

46TH DISTRICT DEMOCRATS 2021 Standing Rules for Endorsements

As Adopted 3/17/21



1. Meeting Scheduling and Conduct

- a. Meetings to allow the 46th District Democrats to express support for or against candidates and ballot measures shall be called according to the terms of the Bylaws.
- b. Endorsement Meetings shall be conducted according to these Standing Rules, which must be posted for the membership at least 10 days prior to an Endorsement meeting and reviewed at the meeting prior to any action taken to endorse. Endorsement meetings are governed by the Bylaws of the 46th District Democrats, and conducted according to the edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, current edition, incorporated by rule into the Bylaws.
- c. At least one Endorsement Meeting shall be held before each of the Primary and the General Election.
- d. Ballot measures on the November ballot will be eligible for endorsement at the August District General Meeting.
- e. Motions to consider Ballot Measures not appearing on the November general election ballot will be in order at any other general membership meeting if such is announced in the 10-day meeting notice. If a district member wishes to bring a potential ballot measure to the attention of the chair for placement on the agenda, they must contact the Chair at chair@46dems.org at least 14 days before the meeting at which the member would like the measure considered to facilitate inclusion in the meeting notice.

2. Member Eligibility to Vote

- a. All members in good standing who will be 18 years of age or older on or before November General Election Day (for 2021, November 2, 2021) are eligible to vote in Endorsement Meetings.
- b. Persons who were members in good standing of the 46th District Democrats in the previous year may renew their membership up to the time of the Endorsement Meeting. Other members must have become members at least 21 days prior to the Endorsement Meeting.
- c. Voting by proxy is not allowed. For further guidance on this rule, please refer to the 46th District By-Laws.
- d. ADA accommodations are provided upon request, per the bylaws of the 46th District.

3. Candidate Eligibility for Endorsement

- a. To be eligible for endorsement, a candidate for partisan office must file as a Democrat and declare affiliation only with the Democratic Party for a period of at least one year prior to the endorsement meeting. For non-partisan races other than judicial races, a candidate must publicly identify as a Democrat.
- b. The 46th District Democrats do not have an endorsement committee. Instead, all members are responsible for informing themselves of the candidates' qualifications.
- c. To be eligible for consideration for endorsement, with the exception of Federal office candidates previously endorsed for the same office, and candidates for judicial office, candidates must document their partisan participation over the last five years, especially noting if the candidate has been a member of any other party, with explanation, using the appropriate candidate questionnaire. Candidates must document that they currently identify as a Democrat on the questionnaire, except in the case of judicial candidates, who are prevented from party identification. As used in this section, the term "party" is understood to mean a 'bona fide political party' as that term is defined in the state public disclosure law (RCW 42.17A.005(6)).
- d. All candidates, with the exception of Federal office candidates previously endorsed for the same office, must sign and submit the appropriate designated candidate questionnaire for their office and any 46th District Democrats questionnaire addendum. The Chair of the 46th District Democrats must receive the completed questionnaire sent to chair@46dems.org no later than 10 calendar days prior to the Endorsement Meeting at which the candidate wishes to be considered for endorsement. **The chair may clearly designate an alternate email address for submissions which will simultaneously send the questionnaire to the chair and post it to the membership website for consideration***. All questionnaires submitted by candidates requesting endorsement will be publicly posted online for the consideration of the members of the 46th District Democrats.

****Note: An alternate URL for questionnaires has been designated for 2021 – it is clearly identified on the endorsements page of 46dems.org. Questionnaires submitted any other way cannot be considered.***

e. A motion to suspend the deadline for receipt of a candidate's questionnaire by the district chair may be made at the endorsement meeting and requires a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and eligible to vote. No candidate, with the exception of Federal candidates previously endorsed for the same office, may be considered without a questionnaire having been submitted.

f. The district chair or their appointed designee(s) will make best efforts to contact all known eligible candidates for office, as well as both proponents and opponents of ballot measures, to participate in the endorsement meeting(s) and any candidate and issues forums. However, it is the responsibility of any candidate or ballot committee wishing to participate in the endorsement process to contact the District in a timely fashion.

g. The current 46th district website shall prominently provide an explanation of the District's endorsement process, provide access to all designated questionnaire forms, and display the date, time, and location of each forum and each Endorsement Meeting.

4. Suspension of Endorsement Rules

Any request to suspend these rules for a particular race or ballot issue must be made prior to consideration of that race or ballot issue; under Roberts Rules of Order, such a motion requires a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by voting members present for such suspension. The requirement specified in Rule 4(a) of a 60% vote for an endorsement or recommendation cannot be suspended, and any motion to close nominations is prohibited. By-laws may not be suspended.

5. Order, Ballot, and Tally Procedures Applying to all Contests

a. A minimum of 60% of the eligible voters present and voting, excluding abstentions and excluding ballots ruled invalid, is required for adoption of an endorsement position.

b. Action is taken as a vote of endorsement or rejection for candidates or positions on ballot measures. Rejection may include adoption of a position specifically opposed to a candidate or ballot issue. No Action is a default position available on all ballots.

c. All voting will be by written ballots (anonymous paper ballots filled out by each voter OR electronic ballots with a means of retention without linkage to each voter) issued to eligible voters in all races with two or more eligible candidates. Other procedural votes may be by show of hands, unless a member requests written ballots, which will be anonymized in reports. This rule is to protect the privacy of those individuals whose public office or employment prevents them from a public display of specific candidate support and may not be ignored for expediency.

d. Counting of votes shall be completed according to accepted best practices and in accordance with any adopted Tally Rules in a manner that allows observation by any member who wishes to do so. An audit report, which can be electronically inspected in real time, is an acceptable substitute for physical observers, when emergency conditions require online virtual meetings.

e. After voting is completed, witnesses shall observe ballots being sealed in an envelope, the seals signed by at least two members of the Tally committee and handed to the District Chair or a member of the 46th District Democrats in good standing, as designated by the Chair, for retention for at least 90 days. In the event of emergency electronic balloting, the audit report referenced in 4.d shall serve as the ballots to comply with the 90-day retention requirement.

f. The meeting chair may propose a single consolidated list to expedite the endorsement of candidates in all or most races with only one endorsement-eligible candidate seeking the endorsement of the District. The candidates so situated shall be identified and the meeting chair shall provide an opportunity for any member to flag for individual consideration a candidate or candidates they wish to vote on separately. All flagged candidates shall be removed from the list. Once this method has established the consolidated list, then a motion will be entertained to endorse candidates on the consolidated list as a group.

6. Tie Votes

a. If any ballot for an endorsement or recommendation results in a tie, and the tie affects which ballot choice moves on to the next step or receives the endorsement/recommendation, a Tiebreaker Vote will be held. Eligible voters will revote only on the tied items with the subsequent winner advancing to the next step.

b. If the Tiebreaker Vote results in another tie, the chair or their designee will conduct a coin flip or lot drawing, as done in public elections in Washington in accordance with state law, to determine the outcome.

7. Endorsement Consideration Procedures for Candidate Races

- a. Each eligible candidate, or one non-member designees, may be given up to two minutes to speak or use as they wish at the time they are nominated. Other than the candidate or one designee, only members of the 46th District may speak during the candidate's two minute presentation. If the district chair or their designee, in their sole determination, feels that in the interest of limited time this amount of time must be reduced, the chair may do so, provided that all nominees in a single race are given the same amount of time. The chair may consult with others to make this determination, however, this decision of the chair is final and is not subject to appeal.
- b. The chair or their designee, at their sole discretion, will set the agenda for the order in which races will be considered for endorsement. Only eligible voters may make motions to endorse/nominate candidates eligible for endorsement. A motion to close nominations shall be out of order.
- c. Each nominated candidate is allowed a single nomination presentation of no more than two minutes, which may include the candidate themselves, or if the candidate cannot be present, one member or non-member official designee identified to the chair prior to the meeting, and any additional presenters, who *must be voting-eligible members* of the 46th District Democrats. The Chair may recognize a candidate or member for up to an additional 30 seconds to rebut a specific negative statement or ad hominem attack directed against a named candidate. Speakers shall identify themselves prior to making nomination speeches on behalf of any candidate. Eligible voters may NOT cede their time to anyone ineligible to vote at the meeting.
- d. All eligible candidates who are nominated who have not already been eliminated in a previous round and "No Action" will be an option on every ballot.

8. Endorsement Consideration Procedures for Ballot Measures

- a. Ballot Measures include all initiatives, referenda, levies, bonds, advisory votes, and other races without candidates. The question to endorse a Ballot Measure shall be considered in the form it will appear on the ballot. Motions for a specific endorsement to support or oppose a Ballot Measure are not in order, as the District's position - "Endorse" or approve, "Reject", or oppose, or "No Action" or take no position will be determined by the voting. Motions to consider a "Yes" vote or a "No vote" are in order. The default option to take "No Action" is available on all ballots. If no action is taken, then the ballot measure remains eligible for endorsement consideration at a future date.
- b. For each motion to consider a Ballot Measure, a presentation of a speech or speeches totaling of not more than 2 minutes will be allowed for each of the three possible positions (Endorse, Reject, No Action). One non-member representative of a ballot measure campaign(s) and 46th District voting members may speak on behalf of an endorsement/recommendation of a ballot measure. Members will hear all speeches regarding the ballot measure before the vote.
- c. Motions to endorse ballot measures shall be in order at all meetings, provided notice that such shall be considered were included in the 10-day meeting notice sent to all members in the manner specified in the By-Laws.
- d. Motions to recommend signature-gathering campaigns for state, county or municipal initiatives shall be in order at any regular district meeting, and are not considered endorsements *per se*, but do, once passed, allow for the solicitation of assistance for the signature gathering campaign at district meetings and events. Such recommendation does not imply endorsement of the final measure once placed on the ballot, as a formal endorsement of the ballot measure must be earned through the process detailed herein. Recommendations for a signature-gathering campaign require a 60% affirmative vote to pass.

9. Voting on Candidate Races

a. Candidates for endorsement will be selected by written ballot as defined in these rules. At any point in the balloting, with the exception of a ranked choice voting ballot, or step within such ballot, if a candidate or “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then the motion passes. All final endorsements must be made using a single choice ballot step.

b. First Ballot Round:

i. First Ballot in Field of Seven Democratic Candidates or More:

If there are seven or more candidates in field, the field shall be narrowed to no more than six candidates using an instant run-off Ranked Choice Voting method. Once the field is narrowed to six candidates, only those receiving at least 8% of the total vote shall be eligible for the Second Ballot.

A detailed tally procedure for this step shall be published by the tally committee prior to the endorsement meeting. The tally procedure shall include that members are requested to rank all candidates but are not required to do so.

Surviving candidates after these steps shall appear on a Second Ballot.

ii. (Alternate) First Ballot in a Field of Seven Democratic Candidates or More:

This is the alternative winnowing process for Section 7.b.1, should a RCV process be technologically impracticable, or take so much time as to disenfranchise member voters by extending the length of the meeting beyond a reasonable hour. The chair may consult with others to make this determination, however, this decision of the chair in this matter is final and is not subject to appeal.

Each eligible voter will vote for one nominated candidate or “No Action”. If a candidate or “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast on the first ballot, then that motion passes. If neither a candidate nor “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then the process will move to a second ballot.

iii. First Ballot in field of Six Democratic Candidates or Fewer:

If there are six or fewer candidates in field, each eligible voter will vote for one nominated candidate or “No Action”. If a candidate or “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast on the first ballot, then that motion passes. If neither a candidate nor “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then the process will move to a second ballot.

In races with two or three eligible candidates, the top two choices and “no action” shall move on directly to the Third Ballot.

In races with four to six eligible candidates, all candidates receiving at least 8% of the votes cast shall move on to the Second Ballot. Should only one or two candidate(s) or none of these candidates have more than 8% of the votes cast then the top two will move directly to a Third Ballot.

c. **Second Ballot Round:** If a candidate or “Take No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then that motion passes. If no candidate or option, including “Take No Action”, receives 60% of votes cast, the top four choices, plus “Take no Action”, will move to a Third Ballot.

d. **Third Ballot Round:** choose between the four candidates who advance and “No Action”. If a candidate or “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then the motion passes.

e. If none of the choices receives 60% of the vote, and if the top two candidates each have at least 40% support in the Third Ballot, then a motion for dual endorsement for the candidates with over 40% support is in order. This motion must pass by 60%; if not, an endorsement in the race is not made for that portion of the cycle. No motion for a dual endorsement is in order until after the third ballot.

f. If no motion for dual endorsement is made, or if the dual motion fails, then no endorsement is made in the race for that portion of the election cycle. If no endorsement is made for the primary contest, an endorsement may be made for the general election.

g. Prior to debate and a vote on a dual endorsement, the candidates so nominated, or their designee, shall be allowed 30 seconds to speak for the dual endorsement or for taking no action. Regular debate, if any, shall occur after these speeches.

h. No more than two candidates may be endorsed for any one office at one time. If the candidate endorsed in the Primary, or both candidates of a dual endorsement, do not survive the Primary, then the race may be reopened for endorsement in August, which will also only allow a maximum number of two candidates endorsed at any one point in time.

10. Voting on Ballot Measures

a. Ballot measure positions for endorsement will be selected by written ballot as defined in these rules. Each eligible voter will vote for one position, for/yes/approved, against/no/rejected, or “No Action”. If a position or “No Action” receives 60% of the votes cast, then the motion passes.

11. Rescinding an Endorsement

a. Endorsements shall only be rescinded in the following circumstances: death or long-term incapacitation of the endorsed candidate; withdrawal of candidacy of the endorsed candidate; conscious and deliberate failure by the candidate to file for office on the applicable ballot; disqualification from the ballot of the endorsed candidate; if the endorsed candidate switches Parties, or by declared choice of caucus even while claiming Democratic membership, would cause the Democratic Party to lose a majority or committee chairperson position in any legislative or governing body; or by the circumstances detailed in 10.c.

b. Due to the fact that endorsements are not rescinded or reconsiderable, outside of very specific circumstances, if only one candidate sharing a dual endorsement in the primary survives said primary, then the dual endorsement converts to a sole endorsement for the general election by rule. If no endorsed candidate(s) survive(s) a primary, then the void in endorsements for that race re-opens the field for consideration of an endorsement for the general election.

c. Rescinding an endorsement of an endorsed candidate:

i. A rescission of an endorsement is in order for a candidate who is accused of serious wrongdoing or misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance that merits rescinding the endorsement.

ii. Upon the written request of 40% of the Executive Board or 10% of the duly elected and appointed PCOs, the Executive Board shall hold a meeting within 5 business days to consider if the serious wrongdoing or misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance merits rescinding the endorsement.

iii. If two-thirds of the Executive Board present at the meeting approve, excluding any Board members who must recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest, then a membership meeting must be held within 15 business days to vote on rescinding the endorsement.

iv. Rescission of an endorsement decision in these circumstances requires 10-day written notice to the body and all candidates eligible for endorsement for the affected office. The written notice must specify when the reconsideration process will occur.

v. A 75% vote of the members is required to rescind the endorsement and reopen the endorsement decision. If the membership votes in the affirmative to rescind and reopen the endorsement, then the endorsement process is carried through from the beginning, following the rules described herein, as if there had not been an endorsement in the race previously.

vi. It is not permissible for the rescission vote and potential new endorsement process to occur at the same general or special meeting of the membership. Any new endorsement will occur with appropriate notice at a subsequent meeting and under the requirements of these rules.

11. Special Endorsement Meetings for Jurisdictions Within the District

a. In the odd-numbered years, when the municipal and special purpose district offices are on the ballot, at times it will be more just and fair for a portion of the municipal and special-purpose jurisdictions within the district to have a special endorsement meeting called to serve those jurisdictions. Such meeting shall be held in geographic proximity to the jurisdictions for which the meeting is called, to the extent possible. The Chair must consult with other officers and members, but such meeting, if any, shall be called at the Chair’s sole discretion.

b. All 46th district members in good standing shall be eligible to vote, but the initial determination that a quorum has been met shall be measured using just the count of members of the municipal or special purpose jurisdictions being served by the meeting.

Example: Thus, if the meeting was called to consider endorsements for offices in the City of Kenmore, and Kenmore was the home of 45 members in good standing, then the 10% quorum required at the beginning of the meeting would be $45 \times 10\% = 4.5$ (must round up), or 5 members from Kenmore must be present to start the meeting.