

CONSTITUTION

Article I: Name

The name of the club shall be the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club (hereinafter referred to as The Club).

Preamble

The Club is committed to further the interests and participation of all citizens in the civic affairs of our community; to support human and civil rights for all regardless of race, creed, religion, age or sex orientation; to work for peace.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Club shall be to implement the above by:

- a. Providing a strong, honest, active, and reform Democratic organization in the 64th Assembly District, Part A, New York County [Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001];
- b. Promoting the Democratic Party on the National, State and Local levels;
- c. Encouraging the participation of all Democrats in the affairs of the Party;
- d. Working for increased enrollment in the Democratic Party;
- e. Seeking and supporting candidates for party and public office of ability and integrity who subscribe to the principles as set forth in the Preamble of this Constitution; and
- f. Encouraging the appointment of qualified public officials and employees.

Article III: Membership

Section 1 **Qualifications**

Any person who subscribes to the Preamble purposes of the Club, as set forth in Article II hereof, shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2 Categories

There shall be two categories of membership who shall enjoy all of the rights and privileges of membership:

- a. **Regular Members:** Any person may become a regular member upon payment of the annual dues prescribed for such members in Section 3 of this Article.
- b. **Sustaining Members:** Any eligible person may become a sustaining member upon payment of the annual dues prescribed for such members in Section 3 of this Article.

Section 3 Membership Dues

Membership dues shall be set for the two categories of membership by the membership and upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Any person joining the Club after the first (1st) day of October of any year, shall be deemed to be a member in good standing for the succeeding calendar year without the payment of additional dues. Members in good standing for the year previous may reinstate their good standing status by payment of dues at any time during the succeeding year.

Section 4 Expulsion

The expulsion of any member for conduct contrary to the best interests of the Club, as set forth in the Preamble and Article II of the Constitution may be proposed by a petition enumerating the reasons therefor, signed by at least five members of the Executive Committee. At that meeting, the petition may be dismissed by a majority vote of the full membership of the Executive Committee. If the petition is not dismissed, the proposal shall be tabled until a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee to be held not less than two weeks thereafter. The Corresponding Secretary shall give the member in question at least ten days notice by registered mail of the time and place of such meeting, the charges against him/her and his/her right to make a statement in person or in writing to such meeting. A vote of at least two-thirds of the full membership of the Executive Committee shall be required for action by the full membership. If the Executive Committee votes to recommend the expulsion of a member, written notice must be sent to the member with an invitation to appear at the next regular membership meeting.

Expulsion requires a vote of a majority of the members present and voting at such meeting.

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Club shall be held during the month of January on a date to be fixed by the Executive Committee. The purpose of the meeting shall be the election of the officers and the members-at-large of the Executive Committee and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before it.

Section 1 Other Meetings

Meetings of the Club, other than the Annual Meeting, may be called at any time by the President or the Executive Committee and shall be called by the President upon the written request of at least 10 members. There shall be at least 6 meetings during each year.

Article V: Officers

Section 1 Titles

The officers of the Club shall be a President, First Vice-President, two other vice-presidents, any of which shall chair membership meetings; a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer. The membership may add and designate such additional offices and Executive Committee posts as it deems necessary from time-to-time. These offices shall be filled by a special election whose procedure shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 2 Term of Office

All officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Club in January of each year and shall serve until the next annual meeting and until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified.

Section 3 Qualification

Any regular or sustaining member in good standing shall be eligible to hold office, provided however, that no member shall hold more than one office at the same time or be a voting member of any other Democratic Club.

Section 4 Membership On The Executive Committee

All officers shall be a member of the Executive Committee with full powers.

Section 5 Duties

- a. **President:** The President shall be the chief administrative officer of the Club. He/She shall preside at all meetings of the Club and of the Executive Committee. He/She shall submit a report to the membership at each meeting of the Club on the condition and activities of the Club and he/she shall perform such other duties as the Executive Committee may from time-to-time direct.
- b. **Vice President:** The Vice-President shall supervise the activities of the standing committee that have been elected and shall perform such other and additional duties as the President or the Executive Committee may from time-to-time direct. In the event of the temporary absence of the President, the First Vice-President shall be acting President.
- c. **Recording Secretary:** The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation and safekeeping of the minutes of all procedures of the Club and such other and additional records as the President or the Executive Committee may deem advisable.
- d. **Corresponding Secretary:** The Corresponding Secretary shall prepare and mail notices of all meetings of the Club and the Executive Committee, and such other notices as are required by this Constitution or the by-laws of the Club, and other mailings as directed by the Executive Committee. He/she shall also receive and route all mail addressed to particular individuals in the Club.
- e. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds which shall be deposited in a bank or banks designated by the Executive Committee. He/She shall make disbursements only pursuant to the policy set by the Executive Committee. He/She shall be responsible for the maintenance of books of account showing all receipts and disbursements and such other books of account as the Executive Committee may direct, which books shall be open to the inspection of any member of the Club upon reasonable notice. He shall prepare and submit all financial reports required by law and shall render an account of the financial condition of the Club at each monthly meeting of the Executive Committee and at meetings of the membership. At the first meeting of the Executive Committee following the Annual Meeting, a preliminary annual budget shall be presented by the Treasurer.

Section 6 **Vacancies**

If the office of President shall become vacant, the First Vice-President shall serve as Acting President until such time as the Club at its next regular meeting shall elect a President to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 7 **Removal**

The removal of any officer for conduct contrary to the best interests of the Club or contrary to the Preamble and purposes of the Club as set forth in Article II hereof, may be proposed by a petition enumerating the reasons therefor, signed by at least five members of the Executive Committee or ten members of the Club and submitted to the Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall present the petition at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. If the petition is not so dismissed, the proposal shall be tabled until a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee to be held not less than two weeks, thereafter. The Corresponding Secretary shall give the officer in question at least ten days notice by registered mail the time and place of such meeting, the charges against him/her and his/her right to make a statement in person or in writing to such meeting. A vote of at least two-thirds of the full membership of the Executive Committee shall be required for removal. If the Executive Committee votes to remove an officer, the decision may be appealed by said officer or by any member of the Club at the next meeting of the Club, provided that such officer or such member notifies the Corresponding Secretary or the President of his/her intention to make such appeal. If such appeal is taken, the determination of the Executive Committee shall be operative unless and until ratified by a vote of a majority.

Article VI: Ex Officio Members

Section 1 **Ex Officio**

Members of the Democratic State Committee from the 64th Assembly District, New York County [Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001], who are voting members and in good standing of and who shall have been elected with the endorsement of the Club shall be members ex officio of the Executive Committee with full powers.

Section 2 **District Leaders**

District Leaders who serve as Executive Members of the Democratic County Committee of New York County from the 64th Assembly District, Part B[Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001], who shall have been elected with the endorsement of the Club shall be members ex officio of the Executive Committee with full powers.

Section 3 **Duties**

Members of the Democratic State Committee and District Leaders who shall have been elected with the endorsement of the Club shall consult with the Executive Committee and with the general membership from time-to-time, and shall render reports from time-to-time.

Article VII: Executive Committee

Section 1 **Number**

The Executive Committee shall consist of members-at-large (the number of which shall be recommended to the membership by the Executive Committee at the nominations meeting prior to the Annual Meeting and acted upon at that meeting), all officers of the Club, the immediate former President of the Club, the Democratic State Woman, and the District Leaders of the 64th Assembly District Part "B" [Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001] who shall have been elected with the endorsement of the Club

Section 2 **Term of Office**

Member-at-large shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Club and shall serve until successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified.

Section 3 **Qualifications**

Any member of the Club in good standing shall be eligible to serve as a member-at-large of the Executive Committee.

Section 4 **Functions**

The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Club, shall direct and supervise the policies, management and procedures of the Club, and in pursuance of these functions may recommend such rules and recommendations not inconsistent with this Constitution as it may deem necessary and proper, and subject to the approval by the membership.

Section 5 **Meetings**

The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of the president within 20 days following the Annual Meeting and thereafter shall meet regularly once every month on such dates as it may determine. Special meetings may be called at any time upon at least 24 hours notice by the President or in his absence by the officer of the day. Upon the written petition of 4 or more members of the Executive Committee, such a meeting shall be convened.

Section 6 Quorum & Voting

A majority of all the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every member of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to one vote on all questions, which must be cast in person and not by proxy, and except as elsewhere provided in this Constitution, all questions shall be decided by a majority of those voting.

Section 7 Removal

The removal of any member of the Executive Committee for conduct contrary to the purposes of the Club as set forth in the Preamble and Article II hereof, may be proposed by a petition enumerating the reasons therefor, signed by at least 5 members of the Club and submitted to the Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall present the petition at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. At that meeting, the petition may be dismissed by a majority vote of the full membership of the Executive Committee. If the petition is not so dismissed, the proposal shall be tabled until a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee to be held no less than two weeks thereafter. The Corresponding Secretary shall give the member in question at least ten days notice by registered mail of the time and place of such meeting, the charges against him/her and his/her rights to make a statement in person or in writing to such meeting. A vote of at least two-thirds of the full membership of the Executive Committee shall be required for removal. If the Executive Committee votes to remove a member, the decision may be appealed by said member or by any other member of the Club at the next meeting of the Club, provided that such removed member of the Club notifies the Corresponding Secretary or the President of his/her intention to make such appeal. If such appeal is taken, the determination of the Executive Committee shall be inoperative unless and until ratified by a majority vote. If any member of the Executive Committee shall have three (3) unexcused absences from the Executive Committee meetings, the matter of his/her removal may be raised on the agenda of the first Executive Committee meeting following the third absence. The member in question shall be given notice of such meeting by the Corresponding Secretary, and shall be given an opportunity to show cause why such absences should be excused. Unless the Executive Committee shall by majority vote accept the reasons given for such absences, the member in question shall be removed but shall have the right to appeal to the membership-at-large as provided in this Section.

Article VII: Elections

Section 1 **Time**

Officers and members-at-large of the Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual Meeting, except those who have been elected for interim terms which will expire at the next Annual Meeting.

Section 2 **Nominations**

Nominations shall be made from the floor at the meeting prior to the election meeting and can be made and seconded only by members in good standing. Nominations can also be made by petition signed by ten members in good standing or by 15% of the membership, whichever is smaller. The petition must be submitted to the Corresponding Secretary at least 12 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Corresponding Secretary shall notify the member of the Club of the name of the member so nominated. However, in the case of no choice of candidates, nominations can be made from the floor at the election meeting.

Section 3 **Voting Procedure**

Voting shall be by secret written ballot.

- a. **Officers**: There shall be a separate vote for each office in the order listed in this Constitution. Each member entitled to vote shall have one vote for each position to be filled and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- b. **Election**: After the officers have been elected, there shall be a single ballot for member-at-large of the Executive Committee. Each member entitled to vote shall have as many votes as there are members-at-large to be elected. The nominees receiving the highest numbers of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of any tie which makes it impossible to determine which nominees are elected, additional ballots shall be taken among those so tied, until the required number shall be elected.

Section 4 Members Entitled To Vote

All members who were members in good standing as of the 30 days preceding the Annual Meeting shall be entitled to vote. A member who resides outside the boundaries of the 64th Assembly District, must have been a member for six months in order to vote. Any member who is a voting member of any other Democratic Club is ineligible to vote in the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club election. This restriction remains operative unless such a member pledges that he/she will, in the future vote only in the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club.

Article IX: Candidates for Public and Party Office

Section 1 Endorsement of Candidates in Primary Elections

Endorsement of candidates for election to party office or for nomination as Democratic candidates for public office where such office is to be voted upon in the forthcoming primary election in the 64th Assembly District, New York County, or in a political subdivision which includes all or part of the 64th Assembly District, New York County, [Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001] may be proposed by the Executive Committee or by written petition signed by 10 members entitled to vote pursuant to Section 3 of this Article and submitted by such 10 members to the Corresponding Secretary. Such proposal shall be included in the notice of the meeting next sent out and shall be placed upon the agenda of that meeting. Names of additional candidates for such office may be proposed from the floor of that meeting by any member of the Club. Prior to voting upon the candidates proposed, a vote shall be taken on the question of endorsement for such office.

If a majority of members entitled to vote pursuant to Section 3 of this Article, who are present and voting, shall determine to make an endorsement for such office, all candidates proposed for such office shall be voted upon by secret ballot by members entitled to vote pursuant to Section 3 of this Article.

The candidate who obtains a majority of the votes cast shall receive the endorsement of the Club. If no candidate receives a majority a majority on the first ballot, additional ballots shall be had between the candidates having the two highest numbers of votes until one of such candidates receives a majority. The provisions of this Section shall not apply to candidates for election as members of the Democratic County Committee.

Section 2 **Endorsement of Candidates in General Elections**

All duly nominated candidates of the Democratic Party shall be deemed to have received the endorsement of the Club unless two-thirds of the members pursuant to Section 3 of this Article, who are present and voting at the meeting at which this question is on the agenda, shall determine not to endorse such candidate or candidates. In such case, another candidate may receive the endorsement of the Club if a resolution to that effect is carried by a two-thirds vote.

Section 3 **Members Entitled to Vote**

All members in good standing as of 45 days prior to the date upon which any such vote is taken and all persons who shall have been members in good standing at any time during the preceding year, but who have not paid their dues as of such date but who shall have paid their dues on or before the date upon which the vote is taken shall be entitled to vote. A member who receives outside of the boundaries of the 64th Assembly District, must have been a member in good standing for six months in order to vote. Any member who is a voting member of any other Democratic Club is ineligible to vote in the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club election. This restriction remains operative unless such a member pledges that he/she will be in the future vote only in the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club.

Article X: Committees

Section 1 **Audit Committee**

There shall be an Audit Committee which shall examine and audit the books of account of the Club within 30 days following the election and qualifications of a new Treasurer at such other times as the President or the Executive Committee shall direct. A report shall be submitted to the Executive Committee at the first meeting following such audit.

Section 2 **Campaign Committees**

There shall be a Campaign Committee which shall direct and supervise the activities of the Club in all primary and general elections in which the Club participates. In addition, the Campaign Committee shall select and designate its own Treasurer, District Campaigns for each election district within the jurisdiction of the Club, provided however, that such selections and designations shall be approved by the President and the Executive Committee.

Section 3 **Other Committees**

The President may with the approval of the Executive Committee create from time-to-time such other committees as may be deemed necessary.

Section 4 **Committee Chairpersons & Members**

Chairpersons of all committees shall be appointed by the President by and with the consent of the Executive Committee and may be removed at any time by the President with the consent of the Executive Committee.

Article XI: Use of the Club Name

No person, whether a member of the Club or otherwise, shall use the name of the Club in any which may indicate official sanction by the Club of any statement or action in any way which may indicate support by the Club of any candidate or issue without the prior authorization of the Executive Committee, or by the membership of the Club. The circulation of designation petitions shall not be deemed to violate this Article.

Article XII: Order

Section 1 **Parliamentary procedure**

Parliamentary Procedure shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (revised) in the absence of any contrary provisions in this Constitution.

Section 2 **Sergeants-At-Arms**

The President may appoint at least two Sergeants-At-Arms who shall be responsible for enforcing order at all meetings.

Article XIII: Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by the Executive Committee or by written petition signed by ten members or 15% of the membership, whichever is larger and submitted to the Corresponding Secretary. To become an effective two-thirds, any amendment so proposed must be approved and adopted thereafter by a majority of the members present at two consecutive meetings of the Club which shall be at least one week apart. The substance of the change to be effected by such proposed amendment or amendments must be included in the notice of each of the aforesaid consecutive meetings and the notice of the second meeting must further state that final action will be taken upon amendment or amendments to this Constitution, said amendment or amendments shall become effective as part of this Constitution upon the date of final approval and adoption or on such other date as the amendment or amendments shall specify by two-thirds members adopted and approved by members present.

Article XIV: Endorsing Candidates

The membership of the Club may delegate the function of endorsing in primary elections candidates who run in districts including areas outside of the 64th Assembly District, Part B [Correction: 75th Assembly District, Part A as of 2001], to a Convention or other bodies in which the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club is represented. In such event, the Constitution of such Convention or body shall supercede this Constitution to the extent inconsistent therewith and the provisions of Article IX of this Constitution with respect to endorsement or candidates shall be read as requiring endorsement by such convention or body.

Part I: Positions on Candidates

Guidelines for State Committeemen

An important function of both State Committeemen is to provide political leadership in a club situation; i.e.,

1. to educate the membership of their supporting clubs to the fullest extent possible and on a continuing basis about what is happening on and behind the political scene;
2. to attempt to influence the membership of their supporting clubs, prior to the clubs' endorsement in favor of those candidates who in their informed political judgment merit the clubs' support;
3. to encourage and engage in full discussion and debate on the various alternatives presented by different candidacies and the implications involved in each; and

4. to represent the view of their supporting clubs on candidates in the State Committee.

Prior to the endorsement of all their supporting club, the State Committeemen shall not take any public position on a candidate, except where the context makes it clear that all the clubs have not yet taken a position and the State Committeemen are therefore acting as individuals (e.g., in a pre-procedure situation). Where one club's endorsement for a particular office precedes those of the other supporting club or clubs, the State Committeemen's partisan activity may continue, but only in those of their supporting clubs that have not yet taken an endorsement vote.

1. "Public" in the above context, relates to such actions as issuing a press release, announcing support at a press conference or other public forum, appearing as a speaker on campaign literature, or on a letterhead for a candidate, and the like.
2. "Supporting clubs" in the context above and below means those reform clubs in the State Committeemen's Assembly District.

After the endorsement of all their supporting clubs, the State Committeemen shall support the choice of the majority of those clubs; if there is no majority, the State Committeeman may use their discretion among the clubs' choices, but shall not engage in partisan activities in the executive districts of the dissenting clubs.

1. If the CRDC dis-endorses a candidate, the State Committeemen shall view the Club's choice as not to support any candidate for that office.
2. If the CRDC fails to act, the pre-endorsement situation outlined above continues to apply.
3. If the CRDC votes not to take action on a candidate, the State Committeemen may use their discretion, but must make it clear that their position is not that of the CRDC.
4. If the State Committeemen cannot, in good conscience, support the clubs' choice, they shall not take an active role with another candidate and shall remain inactive relative to the campaign for that office. If the clubs' choices differ, the preceding holds true with regard to the State Committeemen's activities in the club or clubs not backing the final choice of the State Committeemen from among the clubs' choices.
5. If the State Committeemen feel so strongly that they must work for a candidate other than the one chosen by the clubs, they must do so outside their Assembly District and in a position of low visibility.

Guidelines for District Leaders

An important function of the District Leaders is to provide political leadership in a club situation, i.e.,

1. to educate the club membership to the fullest extent possible and on a continuing basis about what is happening on and behind the political scene;
2. to attempt to influence the club membership, prior to its endorsement, in favor of those candidates who, in their informed political judgment, merit the club's support; and
3. to encourage and engage in full discussion and debate on the various alternatives presented by different candidates and the implications involved in each.

Prior to the club's endorsement, the District Leaders shall not take any public position on a candidate, except where the context makes it clear that the club has not yet taken a position and that the District Leaders are therefore acting as individual (e.g., in a pre-procedure situation).

1. "Public" in the above context relates to such actions as issuing a press release, announcing support at a press conference or other public forum, appearing as a speaker, on campaign literature, or on a letterhead for a candidate, and the like.

After the club's endorsement, the District Leaders shall, if at all possible, support the candidate so chosen.

1. If the club dis-endorses a candidate, the District Leaders shall not endorse the dis-endorsed candidate, and the pre-endorsement situation outlined above shall apply to the other candidates for that office.
2. If the club fails to act, the pre-endorsement situation outlined above continues to apply.
3. If the club votes not to take action on a candidate, the District Leaders may use their discretion, but make it clear is not that of the club.
4. If the District Leaders cannot, in good conscience, support the club's choice, they shall not take an active role with another candidate and shall remain inactive relative to the campaign for that office.
5. If the District Leaders feel so strongly that they must work for a candidate other than the one choice by the club, they must do so outside the club's executive district and in a position of low visibility.

Guidelines for Club President and Executive Vice President

Prior to the club's endorsement, the President and Executive Vice President shall not take any public position on a candidate, except where the context makes it clear that the club has not yet taken a position and that the President and Executive Vice President are therefore acting as individual (e.g., in a pre-procedure situation).

1. "Public" in the above context relates to such actions as issuing a press release, announcing support at a press conference or other public forum, appearing as a speaker, on campaign literature, or on a letterhead for a candidate, and the like.

After the club's endorsement, the President and Executive Vice President shall support the candidate so chosen.

1. If the club dis-endorses a candidate, the President and Executive Vice President shall not endorse the dis-endorsed candidate, and the pre-endorsement situation outlined above shall apply to the other candidates for that office.
2. If the club fails to act, the pre-endorsement situation outlined above continues to apply.
3. If the club votes not to take action on a candidate, they may use their discretion, but make it clear that their position is not that of the club.
4. If the President and Executive Vice President cannot, in good conscience, support the club's choice, they shall not take an active role with another candidate and shall remain inactive relative to the campaign for that office. In such a situation, the President and Executive Vice President shall not be the campaign manager.
5. If the District Leaders feel so strongly that they must work for a candidate other than the one choice by the club, they must do so outside the club's executive district and in a position of low visibility.

Part II B Positions on Candidates

Guidelines for State Committeemen, District Leaders, and Club President and Executive Vice President

The intent of this portion of the guidelines is to ensure that when an elected party official takes a position contrary to that of the club and actively works to implement or publicize it, this position is not construed by others as reflecting the position of the club. This holds true in any dealings public or private between these party officials and other individuals or groups (such as members of the community or representatives of public or private bodies). The guidelines set forth below should be viewed in this context.

Prior to the club's taking a position on an issue, the State Committeemen, District Leaders, and President and Executive Vice President may use their discretion on that issue.

After the club has taken a position on an issue, the above-named officials shall support that issue and actively work to implement and publicize it.

1. If the above-named party officials cannot, in good conscience, support the club's position, they shall say and do nothing relative to that issue.
2. If the above-named party officials feel so strongly that they must speak out or work for a position other than that of the club, they shall state that their position is contrary to the club's each time they make a public pronouncement on the issue. They shall also so specify in conversations with representatives of public or private bodies or with anyone else who might misconstrue their position as that of the club when discussing the issue.