

Bylaws of the Green Party of Butte County

BYLAWS OF THE GREEN PARTY OF BUTTE COUNTY

Adopted: September 8, 2016

Amended:

Article 1. Name

The name of this organization is the Green Party of Butte County (GPBC). It consists of a general membership of those registered in the Green Party of California (Members) and an administrative body consisting of elected Members (Council).

Article 2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of the GPBC is to further the following ten Key Values through political and social action:

- a. Ecological Wisdom
- b. Grassroots Democracy
- c. Social Justice
- d. Nonviolence
- e. Decentralization
- f. Community-Based Economics
- g. Post-Patriarchal Values/Feminism
- h. Respect for Diversity
- i. Personal and Global Responsibility
- j. Future Focus/Sustainability

2.2 GPBC seeks to build capacity for social change by coordinating with other community groups who share our values and by training new community organizers and leaders.

2.2.1 GPBC accomplishes this through empowering Members to pursue their own talents and passions through the decentralized organizational structure of Working Groups.

2.3 These bylaws govern the organization, operation and responsibilities of GPBC, the County Plenary and the administrative Council.

Article 3. General Membership

3.1 Members are defined as all persons with valid registration in the Green Party of California residing in Butte County.

3.1.1 To foster solidarity and advance the purpose of GPBC, individuals not qualifying as Members, due to citizenship, residency or legal disenfranchisement, are encouraged to participate in all open meetings and can participate in discussions, time permitting, but will not hold voting powers in the County Plenary, pursuant to Section 5.2.4.

3.1.2 Working Groups, intended to advance common goals in collaboration with nonpartisan community groups, may determine who can participate in consensus decisions, if convened Members unanimously consent. Voting powers granted to non-Members of a Working Group shall be not be construed to grant voting power in the County Plenary.

3.2 In accordance with the Key Values, outreach and recruiting efforts should focus on building the most diverse membership possible.

3.3 All Members should pursue their policy interests and passions through creating a Working Group, in consultation with the Council, which advances the purpose of GPBC.

3.4 All Members are encouraged to speak truth to power and otherwise promote the Key Values in word and deed. However, Members should not present themselves as authorized to speak on behalf of GPBC unless so delegated by the Council.

Article 4. The Council

4.1 Purpose

4.1.1 The Council serves as the elected representative body of GPBC. The Council's mission is to empower the Members in pursuit of manifesting the Key Values.

4.1.2 The Council will administer GPBC according to these bylaws. In the event of an omission or ambiguity in these bylaws, the Council will look to the bylaws of the Green Party of California (GPCA) for guidance and amend these bylaws, as applicable, in accordance with Article 7 herein.

4.1.3 The Council serves the Members and must enact all decisions of the County Plenary in accordance with these bylaws and conduct GPBC business with transparency and in good faith.

4.1.4 The Council shall fill the role served by the County Central Committees pursuant to Division 7 of the California Election Code.

4.2 Membership

4.2.1 The number of voting members on the county council is determined by the GPCA, pursuant to state party bylaws Sec 6-1, based on the number of registered Greens in the county, and elected at-large in a countywide district during the State of California primary election held in even years. Currently, the County Council seats seven Members.

4.2.2 The Council membership should reflect the diversity of county demographics and advance the Key Values.

4.2.3 The Council will notify the GPCA Coordinating Committee of any bylaws changes affecting council elections or size no later than 150 days before the California primary election.

4.2.4 Council members will serve until the succeeding primary election and the new Council convenes its first meeting.

4.2.5 A Council member may appoint an alternate in their absence. The alternate must be a Member of GPBC in accordance with Section 3.1. Alternates shall have full consensus and voting rights only with either the written authorization of their appointing Council member, or prior verbal notification and consensus approval of other Council members. An alternate member shall be subject to the rules of the Council and may vote only while the elected member is absent.

4.2.6 A Council member automatically resigns if they are no longer an eligible Member as defined in Section 3.1, or they miss three consecutive Council meetings without appointing an alternate.

4.2.7 When a vacancy occurs on the Council that vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the County Plenary according to the decision-making procedures specified in Section 5.3.2.

4.2.8 A Council member can be recalled and removed if both (a) AND (b) occur:

a) Three Members present a Cause for Removal petition to the Council member specifying why they would like the Council member recalled. The statement must be presented at a Council meeting or County Plenary to the Members for deliberation.

b) The next County Plenary agenda shall allot equal times for the petitioners and Council member being recalled. After a period of deliberation as specified in the agenda, removal can be enacted by consensus.

c) If consensus is not reached, a secret ballot vote will be placed on the following County Plenary agenda (called within 45 days, if not already scheduled) whereby a 2/3 majority removes the Member from Council. A quorum for this purpose is 10 members.

4.3 Duties and Powers

4.3.1 The Plenary duties of the Council include:

a) to propose the agenda and choose Facilitators for the County Plenary;

b) to make sure that minutes of Council and County Plenary meetings are kept, and that the records of finances and proceedings of GPBC are maintained and available to Members;

c) to set dates for County Plenary sessions, and to inform the membership of those dates;

d) to make recommendations and proposals to the County Plenary;

e) to carry out the decisions of County Plenary in good faith and transparency;

f) to make such decisions as are normally reserved to a County Plenary, but cannot be delayed until the next possible session (such decisions shall be subject to revision or rejection at the next County Plenary);

4.3.2 The administrative duties of the Council include:

a) to develop strategy and implement policy for GPBC;

b) to meet any legal or financial obligations on behalf of GPBC;

c) to raise funds and make expenditures as necessary in accordance with Section 4.2.2;

d) to establish and disband Working Groups, as needed, to further the goals and strategy approved by the County Plenary, to facilitate activity reporting and coordinate their efforts;

e) to carry out any necessary action which does not fall within the duties of any particular Working Group;

f) to retain and direct legal counsel;

g) to speak for GPBC, or delegate spokespersons to speak, within the general parameters of GPBC policy, the GPCA Platform, or the Ten Key Values;

h) to carry out any duties required of it by the GPCA;

i) to make any decisions which, in good faith to the spirit and letter of these bylaws, advance the Key Values and strategies of GPCA, GPBC, the Council, Working Groups, and Members.

4.4 Officers

4.4.1 The Coordinator:

- a) shall be selected by the Council from among its members, not to serve more than one two-year term consecutively;
- b) shall notify the Butte County Clerk-Recorder as soon as practical, so the Coordinator can be added to county records as the representative of GPBC;
- c) shall annually review and report on GPBC compliance with GPCA directives, California Board of Elections, Secretary of State's Office and applicable federal law;
- d) serves as a point of contact between GPBC and GPCA and other county parties, unless otherwise delegated to another Member or Working Group;
- e) shall provide, before each statewide or national meeting, the GPCA Coordinating Committee and the state Hosting Committee with the names of the GPBC delegates selected pursuant to Article 6.

4.4.2 The Treasurer:

- a) shall be selected by the Council from among its members, not to serve more than two consecutive two-year terms;
- b) each month, shall provide the Council with written reports of all the preceding month's transactions, and file all required reports with the Treasurer of the GPCA;
- c) shall be responsible for compliance with financial disclosures required by the CA Fair Political Practices Commission, CA Elections Code and applicable federal law;
- d) maintains accurate records of all funds at the Council's disposal, using both digital and hardcopy formats, and ensures all Members have timely access to financial records;
- e) retains the GPBC checkbook and maintains its accounts at a local credit union;
- f) shall facilitate a two-signature system, requiring one additional Council member's signature in addition to their own, for all withdrawals;
- f) shall disperse funds as directed by the Council and Plenary;
- g) will coordinate fundraising efforts, as required.

4.4.3 The Secretary:

- a) shall be selected by the Council from among its members, not to serve more than two consecutive two-year terms;
- b) shall take written minutes of all Council meetings and the County Plenary, regularly or specially scheduled, and make them available to Members and CAGP, as applicable;
- c) will act as point of contact, assisting Working Groups to report to the Council, and maintain a list of Working Group contacts to facilitate communication;
- d) will collect attendance or sign-up sheets and maintain a list of active members.

4.5 Decision-Making

4.5.1 The Council shall use the consensus-seeking process, as defined in 5.3.2, for decision-making. The Council may, however, establish its own rules of procedure subject to these bylaws.

4.5.2 A quorum shall be 2/3 of the Council, rounded down to the nearest whole number, and never less than three if there are 4 or more Council members.

4.5.3 The Council may delegate any of its duties and powers to Working Groups, consisting of regular Members, but they shall remain responsible to the Council.

Article 5. Meetings

5.1 Council

5.1.1 The Council will hold monthly in-person meetings and will post a date-time-place announcement two weeks prior for widest dissemination among Members. Additional meetings will be called as appropriate, and Members notified as soon as possible.

5.1.2 Council meetings shall normally be open to observation and participation of all Members, but only Council members shall have full consensus and voting powers.

5.1.3 The Council may impose reasonable time limits in meetings open to Members and may impose a “closed” session as circumstances require.

5.2 County Plenary

5.2.1 The County Plenary shall assemble at least once per quarter and maximum participation of Members will be encouraged;

5.2.2 The Council may call additional County Plenary sessions whenever necessary, as long as Members are notified 14 days prior, or as soon as possible, as circumstances dictate;

5.2.3 The County Plenary shall be open to the public, but non-Member participation can be limited by consensus of the Members;

5.2.4 Only Members as defined in Section 3.1 that have attended two Council or Plenary sessions in the last 6 months will have full consensus and voting powers.

5.3 Decision-Making

5.3.1 All Members and non-Members may participate in facilitated discussion, but voting power is restricted per Section 5.2.4. Non-Members shall not obstruct decision-making and cannot present unresolved concerns.

5.3.2 Process for Consensus:

- a) Decision-making shall be direct democratic, according to an amended consensus-seeking process described below.
- b) The facilitator and participants will adhere to the time frames approved in the agenda, except by a simple majority vote (show of hands) among the participants to amend the agenda to extend the time frame.
- c) The following procedures shall be used to achieve consensus:
 - i) Presenter(s) explain the proposal;
 - ii) Facilitator calls for clarifying questions and presenter(s) clarify;
 - iii) Facilitator calls for concerns (noted by Secretary in the minutes) and friendly amendments; presenter may accept or reject amendments;

- iv) Facilitator calls for unresolved concerns. If none are raised, consensus is achieved;
- v) If members have unresolved concern(s), facilitator asks if the members will stand aside; if so, the Secretary annotates the concern, and consensus is achieved.
- vi) A Member may ask for a vote in addition to this process, if the member denies consensus exists due to the nature of unresolved concerns. The Member may request a roll call vote or a show of hands to verify the consensus. The result shall be recorded in the minutes.
- d) If consensus fails:
 - i) If consensus cannot be reached within the established or amended time frame, decisions may be made by vote. If the decision is not time-sensitive and does not involve irreconcilable political differences, the Council shall place the issue on the agenda of the next County Plenary, before facilitating a vote. If a decision is time-urgent or involves irreconcilable political differences, it can go straight to a vote in the present Plenary.
 - ii) The purpose of delaying a vote, if feasible, is to allot more time in the agenda for consideration and resolution of concerns with the goal of achieving consensus. The opposition should present its views clearly to the presenters of the proposal, and the presenters should make a good faith effort to resolve concerns, if possible. This should include facilitated dialogue seeking compromise between the opposing viewpoints. It may also include writing a report of the different positions and rebuttals for the next County Plenary.
 - iii) When consensus cannot be reached, a 2/3 majority (hand count or ballot) is required to amend bylaws or make changes to long-standing GPBC policy. Otherwise, a ranked-choice ballot vote is taken (with “none of the above” as an option) and a simple majority affirms the proposal.
 - iv) When votes are cast, the minority opinion is encouraged to submit its views, in writing, to the Council for inclusion in the record.

5.3.3 Ranked Choice or Instant Run-off Voting, as these bylaws permit, will be structured according to the process instructed on FairVote.org. A threshold will be determined and votes will be assigned accordingly.

Article 6. Delegate Selection and Responsibilities

6.1 Selection

6.1.1 The Council shall select delegates, based on the Member’s knowledge of, and participation in, the activities of GPBC, to statewide meetings of the GPCA from a pool of volunteers;

6.1.2 Members will confirm the delegate selections during a County Plenary or offer alternatives with good cause and consensus of other Members assembled, excluding the Council members.

6.1.3 All Members under consideration shall be allotted an equal time to petition the County Plenary for selection. A secret rank-choice ballot will be cast and the Secretary will collect, tally and announce the ballot results, and document the process in the minutes.

6.2 Duties

6.2.1 Delegates will act in good faith as representatives of the Members, in accordance with the delegate duties outlined in GPCA Bylaws Section 7-1.4 and 7-3.5.

6.2.3 If a vote is called at a statewide meeting, the delegates will caucus to decide how to use the votes allotted to Butte County, consulting each other and seeking consensus, as necessary.

Article 7. Amendment of Bylaws

7.1 These bylaws may be amended at any time, through the following process:

- a) Proposed amendments must be presented for discussion at a County Plenary with notification of the Council three weeks prior for dissemination of the proposal and for inclusion in the agenda;
- b) If the proposal is simple (e.g. renumbering, small additions, etc.), the Council may seek consensus of the Members;
- c) If the proposal is more complex or fundamentally alters the organization or operation of GPBC, the Council, with simple majority approval of the County Plenary, will enact a Bylaws Working Group to settle details and draft an amendment;
- d) The proposed amendment may be adopted or rejected at the following County Plenary. If rejected, consensus of the Members can send the amendment back to the Working Group for additional changes.