

**BYLAWS GOVERNING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
OF THE TOWN OF GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

**PREAMBLE**

The policies and principles of the Democratic Party of the Town of Groton (Town) shall be formed, directed, and executed by the Democratic Town Committee of the Town of Groton (GDTC).

The GDTC shall:

- a. Promote good government and democratic principles at every level of civic life.
- b. Encourage diversity and the broadest possible participation in its activities.
- c. Encourage citizens to register to vote, to enroll in the Democratic Party, and to participate in elections.
- d. Recruit and nominate the best possible Democratic candidates for town and state elections and appointed offices, and promote their election.

**ARTICLE I – ELECTION OF THE GDTC**

Section 1 – Eligibility and Notice of Caucus

In January of each even-numbered year on specified dates required by the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), Democratic caucuses, open to all voters registered with the Democratic party in the Town as of the last completed enrollment list, shall be held to endorse members of the GDTC for two-year terms.

A caucus for each voting district of the Town shall be held at the same time and place. The Chair (or designee) shall select the date and time of the caucuses, arrange for a location for the caucuses, and ensure that notice of the time, place, and purpose of these caucuses be given to all enrolled Democratic voters of the Town at least five (5) days but not more than fifteen (15) days in advance of the caucus by publication of the same in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town.

In caucuses of the voting districts to be held for the purpose of endorsing members for the GDTC, the GDTC Chair shall designate a temporary Chair and temporary Secretary to preside at the caucus of each voting district until the caucus elects a permanent Chair and Secretary. The Chair of the GDTC shall secure from the Registrar of Voters the last completed enrollment list of the Democratic Party of the Town, which shall be used to determine who is eligible to participate in these caucuses.

Section 2 – Number of Members

The GDTC shall consist of members elected from the enrolled Democratic Party members of the Town. Each voting district shall be entitled to one (1) representative on the GDTC for each seventy (70) enrolled Democratic voters based on the last completed enrollment list of the Democratic Party of the Town.

Each voting district of the Town shall be entitled to at least three (3) members.

Section 3 – Nominations and Voting

- a. A list of interested and recommended members to be endorsed from each voting district may be prepared by the Nominating Committee. However, any enrolled party member from the district may be nominated from the floor. Voters in each district may vote only for GDTC members from that district. No one may vote for a greater number of candidates than those to be endorsed. Voting by slate is only permissible when the endorsement is between two or more full slates. In the event no endorsement is made by the above stated methods, there shall be no endorsement and election to the GDTC shall be made by primary as provided by CGS.
- b. If no primary is held, the endorsed candidates are deemed elected members of the GDTC.
- c. Paper ballots may be used at these caucuses per the Democratic State Party guidelines.
- d. The GDTC shall operate under said guidelines provided for the conduct of these caucuses.

Section 4 – Certification

The Secretary and Chair of the GDTC shall certify to the Town Clerk the names, addresses, and voting districts of the GDTC members so endorsed.

Section 5 – Primary

If a valid opposing candidate(s) has filed for nomination for GDTC membership according to CGS, the candidate(s) endorsed by the GDTC shall run as the party-endorsed candidate(s). Unless otherwise designated by CGS, the date for holding a primary for the election of GDTC members, if needed, shall be the first Tuesday in March in each even-numbered year.

Section 6 – Vacancy

- a. In a primary, if a party-endorsed candidate for GDTC membership becomes disqualified before the opening of the polls, the Chair of the GDTC in consultation with the Advisory Committee may endorse a person to fill the vacancy as provided by CGS and shall so certify to the Town Clerk. No candidate shall be deemed to have withdrawn until a letter of withdrawal signed by the candidate is filed with the Town Clerk.
- b. Any vacancy on the GDTC arising from any cause including failure to elect may be filled by a majority vote of the GDTC members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.
- c. If for any reason sufficient endorsements of candidates for GDTC membership to fill all seats available are not made, any eligible person may seek to become a member as provided by CGS.

Section 7 – Term of Office

GDTC members elected at January caucuses or by primary shall serve for a term of two (2) years, commencing on the Wednesday after the March primary date in each even-numbered year and ending on the first Tuesday in March of the next even-numbered year.

Section 8 – Call of the Organizational Meeting to Elect GDTC Officers

- a. The Chair of the GDTC in office in the immediately preceding term shall notify, via email or other method, all newly elected GDTC members, of an organizational meeting within one (1) week of the Tuesday in March primary date. Such meeting to elect officers shall be held within thirty (30) days of such call.

If for any reason a call for this organizational meeting is not issued by the Tuesday following the primary date, the Vice Chair serving concurrently with said Chair shall do so by the second Thursday following the primary date. If for any reason a call is not issued by that second Thursday following the primary date, the Democratic State Central Committee (State Central Committee) members who represent the GDTC shall call such meeting by the following Monday (two (2) weeks after the primary date).

- b. Within one week after the March organizational meeting of the GDTC, the Chair shall file a copy of the GDTC Bylaws and a list of the names, addresses, and other pertinent contact information of the officers and members of the GDTC with the Secretary of the State Central Committee and with the Town Clerk.

Section 9 – Increase in Membership

The GDTC at a meeting called for such purpose may, by a majority vote of the GDTC members present and voting, increase its membership. Any such increase shall be based on an additional seventy (70) enrolled Democrats in a voting district as provided in Section 2. Any new members shall be elected by voting district, and shall begin in office the next day, and shall continue in office only until the next date for election of GDTC members.

**ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1 – Duties, Responsibilities, and Privileges of Membership

Membership in the GDTC constitutes a firm commitment to the Democratic Party and its principles. This commitment shall include but not be limited to the following:

- a. Attendance of at least fifty percent (50%) at regular and special meetings of the GDTC.
- b. Participation in fundraising activities or events.
- c. Participation in elections, campaigns, and party-building activities.
- d. Encouragement and recruitment of people to serve on the GDTC, Town Council, Board of Education, Representative Town Meeting (RTM), Boards and Commissions, and other public offices.
- e. Active service on a committee.
- f. Support of party-endorsed candidates for election to municipal, district, state, and federal offices. No member shall publicly endorse or take any public action that may be construed as an endorsement of any candidate who is not a Democrat. Members may support challenging candidates in a Democratic primary but must commit to supporting the primary endorsed candidates.
- g. Payment of annual dues by regular members in an amount to be determined by the GDTC, payable on or before June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

- h. The right to speak at meetings. The Chair is authorized to recognize a non-member and allow them to speak. Members at the meeting may offer a motion in objection thereto and vote “no” for such recognition.

Section 2 – Categories of Membership

- a. Regular Membership. Regular members are enrolled Democratic electors in the Town elected in accordance with these Bylaws. Regular members have all the duties, responsibilities, and privileges of membership including the right to vote.
- b. Associate Membership. Associate members are individuals who meet the criteria for membership but for whom there are no vacancies in their voting district. Associate members may be elected by a majority of regular members present at any meeting. Associate members shall have all the duties, responsibilities, and privileges of membership except the right to vote.
- c. Youth Membership. Youth members are individuals under the age of 18 who are residents of the Town and identify with the Democratic Party. Youth members may be elected by a majority of regular members present at any meeting. Youth members shall have the privileges of membership except the right to vote.
- d. Emeritus Membership. Emeritus members are former long-time active regular members who no longer actively participate in the GDTC. Emeritus members may be elected by a majority of regular members present at any meeting and shall have all the privileges of membership except the right to vote.

Section 3 – Terms of Membership

Associate, Youth, and Emeritus members shall continue to serve as long as they are qualified. Periodically, membership in these categories shall be reviewed at the discretion of the Chair.

**ARTICLE III – OFFICERS**

Section 1 – Officers

The officers of the GDTC shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Deputy Treasurer, and such other officers as may be deemed advisable by a vote of the GDTC. The officers of the GDTC shall be members of the GDTC. Officers shall hold office for the term of the GDTC electing them. Any officer, however, may be removed for just cause from their official position by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2 – Vacancy in Office

If there is a vacancy in any office of the GDTC arising from any cause, the GDTC may fill the vacancy by a majority vote of the GDTC members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.

Section 3 – Duties and Responsibilities of Officers

- a. Each officer shall have the duties usually incident to their office and such other duties as the GDTC may from time to time prescribe.
- b. Chair – The Chair shall: preside at all meetings; appoint the members of all committees and committee chairs; be a voting ex officio member of all committees; and communicate the names of candidates for appointive office, as recommended by the GDTC, to the appointing authorities. The Chair of the GDTC shall have the same right to vote as any member and, in addition, may also vote to break a tie on any question. The Chair is authorized to make appointments to fill vacancies for endorsed municipal candidates or delegates.
- c. Vice Chair – The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in the administration of the GDTC and, in the absence of the Chair, shall perform all the duties of that office.
- d. Secretary – The Secretary shall keep minutes of meetings, take roll call at each meeting, and maintain attendance records. The Secretary shall maintain and update the GDTC list of regular members, and send the updates periodically to the State Central Committee and to the Town Clerk.
- e. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall have charge of all monies received, pay all debts of the GDTC, render a monthly report regarding income and expenses, and file all necessary forms and returns required by local, state, and federal law. All filings are shared with the Chair and Vice Chair for review.
- f. Deputy Treasurer – The Deputy Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Treasurer when the Treasurer is unable to, and other duties as assigned.

**ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS, QUORUM, VOTING**

Section 1 – Meetings

- a. The GDTC shall meet at least six (6) times a year.
- b. All public meetings of the GDTC shall be open to all registered Democratic voters in the Town.
- c. The time and place for all meetings of the GDTC should be publicized fully by posting on the GDTC website and social media in a timely manner, and should be held in places accessible to all party members.
- d. The Chair is authorized to ask a disruptive attendee to leave a meeting.

Section 2 – Special Meetings

Special meetings of the GDTC may be called by the Chair, or upon written request, signed by twenty percent (20%) of the members of the GDTC and presented to the Chair. Upon receipt of such request, the Chair shall instruct the Secretary to give at least five (5) days notice of the time, place and purpose of such meeting to all members.

Section 3 – Quorum

Two-fifths (2/5) of the membership of the GDTC shall constitute a quorum at any meeting.

Section 4 – Voting

The use of paper ballots, or any other form of secret voting, is prohibited at GDTC meetings.

## **ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES**

The Chair shall appoint all committee members and committee chairs. Only members of the GDTC may serve on committees.

### Section 1 – Advisory Committee

This committee consists of the officers of the GDTC. Up to three additional GDTC members may be appointed by the Chair and serve at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair of the GDTC shall be the chair of the Advisory Committee. The committee shall assist the Chair in organizing the work of the GDTC.

### Section 2 – Fundraising Committee

This committee is responsible for fundraising to meet GDTC expenses. It organizes major fundraising events, but calls on and requires the support of the entire GDTC in implementing any such event.

### Section 3 – Nominating Committee

This committee is responsible for recruiting and recommending candidates for: the GDTC; election and appointment to municipal offices; delegates to conventions; and appointment to boards and commissions.

### Section 4 – Social Media Committee

This committee develops and maintains the GDTC website, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms.

### Section 5 – Bylaws Committee

This committee recommends amendments to the Bylaws for compliance with the Connecticut Democratic State Party Rules (State Party Rules), State Law, and the evolving needs of the GDTC.

### Section 6 – Membership Committee

This committee recruits new members to the GDTC, welcomes new Democrats to town and GDTC meetings.

### Section 7 – Ad Hoc Committees

These committees are created by the Chair as needed for a specific purpose.

## **ARTICLE VI – CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT, DELEGATE ELECTION**

### Section 1 – Municipal Office

- a. Selection and Endorsement of Candidates for Municipal Office  
During dates specified by State Law, the GDTC, at a meeting called for the purpose, shall, by a majority vote of the GDTC members present and voting, select party-endorsed candidates for each municipal office. In the endorsement of any person for an office for whom only the electors of a voting district of the Town may vote, only the members of the GDTC elected from that voting district may participate.

- b. Primary for Municipal Office  
If a valid opposing candidate(s) has filed for nomination for municipal office according to CGS, the candidate(s) endorsed by the GDTC shall run as the party-endorsed candidate(s).
- c. Filling a Vacancy prior to Election or Primary  
If for any reason an endorsed candidate becomes disqualified, the Chair, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, shall select a candidate and file such endorsement with the Town Clerk.
- d. Filling a Vacancy subsequent to Election  
If for any reason a Democratic office holder on the Town Council, Board of Education, or RTM vacates their position, the Chair will notify the GDTC of the vacancy and solicit interest in the position. The Chair, after consulting with the Advisory Committee, may make a recommendation of candidate(s) to the applicable body and will inform the GDTC of the recommendation with the understanding that the body is not bound by the recommendation.
- e. Certification of Candidates  
The Chair and Secretary shall certify to the Town Clerk the names and addresses of the endorsed candidates. The certification shall include the title and term of office for which the candidates were endorsed including the voting district for any position for which only the voters of said district may vote.
- f. Insufficient Endorsements  
If for any reason sufficient endorsements of candidates are not made, any eligible person may seek to become a candidate in accordance with CGS.

## Section 2 – Delegates to Conventions

- a. Election of Delegates  
At a meeting called for the purpose, the GDTC shall by majority vote elect delegates to conventions during the timeframe specified in State Law. Nominations for delegates may be made by presentation of a full slate or by individual nominations. Only GDTC members who are electors in voting districts that may vote for the candidate to be selected at a convention may vote for delegates to that convention. Delegates must be electors in those voting districts. Delegates do not have to be GDTC members but must be enrolled Democratic electors of the Town. Voting for delegates to each convention shall be done separately.
- b. Alternate Delegates  
Delegates may designate in writing an alternate delegate to act for them in their absence. In the absence of such alternate delegate, the Chair shall fill any vacancy arising for any cause in delegations to conventions.
- c. Certification of Delegates  
The Chair and the Secretary shall certify the names and addresses of the elected delegates to the Town Clerk and the State Central Committee.

## **ARTICLE VII – SPECIAL CAUCUSES**

Section 1 – Caucuses may be called for any lawful purpose by a majority vote of the entire GDTC, or by not less than ten per cent of the registered Democratic voters of the Town. The call for any such caucus shall be in writing. If it is called by a vote of the GDTC, it shall be signed by the Chair of the GDTC. If it is called by the registered Democratic voters of the Town, it shall be signed by such voters.

Section 2 – Notice of the time, place and purpose of any caucus shall be given to all registered Democratic voters of the Town at least five days in advance of any such caucus by publishing a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the Town.

Section 3 – The GDTC Chair and Secretary shall be the Temporary Chair and Secretary of all caucuses and shall preside until the meeting has selected its permanent Chair and Secretary.

## **ARTICLE VIII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Robert’s Rules of Order (newly revised) shall govern the GDTC on parliamentary issues at GDTC meetings and caucuses except as herein otherwise provided.

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

Section 1 – These Bylaws may be amended by the GDTC at a meeting called for that purpose. The proposed amendments shall be provided to the GDTC at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. The vote required for passage of the amendment(s) shall be two-thirds of the members present and voting.

Section 2 – Within seven (7) days after amendment of these Bylaws the Chair shall file a copy with the Secretary of the State Central Committee, the Secretary of the State, and the Town Clerk.

Section 3 – Amended Bylaws shall not take effect until sixty (60) days after the filing with the Secretary of the State Central Committee.

## **ARTICLE X– CONFLICT WITH STATE LAW OR STATE PARTY RULES**

If any provision of these Bylaws is in conflict with any provision of State Law or State Party Rules, such Law and Party Rules shall govern for that provision, but no such finding shall invalidate the remaining provisions of these Bylaws.

AMENDED AT A MEETING OF THE GROTON DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE HELD ON JUNE 24, 2020 AT GROTON, CONNECTICUT.

Original Bylaws adopted December 21, 1971.