

# UNITED DEMOCRATS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY BY-LAWS

Amended February 7, 2024

## Article I – Name

This organization shall be known as “United Democrats of Washington County, MD” hereinafter known as “UDWC” or “the Club.”

## Article II – Mission and Purpose

**Section 1:** UDWC’s mission is to encourage and engage Democrats in Washington County in the political process; to promote Democratic ideals and principles; and to actively support the election of Democratic candidates representing Washington County.

**Section 2:** In conjunction with the Washington County Democratic Central Committee, UDWC’s purposes are: to foster and perpetuate the ideals of the Democratic Party; recruit new members; register new Democratic voters; stimulate an active interest in political and governmental affairs; encourage and help train qualified Democrats to seek elected office as well as appointment to Boards and Commissions; help acquaint voters with the issues and Democratic candidates in all elections; provide social activities and events, and encourage those interests which maintain Party harmony.

## Article III – Membership and Dues

**Section 1:** All registered Democrats may become members of UDWC. Only those members who legally reside in Washington County may be voting members; those registered Democrats who live outside of Washington County may be non-voting, affiliate members.

**Section 2:** All prospective members must complete and return a membership application along with payment of dues to the Treasurer. The Vice-President will verify the applicant’s status as a registered Democrat in Washington County.

**Section 3:** Annual dues shall be \$30. Annual dues for young Democrats (under the age of 29) and students shall be \$10. Non-voting affiliate membership for out-of-county residents shall be \$20. Any member whose dues are in arrears for a period of one year or more shall be removed from the membership list and shall receive only electronic notices of meetings if a current email is on file.

**Section 4:** Dues are payable by January 1 of each calendar year to the Treasurer. New member dues paid during the last quarter of the year shall count for and include the full subsequent calendar year. UDWC members who are residents of Washington County and are current on their dues are eligible to vote.

**Section 5:** Members who have provided a current email on their membership application shall receive notification of all meetings and events.

**Section 6:** The Treasurer, in conjunction with the Secretary, shall maintain an accurate membership list which includes addresses, phone numbers, and emails for members. These records of members’ contact information shall not be shared with other organizations or for uses other than UDWC business without a vote of approval by the membership. Any member may opt out of the sharing of contact information at any time by notifying the Treasurer and Secretary in writing.

## Article IV – Officers

**Section 1:** The officers of UDWC shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The officers shall serve on the board of directors during their tenure in office. All officers shall be members of UDWC and current on their dues. If an officer moves out of Washington County during their term, they are no longer eligible to serve as an officer.

**Section 2:** All officers shall serve two-year terms, or until their successors have been duly elected and installed. The President and Treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years, with their terms starting in odd-numbered years. The Vice President and Secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years, with their terms starting in even-numbered years. The election of officers shall be staggered so that where possible, no more than two officers shall be elected during each election and shall be held in conjunction with the election of members to the board of directors.

**Section 3:** Any member nominated for President must be a member in good standing of UDWC for at least twelve (12) months preceding the election. Any member nominated for any other officer position must be a member in good standing of UDWC for six (6) months preceding the election.

## **Article V – Duties of Officers**

### **Section 1: President**

- a. The President shall serve on the board of directors during the term of office and shall preside at all UDWC meetings and special events, including those of the Board of Directors and regular membership meetings. The President shall direct all affairs of the UDWC and serve as Chief Executive Officer. They shall have the authority to sign checks and access the UDWC bank account, in accordance with Article X. The President shall have the authority to call meetings of the UDWC membership provided at least 5 days' notice has been given to persons eligible to attend such meetings. They may call special meetings of the Board of Directors provided at least 2 days' notice has been given.
- b. The President shall appoint the Chairs and members of the Standing Committees and all other Committees in accordance with Article IX. The President may attend all committee meetings, with the exception of the Nominating Committee, in an ex-officio capacity.
- c. The President shall submit plans for activities of the UDWC to the Board of Directors for review, but not approval, before proceeding with arrangements.
- d. At the close of their term, the President shall turn over all such records pertinent to the duties of office of the President to their successor within 15 days. The President shall accompany new officers of record to the bank for assigning the changes.

### **Section 2: Vice President**

- a. The Vice President shall serve on the board of directors during the term of office and shall perform the duties of the President in the President's absence, and perform additional duties as specified by the President. In the case of the resignation or incapacitation of the President, the Vice President will become President and the vacancy thus created in the Vice Presidency shall be filled by the process outlined in Article VII, Section 5.
- b. The Vice President shall sign off on the actual bank statement each month, verifying expenditures and deposits on each statement.
- c. The Vice President shall verify prospective members' voter registration (Party and county) as part of the membership application process.
- d. At the close of their term, the Vice President shall turn over all such records pertinent to the duties of the office Vice President to their successor within 15 days. The Vice President shall accompany new officers to the bank for assigning the changes.

### **Section 3: Secretary**

- a. The Secretary shall serve on the board of directors during the term of office and shall make and keep written minutes of all meetings of the UDWC and its Board of Directors. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the by-laws and the approved minutes of Board of Directors meetings and UDWC membership meetings.

- b. Board of Directors meetings: the Secretary shall submit a draft of the minutes to all members of the Board of Directors no less than one week prior to the subsequent board meeting, to be approved with any needed amendments at that subsequent meeting. The Secretary shall keep an attendance record as part of the minutes of all Board of Directors meetings. Minutes shall not be disseminated outside of the board without the approval of the board.
- c. Membership meetings: The Secretary shall maintain records of attendance of membership meetings by signing in all members or providing a sign-in sheet and ensuring its accuracy. The Secretary shall submit a draft of the meeting minutes to all members no less than one week prior to the subsequent membership meeting, to be approved with any needed amendments at that meeting. Draft minutes shall not be disseminated outside of the UDWC.
- d. The Secretary shall perform all other such duties as are incidental to the office. At the close of their term, the Secretary shall turn over all such records and minutes to their successor within 15 days.

#### **Section 4: Treasurer**

- a. The Treasurer shall serve on the board of directors during the term of office and shall be the custodian of all monies of the UDWC and shall keep an accurate and detailed record of all receipts and disbursements by the UDWC. The Treasurer shall deposit all monies within seven days of receipt into a bank account in Washington County set up for the express use by the UDWC. All checks shall be signed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall submit a detailed report no less than one week prior to each Board of Directors meeting, after which the Treasurer shall submit the report to the membership for approval and provide an oral report at the membership meetings on the finances of the UDWC.
- b. The Treasurer shall receive all applications for membership with dues and then provide the application to the Vice President for verification of voter records. The Treasurer shall maintain the membership list in accordance with Article III Section 6.
- c. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
- d. At the close of their term, the Treasurer shall turn over all such records pertinent to the duties of the office to their successor within 30 days or as soon as the final bank statement of their term is received. The Treasurer shall accompany new officers of record to the bank for assigning the changes.

**Section 5:** Officers may assign duties falling under their charge to other members of the UDWC to distribute and alleviate workload but should inform the board and membership of that assignment. The assigning Officer should communicate with the assignee prior to any meeting during which a report is due to the board or to the general membership.

### **Article VI – Board of Directors**

**Section 1:** The Board of Directors shall be the governing body of the UDWC and shall act for and on behalf of the organization between intervals of regular UDWC membership meetings.

**Section 2.** The Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) members, including the officers of the UDWC.

**Section 3.** Board members shall serve a two-year term of office, with staggered terms so that roughly one-half of the directors will be elected along with two (2) of the officers each year in accordance with Article VII. Upon adoption of the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) revision to these bylaws, which establishes terms of office, the President shall assign current board members to one of two (2) terms: the first term shall end Dec 31, 2024, and the second term shall end December 31 2025.

**Section 4:** The Board of Directors shall meet regularly prior to each general membership meeting, on the call of the President. The business of any special or emergency meeting shall be limited to that stated by the President and requires at least three (3) of the four officers to be present.

**Section 5:** A quorum for the Board of Directors shall consist of a majority of all directors then serving, which must include at least two officers.

**Section 6:** A board member may be removed by a majority of the board without cause.

#### **Article VII – Election of Officers and Board Members**

**Section 1:** At the regular September membership meeting, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three active members who do not intend to run for the available positions in that cycle. The Nominating Committee's role is to actively recruit qualified members to run for the board of directors and for board offices, and to verify the credentials of those who are nominated. The floor will be open for nominations at this time. Nominations may be made to the Nominating Committee at this time or via email until the October membership meeting.

**Section 2:** At the regular October membership meeting, the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall receive nominations from the floor. After three (3) requests for nominations from the floor by the Committee Chair, the nominations will then be closed.

**Section 3:** At the regular November membership meeting, the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall present a written ballot inclusive of all eligible nominated candidates. The ballot will be given to all eligible voting members in attendance. If there are no contested races, no printed ballot is required, and a voice vote shall be held. For all votes, members must be in attendance to participate. The Nominating Committee shall count the ballots and announce the winners. A majority vote shall elect.

**Section 4:** All newly elected board members and board officers shall be installed at the close of the regular December membership meeting and shall assume their duties January 1.

**Section 5:** In the case of a vacancy in any position on the board, including officers other than the President, the Chair of the Nominating Committee will announce the vacancy at the next general membership meeting and receive nominations from the floor to complete the term of office for that vacancy. The floor will be open for nominations to complete the term of the vacant office. Nominations may be made to the Nominating Committee at this time or via email until the next general membership meeting. At that meeting, the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall again open the floor for additional nominations and after three (3) requests for nominations from the floor by the Committee Chair, the nominations will then be closed. Voting will be by paper ballot. Members must be in attendance to participate. The Nominating Committee shall count the ballots and announce the winner. A majority vote shall elect. If there is no contest to fill the vacancy, a voice vote shall be held. The successful candidate will begin serving the remainder of the term immediately upon being elected.

#### **Article VIII – Membership Meetings**

**Section 1:** Regular membership meetings shall occur no fewer than ten (10) times a year. Meetings may be held in person or virtually via an online platform.

**Section 2:** A member must be present in person in order to vote at any meeting of the organization. A member shall be considered present at a virtual meeting if acknowledged by the Secretary. The members present at a regular membership meeting shall constitute a quorum for all business.

**Section 3:** The most current Roberts Rules of Order shall govern in all cases where it is not inconsistent with the By-Laws, and in accordance with State Law and Regulation.

**Section 4:** Copies of the UDWC by-laws shall be available in print and/or electronically at all membership meetings; via email to any current or prospective member, upon request; and on the UDWC website.

#### **Article IX – Committees**

**Section 1:** The Budget & Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and at least two members. The Committee shall create and maintain an annual budget in accordance with Article X and assist in overall financial strategies and goals of the UDWC.

**Section 2:** The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President and has the duties described in Article VII, Election of Board Members and Officers.

**Section 3:** A By-Laws Committee of at least two members shall be appointed by the President when changes or revisions to the By-Laws are necessary or requested by membership or by Officers.

**Section 4:** Other committees shall be appointed from time to time by the President in order to further the purposes of the UDWC, as described in Article 2, Mission and Purpose.

#### **Article X – Budget and Finance**

**Section 1:** The fiscal year of the UDWC shall be January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Section 2:** The Finance Committee shall prepare an annual budget for review by the Board of Directors. The Board shall recommend the budget for approval by the membership. The budget shall be approved by the membership no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> for the following fiscal year.

**Section 3:** The Treasurer, upon making expenditures for approved budget items, shall report any such expenditure to the Board and to the general membership in the Treasurer's monthly report.

**Section 4.** In the absence of the Treasurer, the President shall assume the responsibility for expenditures, in accordance with Article X Section 3 above.

**Section 5.** Any unbudgeted expenditures must be reviewed by the Board of Directors and approved by the membership prior to making the expenditure.

#### **Article XI – Amendments**

These by-laws may be repealed or amended at any meeting of the UDWC by a two-thirds vote of those present, and provided that such amendment(s) have been submitted in writing at the preceding meeting of the UDWC, at least 28 days prior, so that members have adequate notification.

Adopted 4/20/2015

Amended 8/5/2015

Amended 11/11/2015

Amended 2/10/2016

Amended 8/30/20215

Amended with major revisions 2/7/2024