

# **FEM DEMS OF THE SACRAMENTO REGION BYLAWS**

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the Fem Dems of the Sacramento Region, as we strive to bring the principles of inclusion, equality, and diversity to the forefront of democracy, do hereby ordain and establish these Bylaws for the purpose of governing and guiding our unyielding efforts to establish representative equity and the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes.

## **ARTICLE ONE**

### **Section I**

#### **1. Name**

The name of this organization shall be Fem Dems of the Sacramento Region. It may be described as ‘Feminist Democrats’. In these Bylaws it is also often referred to as the “Fem Dems”, “the organization”, or “the club”.

#### **2. Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Fem Dems is to promote the feminist principles of equality, diversity and inclusiveness. We will fight disenfranchisement both within the Democratic Party and the community at large.

This will be done by promoting involvement by feminists in the Democratic Party; actively working to elect candidates who share a feminist agenda through volunteerism, fundraising and outreach; and clearly defining “women’s issues” so that candidates, elected representatives and the Party can work toward those goals.

We are conscientious activists committed to stimulating advancement of feminist ideals through a combination of social fellowship, community involvement, and political activism.

We believe that this process will sculpt future leaders who are committed to feminist principles, thereby positively influencing our community, state and nation.

#### **3. Affiliation**

The Fem Dems shall be affiliated through charter membership with the Democratic Party of Sacramento County (DPSC). It shall abide by the governing rules and bylaws of the DPSC in concern to its conduct as a club.

## **Section II**

### **1. Structure**

The Fem Dems shall be governed by its members and it shall do so via this provision: The vote of the membership of the Fem Dems shall supersede all other votes or decisions by any committee or persons within this organization.

### **2. Law**

The Bylaws shall govern this organization and the members shall govern the Bylaws through the process provided to them herein. In cases where the Bylaws shall conflict with the decisions of any part or whole of the Fem Dems, the Bylaws shall supersede all until changed as described in ARTICLE IV, SECTION II.

### **3. Service**

The Fem Dems shall work to meet its mission as outlined in the Mission Statement. It shall place primary priority on the people who avail themselves to the club and its members. Responsibility of directing this organization towards the fulfillment of this mission shall rest with the President.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

## **Section I**

### **1. Members**

Membership in the organization shall be open to any person who supports the mission of the Fem Dems; and, if eligible to vote, is a registered Democrat. If not eligible for registration, the intent to register as a Democrat is required.

### **2. Voting Members**

All members are permitted to vote in the manner prescribed for the vote they are present for as described in ARTICLE II, SECTION II, NUMBER 1.

Electronic votes of the General Membership may occur in the rare cases where the President calls for them and this shall be done by the means the President declares acceptable when calling for the vote. Only the means through which the President outlines a vote shall be considered acceptable will be accepted as valid votes and only those members compliant with the Good Standing Clause will be permitted to vote electronically.

The President or Acting President is permitted the privilege of calling for an electronic vote of the Executive Board via the means the President declares acceptable when calling for it (i.e. E-Mail, Voting Buttons on the website, etc).

In cases of voting by electronic means, there must be a thorough effort to notify all eligible to vote in a timely manner. The President will consider the amount of notification time given when considering how long the voting shall be open.

### **3. Good Standing Clause**

No member has the right to vote unless they are found to be in good standing at the exact time and place they wish to do so. Good standing shall be defined as being current on membership dues and having attended one meeting in the past electoral year prior to the vote meeting.

### **4. Dues**

The Annual Dues are due to the Secretary/Treasurer no later than March 30 of each year. Members are charged dues annually, unless the member has received an approved hardship exemption by a two thirds vote of the Executive Board.

A motion sets the Dues amount annually from the Treasurer, which must then be seconded and approved by a simple majority vote of those present. Dues are accepted from new members at the time they apply to be a member. In the case of new members, the dues paid apply to the current year unless membership is established within 90 days of the new year. Years begin the first general membership meeting of March.

### **5. Lapsed Memberships**

Any member who does not renew membership before the expiration of the membership period will no longer be considered to meet the Good Standing Clause.

## **Section II**

### **1. Voting in Meetings**

The method for voting on items before the General Membership is set by the Presiding Officer at the time the vote is called for. The methods available to the Presiding Officer include, but are not limited to: voice vote, show of hands and open, signed ballot.

### **2. Voting in the Annual Election of Officers**

All votes of the voting membership carried out in regard to the Annual Election of Officers, are by voice or ballot. The current Secretary/Treasurer is tasked with the counting and certification of these votes. Members seeking officer positions must meet Good Standing Clause requirements.

### **3. Voting**

A ‘voting member’ is a member who qualifies for a vote by meeting the Good Standing Clause, at the time of the vote or vote deadline.

## **Section III**

### **1. Meetings**

The Regular Stated Meeting of the membership is held monthly. A minimum of five (5) voting members is required to qualify the presence of a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the meeting shall reconvene as a happy hour social event with the location decided by a majority vote of those present.

Regular stated meetings adhere to a flexible order of business - however, all meetings must begin with a brief round of introductions of all people present in which each person states their name, Fem Dems membership status, and answer to the selected ice breaker prompt. The prompt is at the discretion of the President with all suggestions welcome.

Committee meetings occur in accordance with the guidance of the Committee Chair. Standing committees meet a minimum of once a quarter and special committees meet frequently enough to allow for adequate time to effectively accomplish its assignment(s) by its deadlines. A quorum for these meetings shall be that of those present and voting.

Special Meetings shall occur under the following circumstances:

- a. When called by the President or Acting President.
- b. When requested by any member in writing for any reason found by the President or Acting President to be valid.
- c. When voted by the Membership to occur for the replacement of a cancelled Regular Stated Meeting.

Special Meetings must meet the same requirements of Regular Stated Meetings.

## **2. Notice of Meetings**

All members eligible to attend a meeting shall be informed of that meeting's occurrence a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting. All meeting notices must contain information pertaining to the time and place of the meeting, the purpose of the meeting and any needs from potential attendees.

## **3. Rules of Meetings**

The Fem Dems may consult the *Newly Revised Robert's Rules of Order* as a reference for the conducting of the meetings in an organized manner.

## **4. Activities**

Activities outside of the Regular Stated or Special Meetings are encouraged where they are found to be appropriate, in agreement with the furthering or maintaining of the mission of the Fem Dems.

# **ARTICLE THREE**

## **Section I**

### **1. Officers of the Fem Dems**

With the exception of the Immediate Past President and General Counsel, officers are elected during the Annual Election of Officers for a term of office lasting one (1) year, from the first club meeting in March to the next election. They are elected by current members who meet the Good Standing Clause by simple majority vote in a voice or ballot voting process.

New Officer positions may be created at the President's discretion by a majority vote of the board. Position descriptions may be amended in the bylaws as described in ARTICLE IV, SECTION II.

The Fem Dems will have the following officers:

- a. President
- b. Vice President
- c. Communications Director
- d. Secretary
- e. Treasurer
- f. Member Services and Outreach Coordinator
- g. Immediate Past President (may not vote on board decisions)
- h. General Counsel

**Description of Elected Officer Positions:**

**1) President**

- Set monthly and yearly goals, agendas, and projects.
  - Lead monthly Executive Board and membership meetings and events.
  - Coordinate with the PAC.
  - Lead club growth and community involvement
- 2) Serve as the Fem Dems representative to the Sacramento County Democratic Party and attend meetings**
- Vice President**
- Identify and oversee community and social projects for the club to promote and support.
  - Innovate ways for Fem Dems to grow membership and be more involved.
  - Support and be the alternate for the President in functions and meetings as needed.
  - Serve as the Alternate to the Sacramento County Democratic Party and attend meetings.
  - Support and be the alternate for the President in functions and meetings as needed.

**3) Communications Director**

- Chair the *Communications & Outreach Committee*.
- Manage communications to, and the maintenance of: membership and email lists.
- Utilize social media to promote Fem Dems and keep members engaged.
- Work with the President to maintain the: website, blog, facebook, and twitter pages for general information and event updates.
- Design and create regular newsletters for membership.

**4) Secretary**

- Responsible for notes and minutes of all membership and event meetings.
- Create and distribute agendas for meetings.

**5) Treasurer**

- Manage club account, fund collection, and allocation.
- Chair of *Fundraising Committee*.

- Collect and maintain active membership dues and list.
- Responsible for chartering the club each year.
- Responsible for all club financial transactions with accounting firm.

## **6) Members Services and Outreach Coordinator**

- Maintain active membership list and work with Treasurer to collect and track dues.
- Coordinate an annual membership drive, which can be a single event or a series of events.
- Coordinate with local college campuses to recruit new members. Includes working with students who contact us directly, researching and building a rapport with existing feminist campus groups.
- Work with Communications Director to keep members engaged and updated on social media.
- Report at general meetings on upcoming membership events, report at board meetings on membership numbers.

## **7) General Counsel**

- \*\* This is a non-elected position \*\*
- This position advises the club and PAC as needed

In the event that the Vice President is unable to act as the Alternate Central Committee Liaison another officer may be appointed to the Alternate Position by the President.

The **Immediate Past President** is an officer position automatically bestowed on the person who served as the President of the Club for the past term.

- a. In cases where the person who was President for the last term and the President for the current term is the same person, this position is not filled by anyone.
- b. The Immediate Past President is not permitted to vote during the meetings of the Executive Board.
- c. The Immediate Past President is not permitted any of these privileges if they do not meet the Good Standing Clause.

Additionally, each Chair of the club's committees will be considered an officer of the club. These officers are appointed by the President at the first meeting of the club in the new term of office and will conclude at the end of a one year term. These officers will not have a vote on the Executive Board, but are encouraged to attend said meetings to report on their area of assignment.

Each Committee will have the following appointed officers:

- a. Chair
- b. Vice Chair
- c. Recorder

**Interim Officers** are officers fulfilling a position normally occupied by an elected member but without having been elected in the Annual Election of Officers. These are

normally members who were appointed by the President to fill a vacancy. They are entitled to all powers afforded the elected officer once appointed.

**Presiding Officers** are those who are currently acting as the President or Chair during the meetings, as needed.

**Acting President** is a member who is serving as the President in place of the elected President either at the request of the same or in the absence thereof. Acting President is a temporary situation where the powers of the President transfer to the person acting as President until they are taken back by the elected President or they are removed permanently from the President.

Should the office of President be vacated, the Executive Board shall appoint a member of the board to fill the term with the newly appointed President appointing a current member to fill their board position vacancy.

The President is given the power to appoint the Club Representative to the Democratic Party of Sacramento County's Central Committee as well as the alternate. These people will be given all the same powers of an elected or ex-officio member of the Central Committee and will have full rights to perform their duties in this capacity as they feel are fitting to both themselves and the Fem Dems.

## **2. The Executive Board**

This committee consists of all of the elected officers and immediate past President. It is a planning committee that meets at least monthly for the purposes of planning the next month's agenda, processing of any resolution proposals, and the management of the overall function of the Fem Dems.

## **3. Standing Committees**

Standing Committees serve in their assigned capacities to handle specific elements of the Fem Dems. They meet a minimum of once per quarter and consist of a minimum of 5 regular members including the officers.

The following standing committees exist within the Fem Dems for the purposes stated below:

a. Endorsement Committee

This committee will handle the endorsement process, questionnaire formation and all other aspects of screening candidates and issues for endorsement consideration by the Membership. The Chair will inform the Fem Dems PAC of endorsed candidates with the knowledge that any financial support for an endorsed candidate comes from the PAC.

b. Fundraising Committee

This committee is tasked with the planning of events for fundraising purposes, and management of the fundraising plan. It will also handle all other tasks as assigned in this Bylaws, or by the Executive Board.

c. Volunteer Corps

This committee is tasked with recruiting, retaining, and engaging volunteers for any but not limited to the following: community partnerships, advocacy campaigns, voter registration drives, and/or candidate campaigns, etc.

d. Mentorship Committee

This committee is responsible for identifying, pairing up, and keeping in contact with mentees and mentors throughout the year. This committee is also responsible for creating a kick-off and ending ceremony event for all participants and members.

e. Special Events Committee

This committee is responsible for leading and organizing any special events, discussions, workshops, etc. that may arise during the course of the year.

#### **4. Ad Hoc Committees**

The President can create Ad Hoc Committees when such action is recommended for the handling of an issue or task.

#### **5. Committees**

All committees shall have a Chair appointed by the President or Acting President. This Chair is tasked with the appointment of the committee officers. At a minimum, the Chair shall select a Vice Chair and a Recorder.

## **Section II**

### **1. Annual Election of Officers**

The Annual Election of Officers shall be the process through which the elected officers are chosen for the next term. The process is conducted as follows:

- a. At the meeting in February, the nominations of persons, who meet the Good Standing Clause, to serve in the respective officer positions are opened.
- b. At the March meeting, the nominations for each officer position are closed to all interested persons who meet the Good Standing Clause, and the specific position is voted on.
- c. Once all officer positions have closed nominations and elected a new or returning officer, the outgoing officers are dismissed and a toast shall be given to welcome the incoming officers officially into office.
- d. With the dismissal of the outgoing officers, committee chairs term shall end. The President may appoint someone to fill that vacancy at her/his discretion.

### **2. Appointment of Replacement Officers**

If an elected or appointed position, other than that of President, becomes vacant at any time; the President is permitted to immediately appoint someone who meets the Good Standing Clause to fulfill that office as an Interim Officer for the remainder of the term.

### **3. Inactive Committee Chairs**

Should a standing committee chair fail to convene their committee over two quarters, they automatically forfeit their position and a new chair is appointed by the President.

#### **4. Inactive Board Officers**

Should an officer fail to attend, without being excused, more than 3 meetings per quarter, they automatically forfeit their position, which may be filled at the discretion of the President.

### **ARTICLE FOUR**

#### **Section I**

##### **1. Endorsements**

The Fem Dems participate in the politics of the area by offering an endorsement process for candidates and ballot measures being considered during special and regularly scheduled elections.

The Chair of the Endorsement Committee outlines the specific process for obtaining approval for consideration by the membership for endorsement. This process will include the questionnaire formation, the research of either side of ballot measures, and the impact of the endorsement/lack of endorsement to the Fem Dems.

The endorsement process is done in an efficient manner and the Endorsement Committee Chair is responsible for both a timely transmission of the questionnaire to candidates as well as for the completed questionnaires to the membership for review. Membership review and access to questionnaires shall be satisfied by publishing the completed questionnaires to the Fem Dems website: [www.femdem.org](http://www.femdem.org)

The Annual Endorsement Meeting will be held in July of election years.

The committee in consultation with the President or Acting President is tasked with the presentation of the endorsement portion of the meeting of the membership where the endorsement(s) is/are considered. This includes the process through which candidates are allowed to speak; presenters are allowed to speak on ballot measures; members are allowed to ask questions of the candidates/presenters; and the final preparation of the ballot for the endorsement(s) being considered during that meeting.

The membership votes by ballot and the Chair of the Endorsement Committee or the Executive Board tallies these votes. The final results of the vote are presented to the President for certification and announcement.

For ballot measures and local issues other than candidate races, the Fem Dems will make all reasonable effort to seek out both sides of an issue, allowing opposing sides reasonable opportunity to address memberships, before giving or withholding the endorsement.

No endorsement shall be given to any member of any other party.

Members are expected to disclose in good faith any conflicts of interest. Should a member have a conflict of interest they should recuse themselves from participating in the questions and discussion portion of the process. They may still cast a vote on the candidate or measure.

## **Section II**

### **1. Amendment of The Bylaws**

Any member may propose an amendment to this Bylaws. Such amendment proposals go through the following process:

- a. The amendment is proposed on the floor of a membership meeting. A vote is taken on the amendment proposal to be approved for proceeding through this process.
- b. The amendment proposal is given to the Executive Board, who drafts the final language of the amendment proposal and approves the same. This process carefully ensures the final language of the amendment does not place the amendment in contradiction to the rest of this document.
- c. The approved amendment draft becomes an amendment upon the approval of no less than two-thirds of the members present for the vote and meeting the Good Standing Clause.
- d. Where circumstances require, Bylaws may be amended by the Executive Board through a two-thirds vote. If done this way, any changes to the Bylaws must be communicated to the membership within 72 hours.

Care shall be taken to not approve amendments that unnecessarily redirect the Fem Dems away from its original mission. More than one amendment may be considered at a time.

These Bylaws automatically stand for review on an annual basis. The current President shall determine when best to fulfill this review during their term.