

Shawnee County Democrats Central Committee Bylaws

(Including Rules of Committees, Role of Precinct Committeeman/woman and Ward Captain)

As adopted June 13, 2015 and amended March 1, 2019



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BYLAWS OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF SHAWNEE COUNTY DEMOCRATS

PREAMBLE

These bylaws are established to attain the goals of equity, justice, and compassion in carrying out the mission of the National Democratic Party and the Kansas Democratic Party. The Central Committee of Shawnee County affirms that the Democratic Party is the party of the people, and that all people are equal and entitled by right to live and labor freely with dignity in our fair state of Kansas and the United States of America. To attain these stated goals and rights, the Central Committee of Shawnee County Democrats issues and adopts the following articles:

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of the organization shall be Shawnee County Democrats. The governing body of Shawnee County Democrats is the Democratic Central Committee of Shawnee County.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to adhere to the principles and policies announced by the Democratic National Committee and the Kansas Democratic State Committee Bylaws and to aid in the election of Democrats to local, state, and national offices.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

SECTION 1

The Central Committee shall consist of two (2) types of members A and B: A) Two (2) Democratic Precinct Committeepersons, one male and one female, from each of the precincts in Shawnee County, Kansas. B) One (1) registered Shawnee County Democrat may be appointed by the Chairperson to serve as an Ambassador (non-voting) not to exceed one (1) for each Ward. One (1) registered Shawnee County Democrat may be appointed as a Deputy (non-voting) to each Shawnee County precinct person. The Executive Board, prior to their serving, must confirm type B members appointed by the Chairperson.

SECTION 2

The Central Committee shall meet as required by state party bylaw or more often as the Chairperson may direct or by petition of 30% of the members.

SECTION 3

In the event of a vacancy, or where no Precinct Committeeperson has been elected, the County Chairperson shall exercise the Chairperson's authority to appoint persons to vacant precinct Committee positions, with due consideration to nominations by Ward Captains.

SECTION 4

Ward Captains shall be nominated and elected by the Precinct Committee people of their Ward.

To be eligible for election to the position of Ward Captain, the person must be a Democratic Precinct Committeeperson of that Ward. The Ward Captain shall assist Shawnee County

Democrats in coordinating communication relevant to electing Democrats as approved by the Central Committee. If no Ward Captain is elected by the Precinct Committee people at a Central Committee meeting, the Chairperson may appoint a Ward Captain to serve until the next meeting of the Central Committee.

ARTICLE IV- OFFICERS

SECTION 1 ELECTED OFFICERS

The elected officers of the organization shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Officers will be registered Democrats in Shawnee County. Officers will be elected according to state party bylaw.

SECTION 2 CHAIRPERSON

- a. The Chairperson shall be the chief executive officer of the organization and shall supervise the affairs and activities of the organization.
- b. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the general membership of the Central Committee and Executive Board meetings.
- c. The Chairperson may appoint to the Executive Board a Parliamentarian, a Sergeant-at-arms, and a Campaign Coordinator, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, to serve at the pleasure of the Chairperson.
- d. The Chairperson shall notify all members of the Executive Board within seven (7) days prior to each meeting.
- e. The Chairperson shall cause the notification of all members of the Central Committee of meetings in the time and manner prescribed by Kansas Democratic State Committee Bylaws and rules of the Democratic National Committee.
- f. The Chairperson may establish such committees as the Chairperson may deem necessary and appoint members to the committees who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chairperson.
- g. The Chairperson may appoint Ambassadors (non-voting), who must be Democrats, residing in Shawnee County, to assist Ward Captains in the performance of their duties.
- h. The Chairperson may appoint Precinct Deputies (non-voting), who must be Democrats, residing in Shawnee County, to assist Precinct Committee people in the performance of their duties.

SECTION 3 VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- a. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson, or upon resignation of the Chairperson until a replacement chairperson is elected according to state party bylaws.
- b. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such other duties as the Chairperson may direct.

SECTION 4 SECRETARY

- a. The Secretary shall record minutes of all meetings.
- b. The Secretary shall cause the recording and maintain the official records of the organization, including records of all Central and Executive Committees and records of all actions relating to permanent procedures and policies.

- c. The Secretary shall maintain a membership roster of the Central Committee and perform such other duties as the Chairperson may direct.

SECTION 5 TREASURER

- a. The Treasurer shall have charge of all funds of the organization and shall report to the members at each regular meeting of the Central Committee and Executive Board. It shall be the Treasurer's duty to make all disbursements of funds for valid bills from a bank account maintained in the organization's name.
- b. The Treasurer shall be prohibited from incurring debts in excess of funds on hand without the express approval of the Executive Board. The Chairperson shall have the authority to authorize expenditures for valid emergencies without Executive Board approval, not to exceed 10% of the approved budget.
- c. The Treasurer shall file all legally required campaign finance reports.
- d. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as the Chairperson may direct.
- e. The Treasurer must have or acquire through timely training as determined by the Chairperson, a working knowledge of Campaign Finance Regulations and Reporting Requirements as set forth by the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission.
- f. The Treasurer or the Chairperson shall make deposits and withdrawals. Checks will require two authorized signatures of the Treasurer, the Chairperson, and/or the Vice-Chairperson. The Treasurer must record all transactions in the financial records.
- g. The Treasurer will make available to the Budget and Audit Committees appropriate documents relating to the budget including past financial reports, expense summaries, and income summaries.

SECTION 6

~~See Article VI, Section 3~~

SECTION 7

~~See Article VI, Section 4~~

ARTICLE V - EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1

The Executive Board shall implement policies promulgated by the Central Committee, and may take such action and initiate such policies as it may deem appropriate, provided such action and policies are not in contravention of law, or the policies of the Central Committee.

SECTION 2

The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the organization, a Ward Captain elected to the Central Committee from each Ward within the City of Topeka, and one representative from each of the four rural areas of the County outside the city: (a) that area north of the Kansas River and east of Highway 75; (b) that area north of the Kansas River and west of Highway 75; (c) that area south of the Kansas River and east of Highway 75; (d) that area south of the Kansas River west of Highway 75; all Democratic office holders elected in partisan

elections residing in Shawnee County; and such other appointed members as are provided for in Article IV, Section 2(c).

- a. The representative from each Ward and Rural Area shall be elected by the Central Committee members of the district at the County reorganization meeting, or in an interim election as necessary. Every affiliated caucus of the State Democratic Party organized in Shawnee County may select a delegate to the Executive Board and have voting privileges. The Shawnee County Democratic Action Committee is also eligible to select a voting delegate to the Executive Board. Delegates from the caucuses and Democratic Action Committee must be registered Democrats in Shawnee County.
- b. The Executive Board shall meet at least monthly.
- c. At all Central Committee meetings, the most recent version of Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail. For elections of officers, the Chairperson will appoint a Rules Committee to establish the rules to govern the election. All rules will comply with Kansas law, National Democratic Party, and State Committee rules.
- d. A quorum of the Executive Board will be nine (9) members of the Executive Board including at least one officer of the Central Committee of Shawnee County. No Executive Board member may have more than one vote.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES STANDING OR OTHER

SECTION 1

The Chair of each Committee shall be a voting member of the Executive Board.

SECTION 2

The "Shawnee County Democrats Standing Committees' Structure and Scope, February 17, 2015" is attached as Addendum 1. The following committees may be convened by the Chairperson or by a simple majority number of Executive Board members requesting said Committee(s) be established. Those Committees are Rules and Bylaws, Communications, Steering, Fundraising, Voter Registration, Events, Membership, and Legislative Oversight.

The Budget and Audit Committees are standing committees and must be convened.

SECTION 3

The Budget Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, the Treasurer, and member of the Executive Board. They shall devise a budget for a two-year period from the December after a General Election through November of the next General Election. The budget shall require approval of the Executive Board prior to expenditure of Central Committee funds.

SECTION 4

There shall be an Audit Committee composed of three (3) members of the Central Committee (but not of the Executive Board). Their duty shall be to review the books and expenditures of the Central Committee annually for an internal audit. The Audit Committee shall cause an external audit to be conducted biennially and shall work with the auditors to ensure its timely and accurate completion. This Committee shall elect its Chair from its members.

SECTION 5

In the case where a Legislative Oversight Committee is convened, the Committee shall abide by the "Procedures of the Legislative Oversight Committee" attached herewith as Addendum 2.

**ARTICLE VII - ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES
IN DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY ELECTION**

Shawnee County Democrats and its Central Committee and Executive Board shall not endorse a candidate in a contested Democratic primary election. Voter lists and other party resources shall be made equally available to all candidates in a contested primary. However, any party officer or precinct committeeperson is free to personally endorse any candidate in a contested Democratic primary so long as the endorsement is personal and does not include that person's party title.

ARTICLE VIII - ADOPTION OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws shall take effect upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Central Committee present and voting.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Amendment of these bylaws shall be by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those members of the Central Committee present and voting, provided that ten (10) days written notice of said proposed amendment shall be given by U.S. mail to members of the Central Committee and provided further that said proposed amendment shall be submitted by petition of at least fifteen (15) members of the Central Committee or upon recommendation of the Executive Board.

Originally submitted and approved this date: June 13, 2015, and amended March 1, 2019

~~County chair Jeff Zamrzla~~
~~06/13/15~~

ADDENDUM 1

STANDING COMMITTEES' STRUCTURE AND SCOPE

COMMITTEES, STANDING OR OTHER

The Chairperson may create and appoint members to the following committees:

- Rules and Bylaws
- Communications
- Steering
- Fundraising
- Voter Registration
- Events
- Membership
- Legislative Oversight

All committees, standing or other, report to the Executive Board.

Autonomy of Committees

Committees of the Central Committee are authorized to meet as needed and work within the scope of their authority or as directed by the Chairperson or Executive Board of the Central Committee.

ROLES OF COMMITTEES

The Rules and Bylaws Committee

The structure and rules of the Rules and Bylaws Committee are:

- a) The Rules and Bylaws Committee will receive from the Executive Board and/or Precinct Committee members and consider all recommendations for adoption of the amendment to the rules and bylaws of the Central Committee and any committees created by the Executive Board or Chairperson acting on authority derived from the current bylaws.
- b) Recommendation for amendment of the bylaws or adoption of rules for the Central Committee shall be submitted to the Rules and Bylaws Committee no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting of the Executive Board. The Chairperson or the Secretary of the Executive Board shall transmit such recommendations to the members of the Rules and Bylaws Committee no less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting of the Executive Board. The Executive Board will act to send those recommendations to the next full meeting of the Central Committee for their consideration having been recommended by a simple majority of both the Executive Board and the Rules and Bylaws Committee.
- c) The Rules and Bylaws Committee will formulate such supplementary rules as it finds necessary to augment the bylaws insofar as they are not contrary or in derogation of these bylaws, the Charter of the Democratic Party of the United States, the bylaws of the Democratic Party of the United States, the rules for delegate selection adopted by the Kansas

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Democratic Party and in effect at the time. The Rules and Bylaws Committee will conduct the balloting and decide on any question presented to it by the Chairperson regarding the rules and bylaws, parliamentary procedure, balloting, or other questions.

- d) The Chair of the Rules and Bylaws Committee will be the Parliamentarian of the Central Committee and as such should be familiar with the current version of Roberts Rules of Order. The Chair will be decided upon by a majority vote of the members of the Committee when the County reorganizes every election cycle. Therefore, all members of the Committee should be well versed in parliamentary procedure.

The Communications Committee

The aim of the Committee is to facilitate communication between the Shawnee County Democrats, the Central Committee, and the public.

The Communications Committee will:

- a) produce a newsletter to inform Shawnee County Democrats and the public at large of items of interest and maintain an active social media presence;
- b) create and send notices from the Membership/Fundraising Committees that will seek sponsorships for the County Party's efforts to build the County Party; and
- c) maintain the Shawnee County Democrats email list, the website, and coordinate with other committees to produce timely and effective communications with media and the public at large.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is to formulate views and advise the County Chairperson and the Executive Board on matters of strategic and operational importance to the Shawnee County Democrats as a whole. In addition, the Steering Committee acts as counsel and advisor to the Chairperson on matters and activities relating to achievement of the objectives of the Shawnee County Democrats:

- a) To identify and respond to strategic opportunities, threats and other developments in the environment in which services are performed and in which standards for such services are set so that the work of the Shawnee County Democrats continues to be effective in protecting the public interest and strengthening public confidence our stated goals.
- b) To identify and respond to the need for change to the Shawnee County Democrat's procedures and practices so that they continue to support the development of high quality standards in the public interest in a transparent, efficient and effective manner.
- c) To counsel and advise the Chairperson on matters and activities relating to achievement of the objectives of the Shawnee County Democrats.

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee will seek individual, family, student, and business donations to the treasury of the Shawnee County Democratic Central Committee. They will coordinate their efforts with the Membership and Communications Committees on a continuous basis and report on their successes, challenges, and ideas moving forward to raise the funds requested by the

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Budget Committee to carry out the mission of the Shawnee County Democratic Central Committee.

Voter Registration Committee

The Voter Registration Committee will register voters at every opportunity in compliance with current Kansas statutes. Voter Registration Drives will be conducted, as will training sessions for Precinct Committeemen/women yearly so the Precinct Committeemen/women will be in compliance with Kansas statute.

Events Committee

The Events Committee will procure venues, plan for and recruit volunteers to staff events as well as coordinate with the Communications Committee to advertise our events, and other committees as may be affected by those events, i.e., Voter Registration.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee will maintain the list of and advertise for individual memberships and other sponsorships for the Shawnee County Democrats, coordinate those sponsorships, and provide the Communications Committee with the list for inclusion in our annual sponsorship recognition issue.

ADDENDUM 2

PROCEDURES OF THE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Legislative Oversight Committee has been established by the Shawnee County Democrats as a special Committee charged with observation, study, and reporting on legislation processed during the legislative session which concerns the principles of the Kansas Democratic Party outlined in its most recent platform document that include:

- 1) Strengthening public education
- 2) Preserving and growing the Kansas economy and protecting workers
- 3) Upholding governmental ethics and election responsibility, in addition to fiscal responsibility
- 4) Protecting the rights of all Kansans, including children, families, senior citizens, and veterans and diversity among these Kansans
- 5) Supporting Kansas agriculture
- 6) Accessing affordable healthcare, which is a basic human right

The Chair of the Legislative Oversight Committee reports directly to the Shawnee County Democratic Chairperson and the Central Committee. It is recommended that the Shawnee County Executive Board, at the onset of each legislative session, provide direction to the legislative liaison if the Executive Board is interested in having all bills tracked which pertain to the party principles as outlined in the platform document or tracking of bills which pertain to specific topics.

An example of a procedure that could be followed and has been used in the past is:

- 1) Daily screen the Kansas Legislative Website: <http://www.kslegislature.org/li/>.
 - a. Identify newly introduced bills which concern the platform principles.
 - b. Electronic copies of these bills and daily calendars and journals are available online. The same materials can also be obtained in the Kansas Statehouse Document Room which is located on the first floor of the Statehouse.
 - c. Prepare a brief summary of this/these bill(s) electronically and note when the bills are assigned to specific committees. It is recommended that a user-friendly version, such as table or spreadsheet format, be adapted to summarize bill provisions. This format should be readily searched electronically by either bill number or subject.
- 2) House or Senate calendars will indicate when specific bills are assigned to committees. An observer will be assigned to attend a specific Committee hearing. In turn, this person will note Committee action on the/these bill(s). If handouts are available to the general audience, these background materials are also beneficial.
- 3) As bills move through Committee and to the full houses of the Legislature, note that amendments will be incorporated into the original document. On the front page of each bill, written above the bill number(s) are the different amendments through which the bill has

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changed from its original status. (It is also likely that bills can be killed in Committee and require no further action.) The observer is responsible for identifying the changes to specific bills summarizing briefly for the Shawnee County Chairperson. These summaries should first be passed to the Chair of the Legislative Oversight Committee. In turn, the observations will be directed to the Shawnee County Chairperson. The legislative liaison is responsible for providing any training or to be available to observers or other persons assigned to work on the legislative tracking project.

- 4) The purpose of this Committee is to keep the County Executive Committee aware of issues of interest to the party and tracking their progress during the legislative session. Procedural questions should be directed to the Legislative Oversight Chair. Democratic policy questions should be directed to the Central Committee via the Shawnee County Chairperson.
- 5) Interim studies occurring between legislative sessions may include topics which are of interest/concern to the Democratic Party. It shall be the responsibility of the legislative liaison to provide information to the Central Committee which studies are assigned and to develop a methodology of reporting interim Committee findings back to the Central Committee.

ADDENDUM 3

Precinct Committeeman/woman and Ward Captain

Why become a precinct committeeman/woman?

If you are interested in making a real change in your community; if you want your voice and the voices of your neighbors to be heard; if you are tired of complaining and want to actually DO something; and if you believe that our democracy is worth preserving, you owe it to yourself and to your state to become a Precinct Committeeman/woman. In turn, you will receive the satisfaction of knowing that you made a contribution that will impact your life and the lives of everyone around you. Consider turning your concerns into action by becoming a Precinct Committeeman/woman.

What is a precinct committeeman/woman?

A Precinct Committeeperson (man or woman) represents the Shawnee County Democrats on behalf of a specific precinct. An elected or appointed Precinct Committeeman/woman also serves as a member of the Shawnee County Democratic Central Committee.

How does a person become a committeeman/woman?

To qualify as a Precinct Committeeman/woman, the individual must first be a registered Democrat. (This can be done when registering to vote or by changing your registration at the Election Office.) There is no cost involved in registering as a Democrat; however, you cannot change party registration 21 days prior to, or following the Primary Election.

How to file for precinct committeeman/woman?

To be placed on the primary ballot, the individual must file the 'Precinct Committeeman/Committeewoman Candidate's Declaration of Intent' form with the County Election Office. The form must be notarized and filled out in its entirety. The deadline for filing this form changes from time to time, however, filing before June 1 is recommended. There is no fee for filing this petition or for having your name placed on the ballot.

If you miss the deadline for filing, you may run a write-in campaign. If you obtain the vote of at least five (5) people in your precinct and there is no other candidate with more votes, congratulations!

The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or Secretary of the Shawnee County Democratic Party Executive Committee will provide you a list of Democrats in your precinct. This will be useful in identifying potential supporters. There is typically one person elected from each gender. If you win the Primary Election, you will become the Democratic Committeeperson for your precinct at that time. Precinct Committeemen/women serve a two-year term.

The last way to become a Precinct Committeeman/woman occurs when the Primary Election has passed without a registered Democrat pursuing placement of their name on the ballot to represent a certain precinct. After the elected Precinct Committeemen and women have voted on re-organization (within thirty days of the Primary Election, or if postponed at that meeting, within 30 days of the General Election), the Chairperson of the County Democratic Party may appoint a registered Democrat to serve as Precinct Committeeman/woman for the remainder of the two-year term.

What is the role of a precinct committeeman/woman?

Precinct Committee people represent the Democratic Party within their voting precincts and communicate the concerns of their neighbors to the Democratic Party. This grassroots representation is at the heart of our democracy and the basis for all other elected positions.

Of course, not all Precinct Committeemen/women will be able to bring the same level of time and energy to the position. Despite the differing levels of commitment, it is always preferable to have the position filled. However, the following list of duties represents the role of the Precinct Committeeman/woman at its very best; as an active participant in County politics and a dedicated public servant within his or her community.

What are the responsibilities to the Shawnee County Democratic Party?

As a grassroots organizer for the Democratic Party, the Precinct Committeeman/woman is encouraged to:

- 1) contact Democrats in their precinct during the month before the General Election to encourage them to vote to support Democratic candidates and to ask if they will need assistance in casting their votes;
- 2) attend meetings and trainings hosted by the County Democratic Party;
- 3) assist other Democrats in obtaining necessary voter signatures for nominating petitions;
- 4) help distribute information and sell tickets for Party fundraisers;
- 5) organize and assist with the placement of candidate signs throughout the precinct;
- 6) write or co-write letters to newspapers expressing the views of the Party;
- 7) help with the Party's marketing or outreach efforts within the precinct;
- 8) assist with written or phoned surveys of voters;
- 9) choose replacements if elected officials leave office during their term;
- 10) elect the County Party Officers;
- 11) actively support the candidates of the Democratic Party; and
- 12) strategize with the Central Committee in regard to Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts on Election Day.

What are the responsibilities to the voters in his/her precinct?

As a representative of the Democratic voters in his/her precinct, the Precinct Committeeman/woman is expected to:

- 1) contact Democrats in their precinct during the week before the General Election to encourage them to vote to support Democratic candidates and to ask if they will need assistance in casting their votes;
- 2) arrange for "house" parties or other events within the precinct so that voters meet Democratic candidates;
- 3) actively seek out and register new voters within the precinct;
- 4) stay in touch with constituents by any means possible; listen to their concerns and bring those concerns back to the County Democratic Central Committee;

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- 5) strategize with the County Committee in regard to Get Out The Vote (GOTV) efforts on Election Day; and,
- 6) recruit and organize volunteers to help cover the polls, canvass the streets, and assist Democratic voters in transportation to the polls.

WARD CAPTAINS

Pursuant to Article III §4 of the Shawnee County, Kansas, Democrats Central Committee Bylaws, Ward Captains are nominated and elected by the Precinct Committee people of their Ward. The Ward Captain shall assist Shawnee County Democrats in coordinating communication relevant to electing Democrats as approved by the Central Committee. If no Ward Captain is elected by the Precinct Committee people at a Central Committee meeting, the County Chairperson may appoint a Ward Captain to serve until the next meeting of the Central Committee.

What are the duties of the Ward Captain?

Ward Captains represent the Precinct Committeemen/women of their Ward at the monthly Shawnee County Democrats' Executive Board meeting. Ward Captains organize the Precinct Committeemen/women of their Ward to assist in the manner set above. They have the same responsibilities in their own precinct as the various Precinct Committeemen/women of their Ward, in addition to representing the Ward as a whole.

Shawnee County Democrats

CONTACTS (as of November 30, 2020)

Chairperson: Keith Tatum, ktatum, ktatum1124@yahoo.com

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Treasurer: Dana Hartter; email, dhartter1@gmail.com

Secretary: Roxie Ortiz; email, roxie.ortiz@sbcglobal.net

Parliamentarian: Monice Crawford, email, crawfordmk1959@gmail.com