective 60 days after filing with the office of the Secretary of the State, the office of the Windsor Town Clerk, and the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party.**

**Numerous sections of the prior Rules were amended in whole or in part and new provisions were adopted.**

**The foregoing document constitutes the complete Rules incorporating all amendments.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
By Anita M. Mips, Town Committee Secretary  
and Secretary of the Caucus