

WEST NEWBURY DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE BY-LAWS

September, 2019

January 2020 (proposed edits shown as bold text)

June 2023 (proposed edits in redline)

Preamble

The West Newbury Democratic Town Committee (also referred to as the “Town Committee”) exists to promote democracy and the ideals, policies, and candidates of the Democratic Party.

We encourage the participation of all eligible voters in the electoral process. We believe that the participation of all of our citizens in open public discourse strengthens our democracy.

While we celebrate our individual rights, we understand that the freedom and prosperity we enjoy is the result of our commitment to work together for the common good.

We acknowledge that differences of philosophy and opinion may, at times, test our commitment to our **party** and make the task of working together more difficult. Our challenge is to respect these differences and find our common values, so that with clear mind and open heart our commitment to the Democratic Party may be sustained.

In this spirit, the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee adopts the following **by-laws**.

Article I: Definitions

The following terms shall have the following meanings when used throughout these by-laws:

ACCESSIBLE: **referring** to venues and procedures which promote openness and provide an equal opportunity for participation, including accessible locations, **and** timely ~~and public~~ ~~notice~~ of meetings.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER: a person nominated by the ~~town-committee~~ **Town Committee** chairperson or any three of its members and voted in by a majority of ~~town-committee~~ **Town Committee** members present and voting at any **Town Committee** meeting, ~~and~~ who may serve on the **Town Committee subcommittees**, but **who** shall not vote at any **Town Committee** meeting, and shall have no other rights or privileges of full **Town Committee** members ~~-~~ **except as granted in Article IV, Section F.**

DISABILITY: a condition which limits one or more of life’s major activities (walking, talking,

hearing, thinking, etc.)

GENERAL LAWS: the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

LOW AND MODERATE INCOME: as defined by the Democratic National Committee

MEETING: a gathering of full and/or associate members of **the** Town Committee or any subcommittee thereof.

MEMBER: a full member of **the Town Committee** either elected to membership by popular election every four years at the presidential primary or appointed thereafter to membership by **the Town Committee**, pursuant to provisions of these by-laws.

MINORITIES: any and all groups as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

SENIOR CITIZENS: those persons **sixty-five** (65) years of age or older.

YOUTH: those persons **fifteen** (15) through **thirty-fivesix** (~~356~~) years of age.

Article II: Name

This body shall be known as the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee and is sometimes hereinafter called the “Town Committee.”

Article III: Purposes

A. General

This **Town Committee** is organized and constituted under authority of, and in accordance with, the provisions of Chapter 52 of the General Laws and shall have the following purposes:

1. To foster and advance democracy and the ideals and aims of the Democratic Party,
2. To work in cooperation with the Democratic National Committee,
3. To work in cooperation with the **Massachusetts** Democratic State Committee,
4. To aid in carrying out the planks of the platform of the **state** and **national conventions** of the **Democratic** Party,
5. To work, organize, and raise funds for the success of the Democratic candidates of the ~~town,~~ **district, state, and nation,**

6. To foster a program of affirmative action and outreach to gain participation in the political process by minorities, low- and moderate-income citizens, youth, senior citizens, **persons with disabilities**, and others who may be **underrepresented** on the **Town Committee**,

7. To do all things necessary and incidental to the building and strengthening of the Democratic Party in Massachusetts,

8. To foster contacts between registered Democrats and Democratic candidates, and

9. To develop closer relationships between Democratic voters in West Newbury and the Town Committee.

B. Endorsement of Candidates

1. The West Newbury Democratic Town Committee may endorse and financially support any Democratic nominees for election in any general federal or **Massachusetts** state election, ~~including any West Newbury election.~~

2. Letters will be sent to all Democratic candidates known to be seeking election to office as described above inviting them to a meeting of the **Town Committee**. Each candidate or **the candidate's** representative will be given an opportunity to address the **Town Committee**, followed by a brief question and answer period. **Only Town Committee members may question the candidate or the candidate's representative.**

3. Endorsements of candidates will be made at a duly called meeting of the **Town Committee** with proper notice to all members. Endorsements will be made no fewer than **thirty (30)** days before the election date.

4. Endorsements of candidates will be by secret ballot. A two-thirds majority of those members present and voting shall be required to endorse. The chair will report the vote immediately following the balloting. All endorsements are to be made public.

5. The **Town Committee** may also endorse and financially support or may oppose any referendum or petition question that may appear on any **Massachusetts** election ballot, using the same procedure as in **#paragraph 4** above.

Article IV. Membership

A. Full membership

The West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall consist of registered **Democrats** elected every four years in the presidential primary held in the Town of West Newbury, together with those elected to membership by the existing members of said Town Committee,

in conformance with the provisions of Chapter 52 of the General Laws.

B. Term

The members of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall hold office for a period of four years ending on the thirtieth day following the day on which the presidential primary is held and until ~~their~~ successors have organized.

C. Organization

The Town Committee shall, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 52, **Section 4** of the General Laws, within **ten (10)** days after the thirtieth day next following the election of its members, meet and organize by the choice of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson of a **gender different from** that of the chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, an affirmative action and outreach advisor, and such other officers as it may decide to elect.

D. Expiration and Interruption of Term

1. In the event that a member of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee changes ~~their~~ residence from the Town of West Newbury, **that person** shall cease to be a member of the Town Committee at the end of the calendar year during which the said residence is changed. In the event any member cancels or changes ~~their~~ party enrollment from the Democratic Party at any time during said term, **that person** shall forthwith cease to be a member of the Town Committee.

2. It is understand that implicit in membership is the individual member's responsibility to show loyalty and, therefore, commitment to the **Democratic** Party and its candidates by the public expressions of support.

~~4. It is further understood that should a conflict in loyalty occur, for whatever reason, the member will excuse themselves must withdraw from active membership in the Town Committee for the period of time during which such conflict exists.~~

3. **Censure** or removal

a. Censure by the Town Committee shall cause the immediate removal of said member from any officership or membership in any **subcommittee** of the Town Committee, but shall not remove the voting privileges of said member.

b. **Removal by the Town Committee means expulsion of the member from the Town Committee.**

c. **The chairperson or a majority of the executive committee (which consists of the officers of the Town Committee as specified in Article VI) may institute proceedings for the censure or removal of a member for cause.** The motion to censure or remove a Town Committee member will be made and seconded at one meeting and voted upon at the succeeding meeting. **Imposition of censure or removal shall be by vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership present and voting.** Said vote shall be by secret ballot.

d. Specific causes for censure or removal shall include the following:

- (i) Failure to attend at least half of the scheduled Town Committee meetings during any calendar year,**
- (ii) Public support for or financial contribution to a candidate with a party affiliation other than the Democratic Party, irrespective of whether the election is partisan or nonpartisan, unless no Democratic candidate is running,**
- (iii) Unauthorized use of the Democratic Party name or resources, or**
- (iv) Conviction after appeals are exhausted of a criminal offense.**

e. A member must be given the opportunity to resign before notice of the meeting on the question of removal is given to the membership of the **Town Committee**.

f. A member censured or removed under this section shall have **thirty (30)** days to appeal to the judicial council of the Democratic State Committee, and the vacancy created by said removal shall not be filled until the final decision of the judicial council is made and received by the Town Committee.

E. Filling Vacancies

Vacancies in the **Town Committee** may be filled in the following manner:

At any duly called Town Committee meeting, the presiding chairperson **may** nominate an eligible person from the rolls of the Democratic **Party** within the Town of **West Newbury**. **Alternately, the** nomination may be made by any three members of the **Town Committee** present and voting at said meeting. The nominee must **be in attendance at the meeting at which that person is nominated and must** have attended at least **one prior meeting**. **Election** shall **be** by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

F. Associate Members

The Town Committee may, upon nomination by its chairperson or any three of its members and by vote of a majority of those present and voting at a duly called **Town Committee** meeting, appoint associate members in any number from the rolls of the Democratic Party within **the Town of West Newbury**, and, once appointed, said associate members shall be eligible to serve on any Town Committee **subcommittees** and shall have such powers and duties as the Town Committee shall determine, except they shall not have the power to vote at any Town Committee meeting.

Article V: Quorum

Twenty ~~(20%)~~ percent **(20%)** of the members of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article VI: Officers

A. Election

The officers of the Democratic Town Committee shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson of a **gender** different **from that of the chairperson**, a secretary, a treasurer, and an affirmative action and outreach advisor. These officers shall be elected at the organizational meeting and shall serve for a term of one year, at the end of which term new elections for officers shall be held.

B. Executive Committee

There shall be an executive committee consisting of the officers of the **Town** Committee as listed in paragraph A above.

C. Vacancies

In the event of the death, resignation, change of residence from the Town of West Newbury, or permanent removal from the Town Committee of any of the officers listed in paragraph A of **this** Article VI, ~~their places those offices~~ shall be declared vacant and **may** be filled at **subsequent meetings** of the Town Committee. Notice of such election shall be given in the call/announcement of the meeting.

Article VII: Chairperson

The chairperson of the Town Committee, in addition to the duties required by law, **shall** preside at all meetings of the **Town** Committee and shall have general charge and supervision of all **Town** Committee activities. **The chairperson** shall have the power to appoint all standing **subcommittees** and such other special **subcommittees** as are created from time to time. **The chairperson** shall have the power to call special meetings of the Town Committee and all regular meetings at such time or times as may seem advisable, subject only to the provisions of these by-laws or to the vote of the **Town** Committee in fixing the number of regular meetings to be held during the course of the year.

Article VIII: Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the **Town Committee** in the absence of the chairperson.

Article IX: Secretary

The secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee and shall issue a notice by mail or by email to each member of the **Town** Committee of each meeting of the **Town** Committee at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting.

The secretary shall, within ten (10) days after the organization of the **Town** Committee or within ten (10) days of any change in the list of officers or members of the **Town** Committee, file with the Secretary of State, the Office of Campaign and Political Finance, the Secretary of the Democratic State Committee, and the Town Clerk of West Newbury a list of the names and addresses of the officers and members of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee.

Within a like period after the appointment of associate members, the secretary shall likewise file a list of the names and addresses of such associate members.

Article X: Treasurer

The treasurer of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall have custody of all funds belonging to the **Town** Committee and shall pay all its debts, subject to the approval of the chairperson, and shall procure and file vouchers for all such payments. No expenditure of funds of the **Town** Committee shall be made by the treasurer outside the regular activities or **expenses** therefor, except on approval of a majority of the members present and voting at a special or regular **Town** Committee meeting. The treasurer shall **qualify** for office by filing a written acceptance thereof with the Director of Campaign and Political Finance, as provided in Section 5 of Chapter 55 of the General Laws. The treasurer shall **keep the Town Committee informed of its financial status on a regular basis** and **provide a detailed report at least semiannually**.

Article XI: Affirmative Action and Outreach Advisor

A. There shall be an affirmative action and outreach advisor to the Town Committee who, once **elected**, shall chair the affirmative action **subcommittee** and be responsible for developing strategies and actions to expand participation in and make the Town Committee accessible to registered Democrats, with particular emphasis on **minorities, as defined** above. Affirmative action procedures shall be followed in constituting **subcommittees** of the Town Committee.

B. There shall be an affirmative action and outreach **subcommittee**, which shall be chaired by the affirmative action **and outreach** advisor, and it shall oversee the formulation and implementation of affirmative action goals and plans for the Town Committee through a formula consistent with ~~the~~ US census data. All affirmative action plans shall be submitted to the Town Committee for approval.

Article XII: Call to Meeting

A. In the event of a failure of the chairperson of the Town Committee to call a regular meeting of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee, one-third of the members of the executive committee may, in writing, direct the secretary of the **Town** Committee to call a meeting of the said committee.

B. Ten percent (**10%**) of the members of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall have the power to call a meeting of the **Town** Committee by a petition in writing to the secretary.

Article XIII: Subcommittees

A. Subcommittees

There shall be a standing **affirmative action and outreach subcommittee** and whatever other **subcommittees**, standing or *ad hoc*, the **Town** Committee may decide to form from time to time.

B. Appointment of subcommittees

Members of all **subcommittees** shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Town Committee from the duly elected members of the Town Committee and/or associate members. However, the majority of the members of each **subcommittee** shall be full members of the Town Committee. **Subcommittee** chairpersons shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Town Committee.

Article XIV: Amendments to the By-laws

These by-laws shall **continue in effect from year to year without express renewal, unless amended according to the following procedure:**

A. From time to time, the chairperson shall appoint an *ad hoc* by-laws subcommittee to review these by-laws and propose amendments.

B. Alternately, a member may propose an amendment by submitting a proposal in writing to the chairperson, at which time the chairperson shall appoint an *ad hoc* by-laws subcommittee, which shall meet and consider the proposed change.

C. The by-laws subcommittee shall report on its progress at each meeting of the Town Committee until the final vote is taken.

D. The by-laws subcommittee shall prepare a report on the proposed amendments,

including the proposed language. Such report shall be provided to members of the Town Committee with notice of the meeting at which the proposal is to be considered. After consideration by the Town Committee, the proposed final document will be provided to the membership with notice of the meeting at which the final vote shall be taken.

E. The proposed amendment is adopted if it receives the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those members present and voting.

Article XV: Order of Business

The order of business at a meeting of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall be as follows:

1. Call to order
2. **Considering** the minutes of the previous meeting. -
3. Reports of the officers and **subcommittees**
4. Reading of communications addressed to the **Town** Committee
5. Unfinished or old business
6. New business
7. Adjournment

The order of business may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

Article XVI: Meetings

Meetings of the West Newbury Democratic Town Committee shall be held as often as necessary but no fewer than **four** times each year. The four regularly scheduled meetings shall be held quarterly, e.g., in the months of January, April, June, and October. Specific meeting dates are to be determined by the will of the membership. Proper notice by email, mail, and/or phone shall be given to all full and associate members at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting date.