

SOUTH SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
DEMOCRATIC CLUB BY-LAWS

Adopted on April 10, 1999  
Amended on August 4, 2001  
Revised April 15, 2002  
Amended January 23, 2010

Revised Feb. 19, 2011

Amended June 18, 2011

Amended Feb. 18, 2012

Amended April 18, 2015

Amended June 20, 2015

Amended March 18, 2017

Article I: Name, Purpose and Geographic Area

- A. The formal name of this organization shall be the South Santa Clara County Democratic Club, also known as the South County Democratic Club (SCDC).
- B. The purpose of the Club shall be: To further the goals of the Democratic Party through active support of the policies and philosophies of the Democratic Party;
- C. To promote the election of strong Democratic candidates to local, state and national offices through fundraising and volunteer assistance.
  - 1. To study selected local issues of interest to Club members and formulate an appropriate action plan, including developing a formal Club opinion to be shared with appropriate community leaders and Democratic candidates. Such action plans or opinions would require a supermajority (60%) vote of the members.
  - 2. To provide support for the Santa Clara County Democratic Committee and the California Democratic Party.
  - 3. To register Democrats to vote and to educate and inform voters about Democratic values and goals.
- D. The geographic area of this Club encompasses the southern area of Santa Clara County, including the region in San Jose south of Bernal Road to the San Benito and Santa Cruz County line.

Article II: Membership & Voting Eligibility

- A. Applicants for regular, voting membership in the Club shall be currently registered Democrats. They must submit a membership application and appropriate dues. Dues may be waived for applicants with special hardships. New members are to receive a copy of the Club's By-Laws They will also be posted on the club's website.
- B. Membership categories are as follows:
  - 1. Individual membership.
  - 2. Family membership. A family consists of a couple plus two adults living at the same address. Each registered Democrat must be listed by name on the membership application in order to be given voting membership in the Club. Each additional adult family member beyond four must pay \$5.
  - 3. Student: Full-time students at any higher educational institution.
  - 4. Senior (55 and older).

5. Junior Democrat Member (non-voting, ages 15-17).
  6. Democratic Friends: For non-citizens who are ineligible to register to vote.  
Democratic Friends category members are welcome to express their opinions or serve as Committee Chairs or in appointed positions. However, they are ineligible to vote on Club matters or serve as elected officers.
- C. Dues are to be determined by the Executive Board.
- D. The membership year runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. A member in good standing is one who has been a member for over 60 days and is current in his or her dues. Expired memberships may be renewed at any time, but will not be prorated. Special enticements for early dues payment may be set by the Executive Board at their discretion. A new member shall be eligible to vote in all Club matters as of the effective date of the new membership. The new member will not be eligible to vote on endorsements, elections of officers and By-Law revisions until the second meeting following the receipt of such application and dues, or 60 days, whichever is less.
- E. Proxies are specifically forbidden other than for the purpose of endorsement.

### Article III: Officers and Duties

- A. The officers shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Together with Past Presidents, Parliamentarian and the elected club representative to the Central Committee they shall be known collectively as the Executive Board.
- B. The duties of the officers are as follows:
1. President: Leads the Club meetings, sets the agenda with input from the Executive Board as appropriate, chairs the Executive Board meetings, and represents the Club at regional meetings.
  2. Vice-President: Serves as a liaison between the officers and committees, chairs meetings and acts on behalf of the president in his/her absence, conducts all Club elections and endorsements at membership meetings.
  3. Secretary: Takes the minutes during general membership and Executive Board meetings, which are typed up and made available in a timely manner to the members. Club correspondence and e-mail messages from the officers are communicated to the members.
  4. Treasurer: Keeps accurate records of all incoming and outgoing monies related to the Club membership dues, donations, and fundraisers. Pays bills as needed. Files appropriate paperwork as required by the state. Reports fiscal status to the Club and Executive Board at each meeting.
  5. Past Presidents: Any president who has served for a minimum of one year. Their duties will be to advise the Executive Board and provide continuity.
  6. Parliamentarian: Assists the Executive Board in amending By-Laws, advises the Membership and Executive Board on following Roberts' Rules of Order.
  7. Club Representative to the Central Committee: Acts as liaison between the Membership and the Central Committee, shares information from Central Committee meetings with the club membership. Is required to attend at least ten meetings of the Central Committee per year or ask for an excused absence if unable to attend.
- C. Officers shall serve as the core of the Executive Board of the Club, in addition to other committee chairs. The officers shall be responsible for calling all meetings and will serve as the Nominating Committee, which will present a slate of prospective officers each year, in addition to accepting nominations from the floor.
- D. When running unopposed, a voice vote is acceptable. In the event there is more than one candidate for an office, a secret, written ballot must be used. A simple majority determines the winner. In the event of a tie, a second secret vote is to be taken.
- E. Officers must be members for 2 months prior to being elected. Officers shall have two year alternating terms with the President and Secretary being elected in even years and the Vice President and Treasurer being elected in odd years.
- F. In the event of a vacancy in any elected officer position, notice shall be given that

an election will be held for the purpose of choosing a successor at the next General Membership meeting. The Executive Board may appoint an interim officer to fill a vacated seat until such time as an election may be held.

- G. A written petition calling for the recall (revote) of any office, signed by a quorum (10%) of the general membership, may be submitted to the secretary no later than 3 weeks prior to the next general membership meeting. Members are to be notified that such issue will be voted on at the next meeting, at least 7 days prior to the meeting. The petition will be presented at the next general membership meeting, where a formal secret ballot will be taken on the subject of the petition.
- H. Ad-Hoc Committees may be established by the Executive Board for special purposes. Activities of any Ad-Hoc Committee must be in accordance with these Bylaws of the Club. Only Club members may vote in any Club committee.
- I. Officers shall not publicly (such as being listed on campaign literature or in the media as a supporter) identify themselves, with a specific reference to an association with this Club, as supporting a non-Democratic candidate.

#### Article IV: Standing Committees & Chairs

- A. The Club shall have Standing Committees and Chairs appointed by the Executive Board, to include the following: The executive board shall have the authority to make changes in assignments.
  - 1. Publicity: Includes alerting the media to upcoming meetings and events, and facilitating Club information on web sites as appropriate.
  - 2. Newsletter: Responsible for taking information from the Executive Board and developing, printing, and distributing the newsletter to members. (Costs to be reimbursed)
  - 3. Membership: Includes keeping accurate records as to the status of each member's dues, planning events or activities to increase membership, initiating phone tree to remind membership of upcoming meetings or events.
  - 4. Young Democrats: Responsible for facilitating the interest and membership of younger Democrats, coordinating with other local Young Democrats groups.
  - 5. Issues Committee: Helps identify issues of local interest to Club members, develops an action plan to be presented to the Executive Board for input, then general membership.
  - 6. Endorsement Committee: Members must disclose, to both the executive board and the general membership, their endorsements or affiliations with any candidate before conducting the endorsement process. They are responsible for endorsement recommendations.
  - 7. Campaign Committee: Acts as a liaison between the Club and endorsed candidates, coordinates and organizes volunteers for campaign purposes, helps plan fundraising events. They may recommend monetary amounts for endorsed candidates.
- B. The Chairs listed above shall serve as members of the Executive Board, along with Club officers.
- C. The Chairs shall accept and seek assistance from members to perform the duties described above.

#### 5) Article V: Meetings & Notices

- A. Regular meetings of the General Membership shall be held at least quarterly on a date to be determined by the Executive Board.
- B. Special Meetings of the General Membership shall be called by the Executive Board, or shall be called upon written demand of a quorum of the General Membership.
- C. Prior notice shall be given to all Club members of any general membership meeting.
- D. A quorum shall consist of at least ten percent of dues-paying members or 10 Club

members whichever is smaller. Robert's Rules of Order, last revised edition, shall govern procedures to the extent that they are consistent with these Bylaws or those bylaws of other bodies, which the Club may join.

E. Consensus will be the goal of all decisions made by the Club.

#### Article VI: Budget & Expenditure

A. Budget and expenditures shall be approved as follows:

1. There shall be no encumbrances or deficit expenditures by the Club.
2. The Treasurer shall propose an annual budget for approval of the General Membership and shall oversee all expenditures of the Club. Expenses for ongoing Club operations, such as postage, envelopes, labels, etc. should be paid and reported to the Club as part of the Treasurer's report .

B. Fundraising: Members should vote whenever possible in terms of the scope and nature of the fundraising event. When planning special events, such as a fundraiser or luncheon, any funds needed to operate such events should be recouped from fees collected. Overhead for such projects should be discussed with members and the Executive Board and approved by the Officers. Club campaign contributions should not be taken from the general operating funds. Specific fundraising activities and/or appeals to members for campaign contributions should fund all campaign contributions. Specific dollar amounts are to be distributed to endorsed candidates and vendors, etc. as per approval of the executive board and/or the membership. Campaign flyers, mailings or any media exposure paid for by the Club are to be approved by the Executive Board.

C. State and Federal Funding Limits: The club will not spend an amount greater than \$999.00 in any calendar year to financially support candidates for either federal or state office.

#### Article VII: Endorsement Procedures

A. All candidate and ballot measure endorsements shall be made in the following manner:

1. No candidate for any public office or ballot measure shall receive the endorsement of the Club, unless prior notice of that intent has been made to all Club members.
2. Endorsement voters must have been members for at least 60 days or the second meeting following receipt of their dues, whichever is less.
3. Candidates and ballot measure endorsements must receive at least a 50% +1 affirmative vote of the ballots cast in that specific race by the eligible Club members and valid proxies at a Club meeting.
4. Multiple candidates and offices may be included on the same ballot.
5. Candidates and proponents/opponents shall be permitted to address the general membership concerning the proposed endorsements. The Executive Board has the right to set appropriate time limits for said speeches.

B. In partisan and nonpartisan elections, only registered Democrats may be considered and supported for public office. If a candidate or ballot measure is unable to achieve 50% + 1 of the vote, then no endorsement will be given.

C. All remaining candidates shall be designated not endorsed. The Club shall not lend nor provide its name or campaign assistance to non-endorsed candidates or ballot measures.

D. To rescind a Club endorsement:

1. The petition to rescind must receive at least two-thirds affirmative votes of the original endorsement votes cast in that race.
2. To rescind a Club endorsement, a petition to rescind, including specific reasons for doing so, signed by a quorum of Club members must be submitted to the secretary. The secretary will notify the Executive Board and the item will be placed on the next meeting's agenda. Members will be notified prior to the

meeting that such petition to rescind an endorsement will be voted on at the next Club meeting.

- E. The General Membership of the Club will typically endorse a candidate for public office or a ballot measure after the official filing date for said public office or ballot measure has passed. However, the Executive Board may ask the Club for an early endorsement in cases where it is politically advantageous to do so.
- F. Representatives to the California Democratic Party Pre-Endorsement conferences shall have been members in good standing for at least 60 days. They shall be chosen by a vote of the members at a meeting that has been duly noticed two weeks in advance in the club's newsletter. There shall be one representative per 20 members in each assembly district.

#### Article VIII: Bylaws & Amendments

- A. These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon approval of the General Membership and may be amended by the following procedure:
  - 1. A supermajority (60% or greater) of voting members present at the meeting must approve any amendment to the By-Laws.
  - 2. Any proposed By-Law amendment must be prepared in writing by a Club member(s), which will then be presented to the Executive Board.
  - 3. The Executive Board shall submit the amendment to the membership at a General Membership meeting for discussion and adoption.
  - 4. Club members shall be duly noticed on any proposed amendments (and proposed new language) to the By-Laws. The Executive Board must approve the method of notification.