

Bylaws of the Green Party of San Mateo County

Adopted 10 December 1999; amended 1 March 2002;
amended 16 June 2007; amended December 2007.

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Green Party of San Mateo County.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

2.1. Bylaws

These bylaws shall govern the organization, operation and functions of that political organization known as the Green Party of San Mateo County.

2.2. Purpose of the organization

The purpose of the Green Party of San Mateo County is to promote these Ten Key Values: Ecological Wisdom, Grassroots Democracy, Personal and Social Responsibility, Nonviolence, Decentralization, Community-based Economics, Feminism, Respect for Diversity, Global Responsibility and Future Focus.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Eligibility for membership

Membership in the Green Party of San Mateo County shall consist of:

- a. All persons registered to vote in San Mateo County who have declared their intention to affiliate with the Green Party of California as provided in California Elections Code section 2151; and
- b. Any resident of San Mateo County who states in writing that s/he would declare an intention to affiliate with the Green Party of California if s/he were not legally prohibited from registering to vote.

ARTICLE 4: THE COUNTY COUNCIL

4.1. Role of the County Council

The County Council of the Green Party of San Mateo County (County Council) shall serve as the elected representative body of the Green Party of San Mateo County. The County Council shall fill the role served by county central committees pursuant to Division 7 of the California Elections Code.

4.2. Members of the County Council

The County Council shall comprise seven voting members elected during the direct primary election held by the State of California in even years.

4.3. Term of office

Each member of the County Council shall serve for a term of two years. That term shall commence at the beginning of the first meeting of the County Council following the direct primary election at which the member was elected and end at the beginning of the first meeting of the County Council following the succeeding direct primary election.

4.4. Removal of County Council members

4.4.1. The County Council may, in accordance with the decision-making process in Section 5.6, remove a member from the County Council if the member:

- a. Moves out of the County;
- b. Registers with another political party (whether ballot-qualified or not);
- c. Fails to maintain an updated, accurate voter registration;
- d. Misses three consecutive meetings without appointing an alternate.

4.4.2. Members of the County Council may be recalled by the voters in accordance with the applicable provisions of the California Elections Code.

4.5. Governance

The County Council shall govern the Green Party of San Mateo County according to these bylaws and the Ten Key Values.

4.6. Alternate members of the County Council

4.6.1. A County Council member may appoint an alternate in her/his absence. Such alternates shall be recognized only with the written authorization of the County Council member making the appointment. An alternate County Council member must be a member of the Green Party of San Mateo County as defined in these bylaws and shall be subject to the rules of the County Council. She/he may vote or hold unresolved concerns only while the elected County Council member is absent.

4.6.2. Each appointment of an alternate shall be for only one specific meeting of the County Council. If the alternate is required to serve at subsequent meetings, the member requiring the alternate must submit an additional written authorization for any such subsequent meeting.

4.6.3. No currently serving member of the County Council or any member who has been removed in accordance with these bylaws shall serve as an alternate member.

4.7. Vacancies on the County Council

4.7.1. A vacancy shall exist on the County Council when any of the following occurs:

- a. Fewer than seven candidates are elected to the County Council;
- b. An ineligible person is appointed or elected;
- c. A member dies, resigns or becomes incapacitated to act; or
- d. A member is removed or recalled in accordance with Section 4.4.

4.7.2. When a vacancy exists on the County Council that vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the County Council according to the decisionmaking procedures specified in Section 5.6 of these bylaws.

4.8. Duties and authority

The County Council shall be responsible for coordinating meetings, internal communications and other administrative tasks, including the following:

- a. Making statements in the name of the Green Party of San Mateo County;

- b. Soliciting and receiving contributions and authorizing expenditures of funds in accordance with State law and policies adopted by the Green Party of San Mateo County and the Green Party of California;
- c. Retaining legal counsel on behalf of the Green Party of San Mateo County and undertaking any legal action deemed necessary;
- d. Electing the Officers of the Green Party of San Mateo County;
- e. Empowering working groups;
- f. Employing staff as necessary or desirable; and
- g. Conducting such other business as the Green Party of San Mateo County may require.

ARTICLE 5: MEETINGS

5.1. Time and place of meetings

A newly elected County Council shall hold its first meeting not more than 30 days after the date of the direct primary election. The County Council shall hold regular meetings at times and places designated by the County Council. All meetings of the County Council shall be open to the public.

5.2. Notification of meetings and agendas

5.2.1. The County Council shall collect agenda items, and propose and circulate to the County Council and the discussion list a draft agenda at least five days in advance of its meetings. Persons responsible for the informational items included in the draft agenda that are not decision items may write a report to be distributed with the draft agenda. These items will remain on the agenda, but time will be scheduled only for questions and clarification. These may include reports on the national party, the state party, and GPSMC committee reports, including outreach activities.

5.2.2. The County Council shall collect agenda items, and propose and circulate a draft agenda at least three days in advance of its meetings.

5.2.3. The agenda package shall include a draft of all proposals. A proposal that has not been circulated to members may come to the floor only after agreement of the County Council.

5.2.4. The County Council shall ratify the proposed agenda and allocate times for each agenda item at the beginning of each meeting.

5.3. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the currently serving County Council members.

5.4. Meeting roles, duties and responsibilities

The Green Party of San Mateo County will be guided by and generally follow the meeting roles, duties and responsibilities outlined in the bylaws of the Green Party of California.

5.5. Proposals

5.5.1. The County Council may formulate proposals for the Green Party of San Mateo County. The County Council, or a designated representative, will present its proposals to the Green Party of San Mateo County at a County Council meeting.

5.5.2. The County Council shall receive proposals for action from both members and nonmembers. When possible, the County Council shall refer a proposal to the appropriate working group for further refinement. If there is no appropriate working group or the proposal

is time-urgent, the County Council may bring the proposal to a County Council meeting or it may establish an ad hoc working group.

5.5.3. Proposals must include cost estimates if costs will be incurred.

5.6. Decisionmaking

5.6.1. The County Council shall follow the "consensus-seeking process," including "choice voting," for reaching decisions as outlined in the bylaws of the Green Party of California.

5.6.2. With the consent of the County Council, and time permitting, all members of the Green Party of San Mateo County may participate in the "consensus-seeking process," but only County Council members or their designated alternates may hold "unresolved concerns" and participate in any vote, should one become necessary. Appropriate time limits shall be observed.

5.6.3 A time-sensitive proposal, requiring a decision prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the County Council, may be submitted to the County Council on the County Council email list on the condition that no member protests the time sensitivity. A current member of the County Council shall submit the proposal with an explanation as to why this proposal cannot wait for the next regularly scheduled meeting, a detailed explanation of the issue, and a clear and concise proposal for the approval of the County Council. The proposal shall also be published on the email general discussion list.

A two-thirds majority of County Council members must approve the proposal as written within five days of its presentation to be approved. Council members and party members may discuss and question the proposal by phone, email or conference call. The proposal may be amended with the consent of the proposer, in which case the five-day voting period restarts, or it may be withdrawn at any time within the five-day voting period. Voting shall take place on the County Council email list. A council member's most recent vote will be counted after the fifth day. All decisions made online must be brought for affirmation at the next regularly scheduled County Council meeting.

ARTICLE 6: OFFICERS

6.1. Chair

6.1.1. As its first order of business at the first meeting of the County Council following the direct primary election, the County Council shall elect a Chair from among its members. The Chair will have no independent decisionmaking authority. The Chair shall serve a term of two years. The out-going Chair shall notify the County Clerk of the name, post office address, and daytime telephone number of the newly elected Chair within five days of her/his election as Chair.

6.1.2. The Chair shall:

- a. Serve as facilitator at County Council meetings or appoint another person to serve as facilitator; and
- b. Act as the sole liaison between the Green Party of San Mateo County and the County Clerk.

6.2. Secretary

6.2.1. As its second order of business, the County Council shall elect a Secretary from among the registered members of the Green Party of San Mateo County. The Secretary shall serve a term of two years.

6.2.2. The Secretary shall:

- a. Take written minutes of all County Council meetings and maintain them in a permanent binder; and
- b. Distribute the minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda for the upcoming meeting at least three days before the start of the next County Council meeting to all County Council members and any other person who has requested notification.

6.3. Treasurer

6.3.1. As its third order of business, the County Council shall elect a Treasurer from among the registered members of the Green Party of San Mateo County. The Treasurer shall serve a term of two years.

6.3.2. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Receive and disburse funds on behalf of the Green Party of San Mateo County;
- b. Maintain complete and accurate records of all financial transactions in accordance with the Political Reform Act of 1974;
- c. Fulfill all reporting requirements of the Political Reform Act of 1974 and the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, including the requirement to inform the Secretary of State of her/his election in a timely manner;
- d. Provide the County Council with written reports of all transactions at each meeting of the County Council;
- e. File all required reports with the Treasurer of the Green Party of California and pay all dues owed to the Green Party of California in a timely manner; and
- f. Upon request of the County Council or a working group, provide an accounting of revenues and expenses associated with a particular working group or project.

6.4. County Liaison to the Green Party of California

6.4.1. As its fourth order of business, the County Council shall elect from among its members a County Liaison to the Green Party of California (County Liaison). The County Liaison shall serve a term of two years.

6.4.2. The County Liaison shall:

- a. Serve as the County Liaison to the Green Party of California;
- b. Serve as the designated County Contact for the Green Party of California;
- c. Circulate information from the Green Party of California to the County Council and any other persons who have requested notification of Green Party of California communications; and

6.4.3. The outgoing County Liaison shall inform the Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of California of the name, post office address, email address, and daytime telephone number of the newly elected County Liaison.

6.5. Media Liaison

6.5.1. As its fifth order of business, the County Council shall elect a Media Liaison from among registered members of the Green Party of San Mateo County. The Media Liaison shall serve a term of two years.

6.5.2. The Media Liaison shall:

- a. At the direction of the County Council, promote the Green Party of San Mateo County, its activities and statements on issues;
- b. Develop relationships with media representatives to enhance the long-term public awareness of the Green Party and the Ten Key Values; and
- c. Inform the news media of the activities of the Green Party of San Mateo County.

6.5.3. Any public statements the Media Liaison makes on behalf of the Green Party of San Mateo County must be authorized by the County Council.

6.6. Delegates to the Green Party of California General Assembly

6.6.1. Prior to each General Assembly of the Green Party of California, the County Council shall appoint delegates in the number allotted to San Mateo County.

6.6.2. To be eligible to be a delegate, one must meet all of the following criteria:

- a. Be a member of the Green Party of San Mateo County;
- b. Have attended at least one state-wide meeting within the preceding two years;
- c. Be familiar with the structure and principles of the Green Party of California;
- d. Have a working knowledge of the bylaws of the Green Party of California.

6.6.3. Each delegate to the state General Assembly shall in all decisions represent the positions taken by the Green Party of San Mateo County.

6.6.4. The County Liaison shall notify the State Coordinating Committee and the hosting committee of the names of the delegates at least two weeks before the General Assembly Meeting.

ARTICLE 7: LOCALS

7.1. Organization

Any two or more members of the Green Party of San Mateo County residing in the same area may create a Green Party Local by submitting the following to the County Council:

- a. A statement of the name and purpose of the organization;
- b. A description of the area to be included in the local;
- c. A list of names of the members;
- d. The name, address, phone, and other contact information for a person who will serve as liaison to the County Council.

7.2. Continuance in good standing

The Local shall continue to be recognized as long as it maintains regular communication with the county council and adheres to Green values and the requirements of these bylaws. The Local shall provide copies of all meeting agendas and minutes to the county Secretary. If the county Secretary has received no communication from the local liaison for a period of three months, the Secretary shall send a letter to the local liaison to determine if the local is still in existence. If the local liaison does not respond to that letter, the Secretary shall inform the county council that the Green Party Local is no longer in good standing.

7.3. Meetings

The Green Party Local shall adhere to the same requirements for meeting notification, agendas, and minutes as the County Council.

7.4. Fundraising

7.4.1. The Green Party Local may raise or expend funds for the cost of meetings and publicity so long as such funds and expenditures do not constitute campaign donations or expenditures as defined by the Political Reform Act of 1974 as amended.

7.4.2. Should the Green Party Local wish to raise and expend funds that would constitute campaign donations or expenditures as defined by the Political Reform Act of 1974 as amended, the Local shall proceed as follows:

- a. Turn all receipts over to the county Treasurer along with all documentation needed to comply with requirements of the Political Reform Act of 1974 and submit requests for expenditures to the County Council; OR
- b. Appoint a Treasurer and register as a political action committee in accordance with the Political Reform Act of 1974.

7.5. Public Statements

7.5.1. The Local may not make public statements on behalf of the Green Party without prior approval of the County Council.

ARTICLE 8: GENERAL POLICIES

8.1. Diversity

The Green Party of San Mateo County shall not discriminate on the basis of age, race, class, sex, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, or income. In all of its activities and functions, the Green Party shall seek to promote diversity on each of these factors.

8.2. Other Policies

Public statements on behalf of the Green Party of San Mateo County must be authorized by the County Council.

ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended by the County Council according to the consensus process.

ARTICLE 10: ELECTION OF REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES

10.1 Alternative Process

This article constitutes an alternative election process as provided for in the GPCA bylaws Section 7-1.5.

10.2 Election Meeting

An election meeting to elect a regional representative or alternate is valid if it meets the following conditions:

- a. the election is authorized and called by the County Council,
- b. the meeting is open to all county party Members and all Members present can vote in the election,
- c. the election has been publicly announced on county party website and email lists in accordance with meeting notification in Article 5 of these bylaws, and
- d. the election is a pre-announced agenda item for the meeting.

10.3 Declaring Candidacy

Candidates shall declare their candidacy on the email lists of the counties of the region prior to the RR and ARR Candidate Presentation Meetings at which a vacancy or replacement is considered. The chair of each county in the region shall be responsible for the announcements being posted to their county's website and email lists.

10.4 Presentation and Election Meetings

The election process may be conducted as part of the regular monthly meetings or as part of duly called special meetings. Candidates shall present themselves to the membership at such a meeting, and the election shall occur at the following meeting.

10.5 Election Process

The representative and alternate shall be chosen by separate votes. The representative shall be chosen first, and IRV shall be used if there are more than two candidates. The elections shall be deemed business decisions.

10.6 Regional Coordination

A candidate must be elected by each of the county parties of the region. If the county decisions disagree, the decision(s) shall be retaken by the county parties until agreement is reached.

10.7 Representational Balance in the Region

It shall be an objective, but not a requirement, to have the representative and alternate be from different counties.

10.8 Replacement or Recall

A representative or alternate may be replaced at any time, using the process described here. The currently serving representative and alternate shall continue to serve until a replacement is elected by the counties.

10.9 Effective Date

This Article shall take effect after formal approval by the GPSMC, and after the bylaws of substantially the same form have been adopted by each county in the region. Upon adoption, the County Council from each county party shall separately and independently notify the GPCA of their bylaws amendments adding this alternative election process to the default procedures provided by the state Green Party Bylaws.

10.10 Termination of Article 10

This effectiveness of this Article 10 shall terminate if any county party in the region rescinds it or if the region is redefined, or if the representative count changes.