

# **Constitution of the Central Austin Democrats**

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the club shall be the Central Austin Democrats.

## ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Central Austin Democrats club shall take the responsibility for promoting the Democratic Party and Democratic nominees within the boundaries established by the club. It shall further be the task of the Central Austin Democrats to work in conjunction with existing and any future neighborhood Democratic clubs for the promotion of the Democratic Party, Democratic nominees and any other objects of mutual agreement.

The Central Austin Democrats shall also define and promote issues, which are deemed important to the community and Democratic Party and shall work in general toward the political education of the population within the boundaries of the club.

## ARTICLE III. BOUNDARIES

The boundaries for new voting membership and political responsibility shall be the Colorado River on the south, Interstate 35, Manor Road, and Ed Bluestein Blvd. on the east, Anderson Lane on the north, and Loop 1 on the west. Anyone living in a precinct inside this area or adjoining these boundaries shall be eligible for voting membership. Any member who moves from this designated area may maintain voting membership upon continued timely payment of annual dues.

## ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

In order for a new member to vote or run for office, the person must: 1) be a dues paying member and attend 2 monthly meetings prior to voting/running or 2) be a dues paying member for 6 months prior to voting/running.

## ARTICLE V. DUES

Dues shall be \$10 annually, and membership shall not be established until payment of such dues. Dues for membership shall be effective until the November general meeting. If a member fails to renew membership by the following November general meeting, the membership will lapse and the individual will be treated as a new member. Dues for new members shall be paid at time of membership request. Dues must be paid by the member applying for membership. A member may also pay the dues of one additional individual if they reside in the same household.

## ARTICLE VI. ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

Membership must be held for a period of six months before a member shall be eligible to hold office.

## ARTICLE VII. OFFICES

The general club membership shall elect the following officers:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

## ARTICLE VIII. TERM OF OFFICE

All officers shall serve for a period of one year.

## ARTICLE IX. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

### Section 1. President

The president shall be the spokesperson for the club, shall preside over all general and Executive Committee meetings and shall serve as an ex-officio member on all committees.

### Section 2. Vice-President

The Vice- President shall serve in the absence of the President and shall perform those duties assigned by the President and/or Executive Committee.

### Section 3. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining minutes from all general meetings and shall perform such secretarial and recording duties as the President shall require. In the absence of the elected Secretary, the President shall appoint a temporary Secretary to take minutes.

### Section 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep all funds held by the club, maintain club membership records, make regular membership and financial reports to the club, pay all bills owed by the club, make timely deposits, maintain proper financial records, including filing with the Texas Ethics Commission as Treasurer and filing all reports required by the state, sign checks for the club, and file all appropriate reports with the Secretary of State's office.

## ARTICLE X. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## Section 1. Membership

The Executive Committee membership shall include all officers, permanent committee chairpersons and three at-large members elected at regular club elections. The Executive Committee shall be composed of no more than 60 percent of one sex. The President shall call a special election to fill any vacancy of an officer or at-large member for the remainder of the term.

## Section 2. Responsibilities

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for meeting and acting upon pressing matters of concern to the club between general meetings. It shall have no authority to make a public statement on any political or other issue except when so delegated by the membership at a regular club meeting. A majority shall constitute a quorum and is necessary for the Executive Committee to conduct any business.

# ARTICLE XI. COMMITTEES

## Section 1. Standing Committees

There shall be five standing committees as follows:

1. Communications/Lobby
2. Election and Precinct Organization
3. Fund Raising
4. Issues and Ideas
5. Membership
6. Ad hoc

## Section 2. Appointment

Appointment of committee chairs shall be by action of the President and is subject to majority approval by the general membership.

## Section 3. Committee Membership

All committees are encouraged have at least three members appointed by the committee chair.

# ARTICLE XII. DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

## Section 1. Communications/Lobby

The Communications/Lobby Committee shall perform public relations duties, work with the President in putting out press releases and publish the club newspapers as well as be responsible for representing the views of this organization before the appropriate officials, governmental bodies or other organizations.

## Section 2. Elections and Precinct Organization

The Elections and Precinct Organization Committee shall establish and maintain an ongoing precinct organization for the purpose of implementing the goals of the club and for implementing election efforts as established by the club.

## Section 3. Fund Raising

The Fund Raising Committee shall be responsible for developing and enacting various activities for the purpose of raising funds for political candidates and club programs.

## Section 4. Issues and Ideas

The Issues and Ideas Committee shall be responsible for organizing candidate forums and interviews for endorsement purposes and shall perform (he necessary research on such issues as the club requests.

## Section 5. Membership

The Membership committee shall be responsible for recruiting and welcoming new and potential members to the organization, and responding to inquiries about membership.

Section 6. Ad hoc: ad hoc committees may be created and convened when their purpose is determined necessary in the regular course of business and at the president's discretion and direction.

## ARTICLE XIII. MEETINGS

General meetings shall be held on the third Wednesday of each month. The Executive Committee or President shall have the authority to call special meetings and to reschedule a regular meeting during the same month when the regular meeting conflicts with an election or other important political event.

## ARTICLE XIV. ENDORSEMENTS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

### Section 1. Procedure

A. The club Secretary shall prepare a roll of club members eligible to vote each time the club votes on endorsements.

B. Endorsement ballots cast in person shall be written and confidential.

C. A candidate must receive at least 55% of the vote of the members present and voting in order to receive CAD's endorsement.

D. Instant Runoff Voting:

a) In conducting an endorsement vote, the members shall be instructed to rank order from first choice to last choice each candidate under consideration for endorsement. There shall be placed on the ballot a line for “No endorsement” which will be considered in the same manner as a candidate.

b) When tallying the votes, all votes for first choices shall be totaled for each candidate and for “no endorsement”. If a candidate or “no endorsement” receives the threshold for endorsement, they shall be declared the winner of the club endorsement.

c) If no candidate or “no endorsement” reaches the endorsement threshold on the first count, the lowest vote candidate shall be eliminated. The second place votes of the lowest candidate shall be cast for the remaining candidates and the votes recalculated. If a candidate or “no endorsement” reaches the endorsement threshold, they shall be declared the winner of the club endorsement.

d) The process in step (b) and (c) shall be repeated, each time removing the lowest vote candidate or “no endorsement”, reallocating those votes to the remaining candidates or no endorsement” until the endorsement threshold has been reached.

## Section 2. Date of Election

The election of officers and at-large Executive Committee members shall be at the regular monthly meeting in November of each year by a majority of those present and voting in officer elections.

## Section 3. Ballot Language

When voting on endorsements for all candidate places and ballot initiatives, the option of “no endorsement” shall appear as a choice.

## ARTICLE XV. ETHICS

### Section 1. General Membership

Any member serving in a paid capacity for a candidate/issue being considered in a contested endorsement shall acknowledge such involvement prior to speaking on behalf of or in opposition to that candidate/issue at a CAD meeting. Any conflicts should be disclosed in advance of discussion at all club meetings. Any member may disclose such conflict of interest if the speaker does not disclose such information.

### Section 2. Executive Committee

Any Executive Committee member serving in a paid capacity for a candidate/issue, in which CAD will address a contested

endorsement, shall notify the president of such an involvement prior to the monthly meeting preceding the meeting at which an endorsement is to be considered. The president will in turn make this information known to the general membership at that monthly meeting preceding the endorsement meeting.

### Section 3. President/Vice-President/Secretary/Treasurer

If the CAD member serving as President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer should become involved in a paid capacity for any candidate/issue campaign in which CAD addresses a contested endorsement, upon acceptance of such a position, he/she shall take a leave of absence from that elected office for the duration of the campaign.

## ARTICLE XVI. AUSTIN PROGRESSIVE COALITION

After formally endorsing a ballot question, the Central Austin Democrats will actively participate in elections/referenda using the Austin Progressive Coalition (APC) whenever possible. This article denotes the procedure through which this club will determine its input into APC, and does not affect the structure of APC itself.

### Section 1. APC Committee

The APC committee shall represent the interests of the Central Austin Democrats in all APC activities. Such activities include planning and executing all actions to be taken by APC. The committee shall be composed of the President of the club, the Treasurer of the club, and one member elected from the general membership. If possible, all three members of the committee shall be consulted concerning any proposed APC activity. In all cases, a majority vote of the committee shall be necessary for any CAD involvement.

### Section 2. General Membership Committee Member

At every meeting at which an endorsement has been made for an upcoming ballot question, the club shall elect, by a majority of those present and voting, a member of the general membership to serve on the APC committee. This member shall serve until the first meeting after the election/referendum on the above-mentioned ballot question at which the club makes an endorsement.

### Section 3. Disqualification/Ineligible

If any current or prospective member of the APC committee is employed by a candidate who will be considered for endorsement by the club for the election in question, either with his/her campaign or in his/her regular employment, he/she shall be immediately disqualified and/or ineligible for committee membership. A replacement member shall be chosen under Section 2 of this article. The APC treasurer shall be ineligible for membership on the committee. Any member of the club who serves in a position

analogous to the APC committee for the University Democrats shall be ineligible for membership on the committee.

## ARTICLE XVII. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

### Section 1. Approval

Any amendment to the Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the general membership present and voting on the regularly scheduled meeting date.

### Section 2. Procedure for Constitutional Amendment

Any amendment must be presented in writing to the general membership at the meeting prior to the regular monthly meeting at which such amendment shall be considered.

## ARTICLE XVIII. SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION

A three-fourths vote shall be required to suspend any section of the Constitution. The suspension vote shall be in effect for only the meeting at which the vote shall take place.

## ARTICLE XIX. AUTHORITY

Final authority for club activities shall rest with the general membership.

## ARTICLE XX. ADDITIONAL RULES

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern this organization, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.