

## Pacific Green Party of Oregon Constitution and Bylaws

Current as of September 02, 2008

### **Constitution**

#### **Constitution Article I - Name**

The legal name of this organization is the Pacific Green Party of Oregon, hereinafter also referred to as “the party”.

#### **Constitution Article II - Purpose**

The Pacific Green Party is established to provide a new voice in the political system, to decentralize political and economic power, and to work for peace, justice, basic human equality, self determination, and an ecologically sustainable society. To achieve our mission, the Pacific Green Party is organized to operate within the State of Oregon election laws as a political party.

#### **Constitution Article III - Membership**

Membership categories are defined as follows:

- A. Member - As defined in ORS 248.002(4), an individual who is registered as being affiliated with the party.
- B. Supporting Member - A member of the party who subscribes to the Statement of Principles and has made an annual contribution as defined in the bylaws.
- C. Auxiliary Member - An individual who is not eligible to register to vote with the State of Oregon but has met all the other qualifications for supporting membership.

#### **Constitution Article IV - Organization**

The party shall strive for diversity at all levels of organization. The party is established as a direct, participatory democracy. One person, one vote - all members are encouraged to participate at all state and local meetings in accordance with the bylaws.

- A. Chapters may be established in accordance with the bylaws.
- B. County central committees may be established in accordance with the bylaws and state election laws. In the absence of a county-level process for electing members to the county central committee, individuals may be appointed by the coordinating committee.
- C. Coordinating Committee

C.1. A Coordinating Committee (CC) for the state shall be comprised of 7 seats, to be filled by members who have been supporting members for at least three months prior to the CC election. Six of the CC members shall serve two-year staggered terms, with three of these members elected each year. One CC member will serve for a one-year term.

C.2. When a vacancy occurs prior to expiration of a Coordinating Committee's term, the CC has the authority to appoint a replacement to serve the remaining portion of the term.

C.3. When the CC by resignation or removal has less than 7 members, it shall continue to operate and function using a quorum system. A quorum for this purpose shall be a majority of the current members of the CC.

C.4. The responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee include:

C.4.a. Managing state-level finances;

C.4.b. Maintaining compliance with state election law requirements;

C.4.c. Scheduling and conducting state conventions;

C.4.d. Representing statewide Party interests;

C.4.e. Making binding interpretations of state organizational documents;

C.4.f. Appointing standing and ad hoc committees;

C.4.g. Any other duties that may arise requiring statewide coordination and administration efforts.

#### D. Officers

The party officers shall be two state co-chairs, a treasurer, and a secretary. Officers shall be appointed by the coordinating committee and shall serve at its pleasure. The co-chairs shall be members of the Coordinating Committee. When possible, one co-chair shall be female and one shall be male.

#### **Constitution Article V - Conventions**

Statewide conventions shall be held at least three times a year. Preferred dates shall be January/February, May/June, and September/October. The next year's schedule and locations to be decided at the September/October meeting so that preparations can be made in advance.

#### **Constitution Article VI - Annual Gathering**

The party may hold an annual gathering, in conjunction, or not, with a convention for the purpose of community building, networking, education, debate, celebration and fun.

### **Constitution Article VII - Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds active approval cast by supporting members at a convention.

---

## **Bylaws**

### **Bylaws Article I - Preamble, Purpose and Methods**

The Pacific Green Party is designed to be a true grass roots decentralized organization. One of the most significant elements in the American culture we are striving to overcome is the value placed upon domination of other people, other species, and the Earth. We encourage our members to participate in community projects, non-violent direct action and electoral campaigns.

### **Bylaws Article II - Statement of Principles**

The Pacific Green Party recognizes that our society and government are plagued by inequality, militarism, poverty, and pollution. We envision and strive to create a local-based grassroots democracy that will overcome these societal ills.

We declare that all [men] People, when they form a social compact are equal in right: that all power is inherent in the People, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness; and they have at all times a right to alter, reform, or abolish the government in such a manner as they may think proper.

[Modified as indicated] - Article 1, Section 1, Oregon Constitution.

The Pacific Green Party strives for cultural diversity and gender balance and believes in a limited government whose legitimate functions include:

- ensuring equal rights for all regardless of race, sex, ideology, philosophy/religion, sexual orientation, age, physical abilities or economic status;
- ensuring that basic human needs, food, shelter, health care and education, are met;
- promoting an economic structure that creates opportunities for meaningful work;
- maintaining and restoring the natural environment for its own sake as well as for future generations;
- promoting energy conservation and the immediate development of renewable and non-polluting energy sources;

- addressing the struggle of Native Peoples, African-Americans, and other ethnic communities who have suffered as a result of government policy in the U.S.;
- ensuring the right to privacy, including, but not limited to, the right to reproductive choice;
- promoting an open, accessible, and truly democratic electoral process.

Achieving peace, justice and a sustainable environment will require that people work within present institutions while simultaneously creating new ones. The Pacific Green Party respects the diversity of approaches necessary to attain these goals.

The Pacific Green Party has been created because of the inability or unwillingness of existing parties to address the fundamental problems of our region and the legitimate needs and aspirations of its people. We accept the challenge of infusing the present system with accountability, future focus, and ecological wisdom.

### **Bylaws Article III - Membership**

A. The party constitution lists an annual contribution as a prerequisite for supporting membership. The coordinating committee shall specify at least two acceptable contributions, one monetary and one non-monetary, from which members may individually choose.

B. People who are not supporting members may attend meetings, but can not vote.

C. A supporting member may begin to vote at the second meeting they attend.

D. Notwithstanding the above, any member may attend party conventions and may vote in the nomination of candidates for public office.

### **Bylaws Article IV - Rules of Order**

A. The Pacific Green Party strives for consensus, encouraging input from all members regarding important matters, but will operate by majority vote. Unless otherwise specified in this document, all decisions by the Party will be made by each supporting member in good standing present casting one vote with a majority of affirmative votes required for passage. A majority is defined as more than half the total votes cast.

B. Amendments to the Mission Statement, the Statement of Principles, constitution and bylaws will require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the supporting members eligible to vote and voting at a convention or meeting; there shall be no voting by mail or proxy. All proposed changes must be received by the coordinating committee 30 days before the convention or meeting. Individuals proposing a change shall provide sufficient copies for each member of the coordinating committee and for the party officers. The coordinating committee shall try to disseminate the proposed changes as widely as possible.

### **Bylaws Article V - Officers**

Officers can be members of the coordinating committee, however no one may hold more than one office. Duties of the officers are as set out in the bylaws or as directed by the coordinating committee.

#### A. Duties

A.1. The co-chairs preside at all meetings, and have other duties established by the coordinating committee.

A.2. The secretary shall be the party recording officer and the corresponding officer with the State of Oregon.

A.3. The treasurer shall maintain all party financial records and comply with the State of Oregon campaign finance laws.

### **Bylaws Article VI - Executive Committee**

The executive committee shall be composed of the officers and the coordinating committee.

#### A. Duties

A.1. All officers shall participate in coordinating committee meetings.

A.2. Set the agenda for state meetings. The agenda must be approved by majority vote at the appropriate state meetings.

### **Bylaws Article VII - Advisory Board**

An advisory board shall be established and maintained by the party to provide continuity, stability and support for the party, local chapters and the statewide coordinating committee. The advisory board shall consist of supporting members who have demonstrated skills and/or who have served previously on the statewide coordinating committee. The advisory board may be of any practical size as determined by either the party in convention or by the statewide coordinating committee and shall provide representation from a variety of geographical regions. Members of the advisory board shall be selected by the party at convention or by the statewide coordinating committee in between conventions; and serve indefinitely at the pleasure of the party or statewide coordinating committee. The statewide coordinating committee shall meet with the advisory board at least twice annually and the advisory board shall consult with the coordinating committee on a regular basis. The advisory board is subject to the party committee openness requirements of these bylaws.

The advisory board shall provide advice to the statewide coordinating committee and the party for long-range planning, voter registration, conducting electoral campaigns, fundraising, budgeting, media, outreach, administration and any other essential activities

of the party. The advisory board shall assist in ensuring that important party documents, newspapers, newsletters and press clippings are properly archived.

### **Bylaws Article VIII - Meeting Structure**

A. It is highly recommended that all meetings and gatherings of the Pacific Green Party begin with a reading of our Mission Statement and Statement of Principles.

B. During open discussions all attendees are encouraged to participate in a respectful and supportive manner. People will be discouraged from speaking too long, so that all may speak. The group may appoint a facilitator, process observer and/or a timekeeper. The goal of a discussion is an open exchange of ideas without personal biases and criticism.

C. Consensus shall be employed with Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline if necessary.

### **Bylaws Article IX - Membership Meetings**

#### **A. Conventions**

A.1. The following activities shall take place only at convention:

A.1.a. Nominating or endorsing any candidates for partisan public offices or statewide non-partisan public offices. Chapters shall report any endorsements they have made of non-partisan local candidates to the coordinating committee within ten working days and to the statewide membership at the next convention. The coordinating committee shall disseminate news of the endorsement(s) within ten working days of receipt.

A.1.b. Electing coordinating committee members; and

A.1.c. Amending the constitution or bylaws.

A.2. Every convention shall be publicized as required in ORS 248.009(3) for nominating conventions. Additionally, the coordinating committee shall attempt to give notice to every supporting member in the applicable region (generally the entire state) at least 10 days prior to the convention. 60 days' notice is preferred but not required.

A.3. Convention rules shall be adopted and/or amended at any duly constituted state convention by a simple majority vote of the supporting members attending.

A.4. Votes taken at convention specific to candidate nominations and endorsements, ballot initiative endorsements, and election of state coordinating committee members may be taken using absentee ballots. The state coordinating committee shall establish procedures for when and how a convention vote will be taken using absentee ballots.

#### **B. Minimum meeting requirements**

B.1. The coordinating committee shall convene at least two statewide membership meetings each calendar year, including at least one convention scheduled between February 1 and July 1, and in even-numbered years including at least one convention that meets the legal timing requirements for nominating candidates to statewide office.

### **Bylaws Article X - Emergency Meetings**

If the coordinating committee fails to hold any regularly scheduled meeting, 15 supporting members in good standing can call for that meeting with 30 days written notice to all supporting members.

### **Bylaws Article XI - Platform**

The party may adopt in convention a platform consistent with the Mission Statement and Statement of Principles. The platform shall consist of a number of planks which shall state the party position on specific issues. The platform shall be considered plank by plank, and each plank must pass a two-thirds vote of the supporting members present in order to be adopted into the platform.

### **Bylaws Article XII - Legislative Committee**

Once a supporting member is elected to public office, a Legislative Committee shall be formed consisting of the office holder(s) and supporting members. The Legislative Committee shall be at the level at which the office is held, e.g., if it's a local office the committee is at a local level. This is to ensure communication and accountability to the Party's Purpose, Platform and Principles.

### **Bylaws Article XIII - Expulsion of Chapters, Individuals or Coordinating Committee Personnel**

A. The party has the right to expel an individual who demonstrably violates the party principles. It shall require a unanimous vote of the coordinating committee or a two-thirds vote of the supporting members present at a convention.

B. Coordinating Committee Personnel can be expelled for 'cause' by a two-thirds vote of supporting members qualified to vote at any statewide meeting.

### **Bylaws Article XIV - Finances**

A. All contributions and funds raised shall be handled through the PGP Political Party Committee (PPC).

B. Decisions regarding finances are the responsibility of the coordinating committee, in consultation with the officers.

C. Party candidates shall form their own PACs.

D Any statewide party money that is to be spent on salaries must be approved by the coordinating committee.

E. Recognized chapters may raise funds as the Pacific Green Party and are to send all funds to the party treasurer to account for and deposit such funds.

#### **Bylaws Article XV - State Outreach**

A. Any supporting member can present the Principles of the Party.

B. An action or event may be called in the name of the Party only with the approval of the coordinating committee or the supporting membership at a regularly scheduled meeting.

C. Anything carrying the party name must be cleared by the coordinating committee before being distributed. Chapters must use the party name and symbol with their chapter designation, e.g. Eugene Chapter of the Pacific Green Party of Oregon.

D. Only designated spokespeople may speak for the state party. Statewide designation shall be by the supporting membership at a regularly scheduled statewide meeting, or by the coordinating committee.

#### **Bylaws Article XVI - Chapters**

A. Chapters are the primary grassroots organizations of the party. As such, they are the primary catalysts for grassroots political change. The state party shall supply chapters with information and expertise upon request.

B. Any 5 supporting members may apply to form a party chapter, by sending the following information to the party secretary:

B.1. The names of those 5 supporting members;

B.2. The proposed chapter's name;

B.3. The proposed chapter's geographic boundaries;

B.4. The name of a designated liaison to the coordinating committee; and

B.5. Either the name of a designated treasurer, or a statement that the chapter won't deal with money.

C. The coordinating committee shall either accept or reject the chapter application. A rejection shall be for written cause, and if the rejection is not ratified at the next state convention, the chapter application is approved.

D. The coordinating committee may revoke an existing chapter for written cause. The revocation is effective immediately, but must be ratified at the next state convention or the chapter becomes reinstated.

E. The coordinating committee may require chapters that deal with money to form PACs prior to fundraising or receiving contributions.

F. Chapters shall notify the party secretary of any changes to the information listed in Section B of this article, within 2 weeks of the change.

G. There is no prohibition on people joining multiple chapters.

H. A person may choose not to be a member of any chapter.

I. A chapter may set its own membership requirements.

J. Each chapter shall submit a roster of its members to the party secretary every six months.

K. Chapter activities may be restricted only by the party supporting membership per se, e.g. by changing the bylaws at a convention. Therefore the coordinating committee may not directly prohibit specific chapter activities, although it retains total discretion in such potentially-related areas as allocating state funds and interpreting the bylaws.

L. In all state party documents except the constitution, references to non-state-level matters such as chapters shall be either explicit or immediately clear from context. All other references are understood to apply exclusively to state level party operations.

M. Chapters shall not endorse different candidates for an election or series of elections for a particular public office, or take conflicting positions on other electoral matters such as endorsing ballot measures and the associated petitions and campaigns. If two conflicting endorsements are simultaneous, they shall both be void; if consecutive, the first shall be valid and the second void.

N. Prior to endorsing a candidate for public office, or taking a position on another electoral matter such as endorsing a ballot measure or an associated petition or campaign, a chapter must determine whether the district in which people may vote for that office in the public election ("voting district") overlaps any other chapters. If so, the first chapter must contact each of those other chapters that is active in any county containing any portion of the overlap, and offer them the option to participate in a joint decision. If any of those other chapters accepts that option, the following subsection (1) shall apply.

N.1. Joint decisions by chapters considering endorsement

N.1.a. The collection of chapters participating in the endorsement shall specify a joint decision procedure for the purpose of determining which candidate(s) are suitable for

endorsement. The joint decision procedure must be acceptable to each participating chapter.

N.1.b. Any participating chapter may appeal to the state coordinating committee, in which case the state coordinating committee shall specify a binding joint decision procedure.

N.1.c. The joint decision does not, in and of itself, endorse any candidate. Each chapter (participating or not) has the right to decide for itself whether to endorse a candidate approved by the joint decision or to take no position. A chapter may make this independent decision in advance of the joint decision and 'trigger' it to take effect when the joint decision has been made.

N.1.d. Prior to the joint decision, all chapters (participating or not) are prohibited from endorsing any candidate. Thereafter, all chapters (participating or not) are prohibited from endorsing any candidate deemed unsuitable by the joint decision.

N.1.e. At any time, a chapter may permanently remove itself from the joint decision procedure.

N.1.f. At any time, the chapters participating in the joint decision procedure may by unanimous agreement abort the joint decision process.

#### **Bylaws Article XVII - County Central Committees**

A. An organization may be both a chapter and a county central committee, so long as it satisfies the criteria for each such classification.

B. County central committees that are not chapters may engage only in activities that are permitted to them by the state party.

#### **Bylaws Article XVIII - External Organizations**

A. Green Party of the United States

A.1. The Pacific Green Party is a member of the Green Party of the United States and is entitled to representation on the National Committee. The members of the PGP shall elect their National Committee representatives at convention. The PGP will seek gender equality in its representation. Terms are for two years and will be staggered to ensure continuity.

Representatives may serve an unlimited number of terms, but it is recommended that they not serve more than two terms consecutively.

A.2. Representatives shall report at least monthly to the PGP coordinating committee and shall consult with the PGP coordinating committee prior to casting votes on major decisions.

## **Bylaws Article XIX - Convention and Committee Process**

### **A. Consensus Process**

A.1. In order to express our dedication to increasing representative Democracy and openness, the Pacific Green Party is dedicated to using a formalized agreement seeking process. Agreement seeking will encourage the party to build unity without holding the group to the restrictions of classic consensus process.

A.2. Party conventions will be conducted by an agreement seeking process, as follows. In this process, all items begin in consensus mode. Through discussion, the facilitator continually summarizes all of the input provided, seeking to weave it into a unified body that gradually approaches consensus as the process unfolds.

A.3. The facilitator will weave the input together into a tentative agreement once. If, in calling for concerns, stand-asides and blocks, consensus is not reached, the facilitator will make a second attempt, seeking to incorporate the concerns of the person(s) blocking. If in the second call there are still blocks, decision making will automatically shift to voting process for the remainder of the item. The item under consideration must pass by a simple majority in order to be adopted, except in matters where the current bylaws require a two-thirds majority. All party members are strongly encouraged to attend a workshop on consensus decision making.

A.4. Votes taken at convention specific to candidate nominations and endorsements, ballot initiative endorsements, and election of state coordinating committee members may be taken using absentee ballots. The state coordinating committee shall establish procedures for when and how a convention vote will be taken using absentee ballots.

### **B. Agenda committee**

B.1. Immediately after each annual summer convention, the coordinating committee shall appoint an agenda committee of one or more people. The agenda committee shall include a coordinating committee member, such as the process committee chair. This committee will have the authority and responsibility to:

B.1.a. set and publicize the agenda item deadline for each convention;

B.1.b. receive agenda items and documentation;

B.1.c. draft agendas in consultation with the facilitator;

B.1.d. reject any item that has not been reviewed by an appropriate committee, has not met submission deadlines, or is not accompanied by appropriate documentation.

B.2. The agenda committee will make a sincere attempt to include all items submitted with proper process, subject to the time allowed for the convention. The deadline for the submission of items by committees to the agenda committee for each convention will be no less than 30 days before the convention.

B.3. It is understood that the role of committees in evaluating convention agenda items is to help ensure the fruitful use of the membership's time in convention by presenting thorough, well considered proposals, without unduly limiting the access of individuals to the membership.

B.4. If there is no other appropriate committee, items will be submitted to the coordinating committee for review. All final decisions on convention agendas will be made by the membership assembled in convention.

#### C. Convention agenda items

C.1. All convention agenda items, except party elections, must include appropriate documentation. Documentation for introduction, discussion or decision items should include, as appropriate:

C.1.a. the background of the issue in question,

C.1.b. the current situation, needs or problems,

C.1.c. options considered as solutions (if any) and why they were rejected,

C.1.d. the full text of the proposal,

C.1.e. an explanation of how the proposal would meet the current needs or problems,

C.1.f. any supplementary documentation needed to understand the proposal,

C.1.g. name and contact information for the item sponsor,

C.1.h. indication of whether the item is being presented for introduction, discussion, and/or decision; if it is being presented for decision, how urgent it is that the decision be made at the next available opportunity; and clear justification for this urgency.

D. The deadline for publishing the agenda and supporting documentation will be no less than 14 calendar days before the convention. Chapters shall be responsible for making the agenda and documentation available to their membership in a timely fashion.

E. Committee, officer and chapter reports will be submitted in writing. A short time will be allowed on the agenda for questions and concerns for each report or cluster of reports. Convention attendees should expect to have read the agenda and all documentation in preparation for the convention.

## F. Committees

F.1. Except as otherwise noted in the constitution and bylaws, only the coordinating committee shall create and disband committees, and appoint and dismiss committee members.

F.2. Each party supporting member has the right to observe the work of any committee. This includes attending committee meetings, being informed of upcoming meetings, receiving handouts, and receiving email sent among committee members.

F.3. Each committee may make exceptions to paragraph 2 for staff evaluations, with or without notice. Such exceptions shall be reported as meeting minutes.

F.4. Each committee is encouraged to keep a list of any party supporting members who have stated a wish to observe their committee, because active use of such a list tends to improve compliance with paragraph 2.

F.5. Committee observers are responsible for being available to receive information. For example, a committee observer who does not attend a committee meeting should expect to receive, at most, the same amount of information regarding that meeting as received by a committee member who misses the meeting. A committee observer who does not have electronic mail should expect to receive, at most, the same amount of information regarding an electronic mail conversation as received by a committee member who does not have electronic mail.

F.6. Committees should generally encourage and allow party supporting members who are not committee members to actively participate, such as by talking at meetings.

F.7. Each committee that has a specified membership has the authority to evaluate the usefulness and efficiency of active participation by non-committee-members, and to limit such active participation when, if, and how it deems necessary.

F.8. The coordinating committee may make exceptions to paragraph 7.

F.9. This section (F) applies only to state-level committees, not to committees formed by chapters. (See also Bylaws Article XVI, section L.)

F.10. Agenda items for conventions may be sponsored by committees or individuals. Items sponsored by individuals other than the party coordinator(s) must be submitted to an appropriate committee for seasoning at least 45 days before the convention. The

committee will review items for appropriateness and completeness of thinking and documentation.

G. The agenda committee will strive to limit the agenda to items appropriate for the specific convention. Constitution and Bylaws changes will be handled exclusively at the Annual Business Convention (scheduled between February 1 and July 1 as indicated in Bylaws Article IX, section B.1). Nominations of candidates to statewide office will be the primary focus of the Nominating conventions (in even numbered years, Bylaws Article IX, section B.1) in order to allow ample time for presentations and discussion. Other conventions/conferences will be dedicated to Party building and information sharing as desired by the party membership. Wherever possible, constitution and bylaws proposals will be submitted at the convention or conference prior to the annual convention for introduction and discussion so that the decisions in this regard will be made with proper consideration.