

# **Durham People's Alliance Political Action Committee By-Laws** adopted 2013 and amended 2015 and 2019

## **I. Purpose and Scope**

The People's Alliance Political Action Committee shall endeavor to evaluate candidates for elected office who appear on a ballot for Durham County voters. The PAC shall also endeavor to evaluate applicants for appointment to vacant elected positions the incumbents to which, under regular circumstances, are elected wholly or in part by Durham County voters. Through the PAC, the members of the Durham People's Alliance shall determine which candidates or applicants, if any, it will endorse. The PAC shall raise money and other resources and expend those resources to obtain the election of the candidates endorsed by the PAC. Through the PAC, the members of the Durham People's Alliance shall also determine whether to support or oppose any matter which is proposed as a referendum appearing on a ballot for Durham voters; however, the PAC shall not act in the matter of a referendum when the Durham People's Alliance determines to act on the matter through a referendum committee or other lawful mechanism. In all its business, the PAC shall adhere to the requirements of the law. These bylaws shall be construed and interpreted to be consistent with the mission statement of the Durham People's Alliance.

## **II. Membership**

Every person who is a member of the Durham People's Alliance shall be a member of the PAC. The PAC shall have no other members.

## **III. Government**

A. The PAC shall be governed by two or more coordinators elected by the members of the PAC. The coordinators may:

- 1) make public statements on behalf of the PAC;
- 2) communicate with elected officials, government officials, and candidates for elected office in the name of the PAC;
- 3) call meetings of the membership for the purpose of endorsing candidates or other purposes pertinent to the business of the PAC not inconsistent herewith;
- 4) solicit gifts of money for the PAC and to hold money and other property belonging to the PAC (except as provided in the section concerning the treasurer in III. B. below);
- 5) preside over meetings of the membership and exercise such powers as are commonly afforded presiding officers;
- 6) expend money and other resources of the PAC to accomplish the business of the PAC and its purposes;
- 7) hire such professional and other services reasonably necessary to accomplish the purposes of the PAC;

- 8) purchase supplies and equipment consistent with the needs of the PAC and its mission as defined herein;
- 9) make policies and rules not inconsistent with these by-laws for the efficient administration of the PAC's business;
- 10) resolve questions of membership and the interpretation of the bylaws;
- 11) establish and charge committees to assist the coordinators in the administration of the PAC's business; and
- 12) dissolve committees.

These powers shall be exclusive to the coordinators; however, the coordinators may delegate any of these powers to committees or to members as it may from time to time seem beneficial. PAC coordinators shall conduct their business by majority rule.

B. The PAC shall have a treasurer appointed by the PAC coordinators. The treasurer may be a PAC coordinator or may serve only in the capacity of treasurer. When the treasurer is not a coordinator, the treasurer shall hold the money belonging to the PAC, however, this responsibility shall be shared with the coordinators. The treasurer shall make timely reports as required by law. The books and records of the PAC shall be available for inspection by all PAC coordinators. The treasurer shall serve at the pleasure of the PAC coordinators.

C. Concerning Coordinators:

- 1) A PAC coordinator shall serve a term of two years from the date of election, however, PAC coordinators elected during 2015 shall serve until elections in 2017. Elections shall be held during a meeting of the members of the PAC scheduled at the discretion of the coordinators during the months of January, February, March or April in odd-numbered years. Notice for the meeting shall be given as provided in Article IV.
- 2) A PAC coordinator must be a member of the PAC; however, a person serving as an officer or board member of the People's Alliance shall not serve as a PAC coordinator or PAC treasurer. In the event a PAC coordinator is unwilling or unable to complete the coordinator's term of office, the remaining coordinators may appoint from the membership a new coordinator to complete the remaining portion of the unexpired term.
- 3) The PAC coordinators may remove a coordinator from office at any time for neglect of duty, violating these by-laws, misconduct of the type or nature likely to bring the PAC or the People's Alliance into disrepute, or other cause. The PAC membership may also remove a coordinator for the same grounds at a meeting called for that purpose under the provisions of Paragraph IV(b)(4) of these bylaws. Coordinators, the treasurer, and other persons elected or appointed to serve the PAC shall not be compensated.
- 4) PAC coordinators shall refrain from personally endorsing or publicly supporting any candidate for elected office before endorsements for that office are determined by the PAC. After endorsements have been determined by the PAC, coordinators shall support the candidates endorsed by the PAC and not any other

candidate. A PAC coordinator who desires to personally endorse or publically support a candidate before endorsements have been determined by the PAC or who desires to personally endorse or publically support a candidate other than the candidate endorsed by the PAC must either resign or, with leave of the PAC coordinators, take a leave of absence from the PAC until after the election.

The provisions of this section shall not prevent any coordinators from supporting a candidate at a meeting of the coordinators or at a PAC endorsement meeting.

D. Only the membership of the PAC may endorse a candidate. Only the membership of the PAC may amend or suspend these bylaws; however, no amendment or suspension of these bylaws shall be allowed if the purpose of the amendment or suspension would be inconsistent with the requirements of law or would be inconsistent with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service as they apply to the PAC or to the People's Alliance.

#### **IV. Meetings**

A. Of the Coordinators, Treasurer, and Committees – The officers and committees of the PAC shall meet at such times and places as may be necessary. Meetings may be conducted in-person, by telephone, or electronically so long as every person entitled to attend is reasonably able to participate. Good faith notice shall be given before any such meeting.

B. Of the PAC Membership –

- 1) The PAC coordinators shall convene at least one meeting each year and shall report to the members on the business of the PAC since the preceding meeting.
- 2) The agenda for the meeting shall be written and may include candidate endorsement or referendum business.
- 3) Except as provided in Article V, notice for PAC membership meetings shall be given at least five calendar days before the time established for the meeting. The notice shall include the date and time of the meeting and the address or location where it is to take place. The notice shall also contain a brief description of the business to be accomplished at the meeting. Notice shall be given by mail. Notice shall be sufficient if it is reasonably made. In an emergency, when expedited action is necessary and five days' notice cannot reasonably be given, a meeting may be called on two days' notice. Such Notice shall be made by mail and shall be posted on the People's Alliance website if such a website exists. Under such circumstances, the nature of the emergency shall be described in the notice given.

- 4) Upon the petition of 40 members, the coordinators shall convene a meeting of the membership. The petition shall be in writing and contain a clear statement of the reason for the meeting and shall include money sufficient to cover the cost of creating and mailing the notice of the meeting to the membership. Absence from a prior meeting shall not be grounds for a meeting called by petition. Meetings called by petition shall not be held on expedited notice. Upon the receipt of a valid petition, the coordinators shall notify the membership and convene the meeting without undue delay. The coordinators may add other business to a meeting called by petition.
- 5) At all meetings of the membership, a quorum shall be 20 members. At the meeting following a meeting called when no quorum was achieved, the quorum shall be those present.
- 6) Meetings of the membership shall be conducted only in-person. To participate, a member must be present. No proxy voting shall be allowed.
- 7) Except as provided in Article VI, all business of the membership shall be passed only upon a majority vote of those present and voting.
- 8) The coordinators shall preside at every meeting of the membership and shall control and direct the business of the meeting. The coordinators shall enforce decorum at membership meetings, and promote fair and open debate. Coordinators shall afford every member a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Consistent with these by-laws, the coordinators may establish rules of procedure for membership meetings.
- 9) When endorsement or referendum business is before a membership meeting, only members shall be allowed to be present for such business. Expired members may renew their memberships at the meeting and debate and vote at the meeting. Members joining for the first time at the meeting and those who have joined within the 60-day period immediately preceding the meeting may debate, but may not vote. Every member present at the meeting must sign a pledge that:
  - 1) The member subscribes to the basic mission of PA,
  - 2) When communicating about the meeting afterwards with any person who was not present at the meeting, the member will not attribute anything said at the meeting to the speaker, and
  - 3) The member will not discuss the decisions made to anyone not present at the meeting for 24 hours after adjournment or until the endorsement decisions are published by the PAC if publication happens before the passage of 24 hours.

- 10) During the conduct of endorsement or referendum business the coordinators may require members to disclose organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. Such conflicts, once disclosed, shall not disqualify a member entitled to vote from participating in debate or voting except that candidates and members of their immediate family are disqualified from participating in or voting in the debate in the candidate's contest and must absent themselves from the meeting during the deliberation and determination of the business for which they are disqualified.
- 11) Subject to these by-laws, the coordinators presiding at any meeting may move items of business, participate in debate, and vote.

## **V. Amendment**

These bylaws may be amended by a vote of the membership at a meeting with notice of a proposed change duly given. The provisions of Article IV notwithstanding, when a change to the by-laws is proposed as an item of business at a meeting, the minimum notice given shall be thirty days.

## **VI. Dissolution**

The PAC may be dissolved by vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a meeting with notice of dissolution duly given, however, the minimum notice period of any meeting to consider dissolution shall be thirty days. The property of the PAC shall be distributed as required by law and, if the law permits, such property or money belonging to the PAC at the time of dissolution shall be distributed to the People's Alliance.