

46TH DISTRICT DEMOCRATS
2016 Standing Rules for Endorsements

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.
- c. At least one Endorsement Meeting shall be held before both the Primary and the General elections.
- d. Ballot measures on the November ballot will be eligible for endorsement at the August District General Meeting (August 21, 2015). (August 18, 2016.)

2. Eligibility to Vote

- a. All members in good standing who will be 18 years of age on or before November General Election Day (for 2016: November 8, 2016) 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.

3. 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.
- b. For non-partisan races other than judicial races, a candidate must have either declared affiliation only with the Democratic Party or else publicly indicated non-affiliation with any political party for a period of at least 1 year prior to the Endorsement Meeting.
- c. To be eligible for consideration for endorsement, with the exception of Presidential candidates and candidates for judicial office, candidates must declare their Party affiliation for the past 5 years and must sign and submit the King County Democrats candidate questionnaire and the 46th District Democrats questionnaire addendum. The Chair of the 46th District Democrats must receive the completed questionnaire (which can be sent to Chair@46Dems.org) no later than 10 days prior to the Endorsement Meeting (i.e., by May 12, 2016 for the May 22nd, 2016 meeting). 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) vote.

e. The District Chair or her/his appointed representative(s) will make best efforts to contact all eligible candidates for office and those advocating for a ballot measure to participate in the Endorsement Meeting 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.

4. Voting

a. A minimum of 60% of the eligible voters present and voting, excluding abstentions and excluding ballots ruled invalid, is required to endorse or recommend support.

b. As specified in the Bylaws, action taken may include Endorsement, No Endorsement, or No Recommendation. An “Endorsement” is specifically positive, “No Endorsement” is specifically negative, and *No Recommendation* is as stated—no action, either positive or negative, is taken at that time. Endorsement or recommendation may include adoption of a position specifically opposed to a candidate or ballot issue.

c. Voting will be by written ballots issued to eligible voters in all races with two or more eligible candidates. Other votes may be by show of hands.

d. Counting of votes shall be completed according to accepted best practices in a manner that allows observation by any member who wishes to do so.

e. After voting is completed, witnesses shall observe ballots being sealed in an envelope and handed to the District Chair for retention for at least 90 days.

f. In order to expedite the endorsement process, motions will be entertained to endorse a block of unopposed Democratic candidates, provided that a motion to divide the question (i.e., flag one or more names from the list for separate consideration) will be in order. A motion to divide requires a second; it requires a simple majority to pass.

g. Motions to endorse groups of candidates unopposed by other candidates eligible for endorsement by a show of hands or credential cards may be entertained at the beginning of the meeting or at other junctures in the endorsement agenda deemed appropriate by the Chair. Once a list of candidates to endorse in this manner is proposed, a motion to “flag” one or more candidates for individual consideration and so to divide the question is in order, if any member wishes to so move.

5. 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; such a motion requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote for such suspension. The requirement specified in Rule 4 of a 60% vote for an endorsement or recommendation cannot be suspended, and any motion to close nominations is prohibited.

6. Endorsement or Recommendation Procedures—Candidates

a. Nominations

1. Each eligible candidate may be given up to 2 minutes to speak.
2. For each race with candidates, the floor will be open to nominations/seconds and “No Endorsement” for all eligible candidates. Only eligible voters may make motions to endorse/nominate or speak on behalf of an endorsement/nomination. A motion to close nominations shall be out of order.
3. For each motion to endorse, a single nomination speech of no more than 1 minute may be allowed. The Chair may recognize a candidate or member for up to 30 seconds to rebut a negative statement directed against a named candidate. Speakers shall identify themselves prior to making nomination speeches on behalf of any candidate or ballot measure. Eligible voters may NOT cede their time to anyone ineligible to vote at the meeting.
4. All eligible candidates who are nominated and “No Endorsement” will be an option on the First Ballot.

b. Voting

1. First Ballot: Each eligible voter will vote for one nominated candidate or “No Endorsement.” If a candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60% of the votes cast, then that motion passes. If neither a candidate nor “No Endorsement” receives 60% of the votes cast, then we will move to a second ballot. In races with two or three eligible candidates, the top two choices shall move on directly to the Third Ballot. In races with four or more eligible candidates, all candidates receiving 15% of the votes cast shall move on to the Second Ballot. Should only one candidate or none of these candidates have more than 15% of the votes cast then the top 4 will move on to the second ballot.
2. Second Ballot: If a candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60% of the votes cast, then that motion passes. If no candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60% of votes cast, the top two choices will move to a Third Ballot.
3. Third Ballot: If a candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60% of the votes cast, then that motion passes. If no candidate or “No Endorsement” receives 60% of the votes cast, then a motion for dual endorsement is in order. This motion must pass by 60%; if not, an endorsement in the race is not made. A show of hands may be called for the dual endorsement ballot. No motion for a dual endorsement is in order until after the third ballot.
4. No more than two candidates may be endorsed for any one office.

7. Endorsement or Recommendation Procedures—Ballot Measures

a. Motions to Endorse

1. Ballot Measures include all initiatives, referenda, levies, 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—Endorsement (approve), No Endorsement (reject), or No Recommendation (take no position)—will be determined by the voting.

2. For each motion to consider a Ballot Measure, a speech of not more than 2 minutes and a seconding speech of not more than 1 minute will be allowed for each of the three positions (Endorsement, No Endorsement, No Recommendation). Only members who are eligible to vote may make motions to endorse/recommend or speak on behalf of an endorsement/recommendation. Members will hear all speeches for that Ballot Issue before the vote.

b. Voting

1. First Ballot: Each eligible voter will vote for Endorsement (approve), No Endorsement (reject), or No Recommendation (take no position). If any option receives 60%, then that vote passes. If no option receives 60%, we move to a Second Ballot.

2. Second Ballot: If either of the top two choices from the First Ballot receives 60%, then that vote passes. If no option receives 60%, then the position of the 46th District Democrats will be “No Recommendation.”

8. Tie Votes

a. If any vote 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 a tie, the Chair or their designee will conduct a coin flip, as done in public elections in Washington in accordance with state law, to determine the outcome.

9. Reconsideration of an Endorsement

a. Endorsements shall only be reconsidered 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; or if the endorsed candidate switches Parties, or by declared choice of caucus, would cause the Democratic Party to lose a majority or committee chairperson position in any legislative or governing body.

b. Reconsideration of an endorsement 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 and possible new endorsement process will occur.

c. It is permissible for the reconsideration vote and potential new endorsement process to occur at the same general or special meeting of the membership.

d. A 60% vote of the members is required to reopen the endorsement. If the membership votes in the affirmative to 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.