

# **Bylaws of the Green Party of Riverside County (11/01/2003)**

## **BYLAWS OF THE GREEN PARTY OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY**

***(Approved by Consensus of County Council and Greens attending the General Meeting  
of the Riverside County Greens,  
Held in Perris at the Public Library 11/1/03)***

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **NAME**

This organization is known as the Green Party of Riverside County ("GPRC"). The GPRC is administered by a council, known as the Riverside County Green Party County Council ("Council").

These Bylaws govern the organization, operation and functions of the GPRC and its Council. In the event these Bylaws fail to provide guidance on an issue that is before the GPRC, the Bylaws of the Green Party of California ("GPCA") in effect as of September, 2001 will apply. A copy of the GPCA bylaws is attached for reference.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **PURPOSE**

The GPRC mission is to promote the 10 Key values of the Green Party of California (GPCA), to facilitate Green politics in the Riverside County, California and to interact with other Green Party persons and entities wherever they may be found. The GPRC and its Council shall actively participate in the GPCA to the fullest extent possible; and in the GPCA region to which it is assigned.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **MEMBERS**

The members of this organization are:

1. All persons residing in Riverside County with a current and valid voter registration in the Green Party of California.

2. Non-citizens, non-residents of Riverside County, and others unable to register shall be regarded as members if actively engaged in the work of the GPRC and not active as a member of the Geen Party in another County or State.

All members are eligible to participate in the functions of the GPRC as provided by California State Law and these bylaws. Eligibility to vote in the elections for members of the Council shall be determined by California State Law, to the extent there is any conflict between the California State Law and these bylaws.

The GPRC shall take affirmative action to reach the goal of sexual, racial, and social diversity in the GPRC membership. THE GPRC shall also balance, to the extent possible, the allocation of responsibilities among its members in order to achieve sexual, racial and social diversity in the leadership as well as the membership.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **CHAPTERS**

A "Chapter" is an active affiliation of at least five registered Green Party voters who are members of the GPRC organized to promote Green values. Chapters have no legal responsibility to the GPRC except as is required by California Law and the GPCA bylaws for participation in the GPCA. To the extent Chapters choose to be actively involved in the GPRC, their involvement will be in accordance with these Bylaws. They must also adopt their own "Chapter bylaws" and submit the ratified bylaws to the Council.

The Council shall offer an opportunity for input on all issues before the GPRC to the Chapters that are active with the GPRC. Each GPRC member may only vote with one Chapter on such issues, although GPRC members may be part of multiple Chapters.

The Council shall offer Chapters non-financial assistance to the extent it is available, such as treasury and bookkeeping assistance, facilitation and consensus training and other basic support.

Chapters that choose to be active with the GPRC may designate one of their members as a non-elected member of the Council.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **THE COUNCIL**

#### **Section 1. Purpose, Structure and Voting**

**1.01** The Council fills the role served by County Central Committees pursuant to Division 7 of the Election Code. A copy of the relevant portions of the Election Code in effect on the approval date of these bylaws is attached for reference. (At present, the GPCA has elected pursuant to Election Code section 5006 to follow the "Peace & Freedom Party" portions of Division 7, which is attached.) However, the Council and the GPRC shall at all times be governed by the Election Code as properly enacted by the state of California.

**1.02** The council will promote the 10 Key Values of the Green Party of California in all its actions and statements. The Council's primary duties are to empower GPRC members and Chapters; to determine the will of the RCGP members and represent that will to the GPCA; and to facilitate Green partisan political activity in Riverside County.

**1.03** The Council is accountable to the membership of the GPRC and must act in accordance with these Bylaws and applicable California law.

**1.04** The Council shall have elected and non-elected members. The elected members shall be elected by Countywide ballot in the manner and for the terms designated by the Election Code. Elected and non-elected members shall have equal voice in the deliberations and decisions of the Council. However, to the extent this provision is in conflict with applicable California law, the decisions of the elected members shall control.

The vote of the elected members shall be recorded with respect to each decision made by the Council. In the event it shall be determined that California law required a decision to be made by elected Council members only, the decision as determined by the recorded vote of the elected members shall govern and shall be implemented.

The Council shall at all times attempt to achieve consensus of its members and of the GPRC membership. In the event consensus is reached, all elected members of the Council present at the meeting where the decision is taken shall be deemed to have voted in favor of the decision. Except, however, if an elected member voiced concerns but agreed to "stand aside," that member's vote shall be counted as an abstention.

GPRC members in the minority on a decision may publicly dissent from that decision, and organize caucuses to promote their views, provided they clearly distinguish their positions from that of the majority.

## **Section 2. Membership**

**2.01** At each general primary election, seven Council members shall be elected at large for two year terms. Elected at-large members must be registered members of the Green Party of California, and must reside within Riverside County. At-large Council members shall be elected using Choice Voting within one county wide multi-member district as described in the GPCA bylaws in effect as of September 2001 (GPCA Bylaws, Article V, Section 1). Elected at large members shall take office at noon on the Tuesday following the 30th day after their election.

**2.02** Any Chapter may appoint or elect a representative to the Council. The Chapter shall inform the Council of the identity of the elected or appointed representative to the Council at least one week before the next Council meeting and to reaffirm or update the appointment when it changes and each November. Failure to comply may result in the Chapter's representative not being recognized until the Chapter is in compliance with notice requirements. When choosing representatives, priority should be placed on contributing to the gender, racial, age, and geographic diversity of the Council.

**2.04** Any council member may appoint an alternate in his/her absence. Alternates have the right to hold an "unresolved concern" (or cast a vote, should one become necessary) only with the written authorization of the member who made the appointment. An alternate shall be subject to the rules of the council and may vote only while the elected member is absent.

**2.05** Council members elected pursuant to 2.01 shall serve until the succeeding direct primary and the new council convenes its first meeting. Each Chapter shall reaffirm its representative to the new council.

**2.06** In the event of the election of an ineligible person, or whenever any member dies, resigns, becomes incapacitated to act, automatically resigns, a vacancy exists. The vacancy will be filled as follows:

- a) Vacancies will be filled at the next regularly scheduled council meeting. If the vacancy occurs after notification of the agenda for the meeting has been distributed; the vacancy will be filled at the succeeding meeting.*
- b) At the Council meeting, nominations for the vacancy will be accepted from any GPRC member. Each nominee will be given the opportunity, to speak to the membership, after which time an election shall be held by secret ballot using Instant Runoff Voting.*
- c) Every GPRC member is entitled to one vote for each vacancy.*
- d) The Council shall notify the County Registrar and the Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of California of the new council person(s) within 30 days of the election.*

**2.07** A Council member automatically resigns if:

- a) The member moves out of the county.*
- b) The member registers with another political Party (whether qualified or not).*
- c) The member fails to maintain an updated, accurate voter registration.*
- d) The member misses three consecutive meetings without appointing an alternate.*

**2.08** To the extent any provision herein is in conflict with the California Elections Code, the provisions of the Elections Code shall control.

### **Section 3. Duties and Authority**

**3.01** The Council is responsible for coordinating meetings, internal communications and other administrative tasks. When necessary, the Council may speak for the GPRC; however, every effort should be made to develop channels of communication and input with the Chapters and the GPRC membership. All policy decisions shall be made with the input of the GPRC membership to the fullest extent possible, subject to the practical and financial restraints on communication. The Council may carry out administrative acts without GPRC input as follows:

- a) Act as necessary to carry out the decisions of the GPRC;*
- b) Make administrative decisions between the meetings of the GPRC.*
- c) Make statements in the name of the GPRC consistent with GPRC and GPCA platforms.*
- d) Retain legal counsel on behalf of the GPRC. This includes undertaking any legal action as authorized by the GPRC.*
- e) Support campaigns of candidates the GPRC has endorsed.*
- f) Empower committees approved by the GPRC.*
- g) Employ staff.*

**3.02** The council will act as conduit of information between the GPCA and members and Chapters. The Council will forward concerns from GPRC Locals and members to the GPCA, information passed between the Council and members of Chapters may include but is not limited to:

- a) Legal requirements regarding political processes as established by either the State of California or the GPCA.*

- b) *Training seminars and support for Green Party candidates.*
- c) *Notice of upcoming meetings of the Council, the GPCA or by any committee of either organization.*
- d) *Minutes, reports, or issues under discussion by the Council, the GPCA or by any committee of either organization.*
- e) *Other information as may need to be exchanged between members, Chapters, Council, and/or the GPCA.*

**3.03** Information provided to non-members must reflect the decisions of the GPRC.

**3.04** Nothing in these bylaws shall require the Council members to expend their own personal funds for Council business.

## **Section 4. Meetings**

**4.01** Regular meetings of the Council will be held at least four times per year. Should the Council be out of compliance with this requirement, the Council members shall immediately endeavor to bring The Council into compliance. All GPRC members are entitled to attend Council meetings.

**4.02** The Council may announce the next meeting at any meeting that has been scheduled upon adequate notice under these bylaws. The meeting shall not be sooner than 14 days. Special meetings of the Council may be called upon 14 days advance notice to members and Chapters. These meetings may be used, for instance, to review the GPCA plenary packet or to prepare for elections.

**4.03** Notice of any council meetings must include the date, time, and place of the meeting, and the preliminary agenda. Notice must be provided to all Chapters and to the membership using the most effective and feasible means within the Council's budget. It will be sufficient notice to a Chapter to provide notice to their Council member, if the Chapter has a properly designated Council member. To facilitate communication, all GPCA members with reasonable internet access shall subscribe to an "announcement" e-mail list designated by the Council for that purpose and shall check such e-mail at reasonable intervals. The announcement list designated by the Council shall not be used for discussion or communication other than announcements of GPRC meetings and business.

**4.04** A quorum shall consist of the greater of four Council members (or their alternates) or 2/3's the number of currently active. Should there be less than four active Council members, a quorum shall consist of all active Council members. Whenever there are less than seven Council members, the remaining members shall actively seek additional GPRC members willing to join the council.

**4.05** Notes of all meetings will be kept, posted to the GPRC website and circulated on any e-mail lists that are known to be regularly subscribed to by GPRC members to obtain information on Green activities within Riverside County. Notices of meetings shall likewise be posted to the GPRC website and the above-mentioned e-mail lists within 3 days of the meeting being scheduled. The meeting notice may be contained in the Notes of a prior meeting.

**4.06** The Council is strongly urged to meet for timely review of GPCA plenary agenda packages and to prepare for primary and general elections.

## **Section 5. Decision Making**

When making administrative decisions as authorized by these Bylaws. The council will use the "consensus seeking process" as specified in the GPCA bylaws effective in September 2001, including the "Supermajority" voting procedure when consensus cannot be obtained.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **GPRC MEETINGS**

**Section 1. Regular Meetings** The GPRC will meet at least twice a year. The meetings may be held concurrently or following a regularly scheduled Council meeting. The meetings shall be announced not less than 30 days prior to the scheduled date, in the same manner as Council meetings are announced as described in Article V.

**Section 2. Special Meetings** The GPRC may be called into special meeting by the council at the request of 3 members or in response to circumstances requiring decisions by the membership. Notice of such meetings will follow the procedure in Article V, Sections 4.02 and 4.05.

#### **Section 3. Agenda**

**3.01** The council is responsible for establishing an agenda for all GPRC meetings is the responsibility of the council. The council shall collect items, propose and circulate a draft agenda to the Chapters and e-mail lists set forth in 4.05 at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Any agenda item requested by three or more members of the GPRC shall be placed on the agenda.

**3.02** The agenda information provided to GPRC members will include a draft of all proposals.

#### **Section 4. Meeting Roles, Duties and Responsibilities.**

The GPRC will use the Meeting roles, duties and responsibilities outlined in the GPCA bylaws in effect as of September 2001.

#### **Section 5. Decision Making**

The GPRC will follow the "consensus seeking process" for reaching decisions as outlined in the GPCA bylaws in effect as of September 2001, including the "Supermajority" voting procedure when consensus cannot be obtained. All decisions made by the members at GPRC meetings are binding on the Council unless rescinded or amended in the same manner by the members at a subsequent GPRC meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **DELEGATE SELECTION TO THE GREEN PARTY OF CALIFORNIA PLENARY**

**1.01** All Council members willing and able to attend a GPCA plenary shall be designated either as a delegate or as an alternate. The entire Council is encouraged to attend the plenary with the delegates so that delegates and the council may attempt to reach consensus on behalf of the GPRC in response to changes in proposals and plenary agenda items.

**1.02** Should there be an insufficient number of persons from the Council willing and able to act as delegates to meet the number of delegates allocated to the GPRC by the GPCA for any given plenary, non-Council members may be elected for that plenary who meet the following criteria. In addition, any other GPRC members who wish to attend the plenary shall be designated as "alternates," should they so request, whether there are sufficient Council members attending as delegates or not. The criteria are:

- a) *Be an active member of a chapter.*
- b) *Be familiar with the GPCA structure and principles.*
- c) *Have a working knowledge of the GPCA bylaws.*

**1.03** As soon as the plenary packet or information becomes available, the Council will request input from the Chapters and GPRC membership at large. At a Council meeting preceding each plenary (which may be a "special meeting pursuant to Article V, section 4.02), the Council, working with the input received from Chapters and the input of any GPRC members attending the meeting, will attempt to reach consensus as to all proposals on the plenary agenda. If consensus or "supermajority" is reached pursuant to these bylaws, the delegates shall vote in accordance with that decision on the proposal. If consensus cannot be reached, the delegates will be split as closely as is reasonable between support and opposition to the proposal. At present with two delegates, this would mean one delegate would vote in favor and one delegate would vote against the proposal. The delegate assigned to vote a particular way on a particular proposal should be the delegate most closely aligned with that viewpoint.

**1.04** At the same meeting referred to in section 1.03 above, two persons shall be selected to act as delegates for the upcoming plenary. One shall be a member of the Council unless none are willing and able to do so; the other delegate may be a Council member or may be a person who meets the criteria of 1.02 above. The decision may be by consensus, but it shall be upon secret ballot if requested by any person attending the meeting. In the event no members of the Council are willing or able to attend the plenary as delegates, then the delegates shall be elected from the persons identified in 1.02 above.

**1.05** Delegates should vote as directed by the Council. The collective goal of the Council and the delegates should at all times be to properly represent the views of the GPRC membership to the General Assembly.

**1.06** The Council shall notify the GPCA of the delegates and alternates selected in a timely fashion.

**1.07** The purpose of this process is to insure a connection is maintained between the official RCGP position and that expressed to the GPCA. These bylaws recognize that the Council has been designed to have broad representation of the interests of the RCGP because it includes members elected in a countywide ballot as well as members representing active Chapters.

## ***ARTICLE VIII***

### ***POLITICAL REFORM ACT***

The Council will act as a 'General Purpose committee' when necessary under the rules of the Political Reform Act.

The Council will establish a bank account, recording keeping system, and methods of receiving and disbursing funds that comply with all the terms of the Political Reform Act.

All records required by the Political Reform Act shall be available for inspection by members at any Council meeting.

## ***ARTICLE IX***

### ***AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS***

The GPRC may choose to modify the method of selection or size of the Council by modifying these Bylaws. The council will notify the Green Party of California Coordinating Committee of such changes no later than 135 days before the direct primary.

Bylaws shall be reviewed on an ongoing-basis and changed when necessary or appropriate pursuant to the "consensus seeking process" for reaching decisions as outlined in the GPCA bylaws in effect as of September 2001, including the "Supermajority" voting procedure when consensus cannot be obtained. The process shall take place at a regularly noticed GPRC meeting. The consensus or vote of a Chapter may be determined at a Chapter meeting, reported in writing to the Council, and integrated with the vote at the GPRC meeting; however, no member of a Chapter may vote more than once on the bylaws proposal.