

# GREEN PARTY OF MINNESOTA CONSTITUTION

*Ratified February 1994, Amended June 2000, June 2002, June 2007, June 2008 and June 2014*

## **Preamble**

We, the members of the Green Party of Minnesota, united together to organize and perpetuate a political party, accept as our own the principles and values of the worldwide Green Movement.

The pillars upon which this party is founded are the four interrelated and coequal principles of Ecological Wisdom, Grassroots Democracy, Social Justice and Nonviolence.

Central to the work of this party are the values of a future focus on sustainability, personal and global responsibility, respect for diversity, feminism, community-based economics and decentralization.

This party shall affiliate with Green Parties in the United States of America and in other nations of Planet Earth, as they accept the four pillar principles and are organized around such principles.

## **Article I. Name and Membership Policies**

### Section 1: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Green Party of Minnesota.

### Section 2: MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Green Party is free and open to all-there are no membership dues. The only requirements for membership are that a person:

- a.) is a Minnesota resident,
- b.) shares the Green Party's values,
- c.) fills out a sign-up sheet or provides other indication in writing that he/she wishes to be a member (must include name and address, at minimum).
- d.) Members of an accredited GPMN Local shall be considered members of the GPMN, unless they specifically decline state party membership. Accredited Locals are encouraged to recognize GPMN members resident in the Local's region as members of the Local.

### Section 3: OPEN MEETINGS

All GPMN activities (including precinct caucuses, statewide caucuses, statewide meetings, locals and committees) shall be open to participation by all members, unless restricted by this constitution, the by-laws, or CC policies for the purpose of effective process.

## **Article II. Subordination to Existing Constitutions and Laws**

### Section 1: SUBORDINATION

The Green Party of Minnesota constitution and bylaws are subordinate to the United States constitution.

### Section 2: ELECTION LAWS

Laws of the United States of America and the State of Minnesota governing the conduct of elections to public office shall be part of this constitution. Members of the Green Party shall continually work to change any laws that restrict the full exercise and pursuit of the principle of Grassroots Democracy.

### Section 3: CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

If an election law is fundamentally and odiously opposed to basic democratic principles, the GPMN shall support acts of non-violent civil disobedience in resistance to such laws.

## **Article III. Platform**

### Section 1: GREEN MOVEMENT

In order to maintain a unity of purpose and clarity of vision with the worldwide Green Movement, the

development of the Platform of the Green Party of Minnesota shall be guided by the Program of the Greens in the United States of America and the programs of Greens in other states and nations.

#### Section 2: MINNESOTA PLATFORM

The Green Party of Minnesota shall develop and maintain an ongoing platform that reflects the unique needs of the State of Minnesota and is in agreement with the Principles and Values of the Green Party of Minnesota.

#### Section 3: BINDING PLATFORM

Platform planks are binding upon candidates for public office at the level at which the planks are passed. Statewide planks shall be binding upon all Green Party candidates in the State of Minnesota, except in such cases where a local plank conforms to Green Principles and Values and is not in agreement with a State Party plank; the candidate in such an area shall be bound by the local plank.

#### Section 4: PLANK ACCEPTANCE

A plank shall be accepted in the Platform of the Green Party of Minnesota with an affirmative vote at the Biennial Convention.

### **Article IV. Accountability**

#### Section 1: FORFEITURE OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Green Party of Minnesota shall be forfeited by any member that publicly espouses a position and works to realize such a position that is in direct opposition to the explicit Principles and Values of the Green Party. Public dissent from specific positions of the Green Party of Minnesota or planks of the Green Party platform shall not, by itself, be considered a reason for forfeiture of membership. Procedure for forfeiture of membership shall be set out in the By-laws to this Constitution.

#### Section 2

Holders of elected offices within the Green Party of Minnesota may be removed from office for cause as set out in the By-laws to this Constitution.

#### Section 3

Holders of elected public office may be removed from the membership of the Green Party of Minnesota, such removal to be made publicly and widely known, for actions that are in opposition to explicit principles and values of the Green Party of Minnesota. Procedures for such removal are set out in the By-laws to this Constitution.

### **Article V. Meetings and Conventions**

#### Section 1: BIENNIAL CONVENTION

The Biennial convention shall be the broadest level decision-making assembly for the Green Party of Minnesota. Amendments to this constitution, changes to the Platform and election of at-large members of the Coordinating Committee shall be considered only at the Biennial Convention or at a Special Meeting.

Subsection A. The Green Party of Minnesota shall assemble in every even-numbered year, within two weeks before or after the Summer Solstice.

Subsection B. Attendance at the Biennial Convention shall not be denied to any registered member, in good standing, of the Green Party of Minnesota.

Subsection C. The right to participate in the decision making process shall be extended to all Green Party members in attendance who are qualified to vote (as defined in the Bylaws).

#### Section 2: ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting shall be the decision making assembly that considers matters of primarily an executive and administrative nature. Changes to the By-laws and election to leadership positions shall be acted upon only at the Annual Meeting or Special Meeting.

Subsection A. The Green Party of Minnesota shall assemble in Annual Meeting every year within two weeks before or after the Summer Solstice.

Subsection B. Attendance at the Annual Meeting shall not be denied to any registered member, in good standing, of the Green Party of Minnesota.

Subsection C. The right to participate in the decision making process shall be extended to all Green Party members in attendance who are qualified to vote (as defined in the Bylaws).

### Section 3: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special Meetings may be called as necessary to make decisions regarding matters of a time-sensitive or unanticipated nature that cannot be dealt with at the next regularly scheduled appropriate meeting.

Subsection A. Special Meetings may be called by a simple majority of the Coordinating Committee or by unanimous consent of the Executive Committee or by a 2/3 majority of the recognized Local Party Organizations.

### Section 4 ENDORSING CONVENTION

The Green Party of Minnesota shall gather in an Endorsing Convention in those years that statewide electoral races are held. Date and place shall be determined by the Coordinating Committee. Consideration of candidates for endorsement by the Green Party of Minnesota shall be the only business of the Endorsing Convention.

### Section 5 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meeting frequency and location for Committees and Working Groups of the Green Party of Minnesota shall be at their own discretion, except that one open annual meeting and an annual report to the Membership are required of all committees and working groups.

## **Article VI. Local Party Organizations**

### Section 1 COMMUNITY-BASED PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

The Green Party shall organize in each community in the State of Minnesota. Communities may be entire incorporated or unincorporated townships and villages, section of cities or any area identifiable as a community.

Subsection A. The Green Party of Minnesota shall recognize a local party organization immediately upon notification of its formation.

Subsection B. A local party organization may lose its recognition by a vote of 75% of the votes cast at a Biennial Convention or Special Meeting.

Subsection C. A local party organization is encouraged to select a name for itself that contains the words "Green Party" and the name of the community in which it is organized.

### Section 2: CONFEDERATIONS OF LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

Local party organizations shall form confederations within existing electoral areas. Such confederations shall be organized by, and accountable to, the members of the Green Party of Minnesota forming such confederations.

## **Article VII. Proportional Representation**

### Section 1: APPLICATION OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

A method of proportional representation shall be used for the election of the at-large members of the Coordinating Committees.

## **Article VIII. Decision Making Processes**

### Section 1: PROCESS

The Green Party of Minnesota shall use a decision making process that combines both consensus and majority-rule at its core.

Subsection A. Facilitators shall be used for all meetings.

Subsection B. Each meeting shall implement a technique for assuring equal opportunity for all voices to be heard.

### **Article IX. Party Organization and Officers**

#### **Section 1: COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

The central organizing body of the Green Party of Minnesota shall be known as the Coordinating Committee and shall be responsible for maintaining a permanent Green Party presence in Minnesota.

Subsection A. The terms of office shall be two years unless otherwise specified in this Constitution. In no circumstances shall a member of the Coordinating Committee serve more than two consecutive terms. For purposes of term limitation, serving more than one year of a term shall count as an entire term.

Subsection B. The Coordinating Committee shall be elected as follows.

Item 1: Eight at-large members shall be elected at the Biennial Convention. The terms of office of these members shall begin at the Summer Solstice or immediately upon their election, whichever is later. The terms of office shall expire at the Summer Solstice of the next even-numbered year or at the next Biennial Convention, whichever is later. Any mid-term vacancy shall be filled by an election at a General Membership Meeting or a Special Meeting.

Item 2: One member shall be elected from each Minnesota congressional district. These eight members shall be elected in odd-numbered years by their respective affiliated congressional district Green Parties, where they exist. In districts where there is no affiliated congressional district Green Party, a geographic member for that district shall be elected at a General Membership Meeting or a Special Meeting. The terms of office of geographic members shall begin and end at the Summer Solstice of odd-numbered years. Any mid-term vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as described in this paragraph.

Item 3: One youth seat shall be reserved for a person aged 14-18. The holder of the youth seat shall be elected by the Coordinating Committee. The youth member may not be part of the immediate family of any other member of the Coordinating Committee. The youth member shall have a term of one year. The youth seat shall not be counted as a term served for purposes of term limitation.

#### **Section 2: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of Minnesota shall select the members of the Executive Committee.

Subsection a. The Executive Committee shall have not more than five members, with terms of one year and no limit on number of consecutive terms or number of lifetime terms.

Subsection b. The Executive Committee shall have responsibility for legal and financial reporting requirements as defined by state or federal law and other responsibilities as defined by the Coordinating Committee.

### **Article X. Endorsement of Candidates for Public Office**

#### **Section 1: ENDORSEMENT FOR STATE-WIDE OFFICE**

The Green Party of Minnesota may endorse candidates for statewide elected office.

#### **Section 2: ENDORSEMENT FOR OTHER THAN STATE-WIDE OFFICE**

Local Green Parties, Confederations of local Green Parties or the Green Party of Minnesota may endorse

candidates for elected public office. Such endorsements are to be made at most appropriate level of organization.

Subsection A. The Green Party of Minnesota shall not endorse or consider for endorsement any candidate for other than statewide office that has been refused endorsement at a more local level of organization.

Subsection B. Candidates who are nominated or endorsed by another political party can be nominated or endorsed by the Green Party of Minnesota if:

1. The candidate has received a majority vote by the most local unit from which the candidate was nominated, and
2. The candidate receives approval from the Coordinating Committee.

## **Article XI. Fiscal Policy**

### Section 1. CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

Subsection A. The Green Party of Minnesota shall accept contributions from individuals of no more than \$1200 per calendar year.

Subsection B. The Green Party of Minnesota shall accept contributions from Green Party candidate's committees, within the limit of local, state and federal campaign finance regulations.

### Section 2. NO CONTRIBUTIONS

The Green Party of Minnesota, and its endorsed candidates, shall accept no contributions from for profit or nonprofit corporations or political action committees.

## **Article XII. Amendments**

### Section 1: AMENDING THIS CONSTITUTION

The Green Party of Minnesota constitution may be amended by an affirmative decision at the Biennial Convention in accordance with Article VIII.

### Section 2: AMENDING THE BY-LAWS

The Green Party of Minnesota by-laws to this constitution may be amended by an affirmative decision at the Annual Meeting in accordance with Article VIII.