

Green Party of Florida - Bylaws, Rules and Regulations

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Bylaws of the Green Party of Florida

PREAMBLE:

In establishing itself as a political party the Green Party of Florida (hereinafter GPF) charts a new course among the progressive movements in Florida. This act takes the personal consciousness of the interconnected unity of all forms of life and the planet Earth, and allows it to breathe its healing and life changing power into the political process. It is our all-encompassing purpose to bring the power and reality of the Ten Key Values to every part of society and nature touched by the actions of the Green Party of Florida.

ARTICLE I: Name of the Party

The name of the Party shall be the Green Party of Florida.

ARTICLE II: Purposes of the Party

The specific objectives and purposes of the Green Party of Florida shall be:

A. To foster greater understanding and to advance the authority and reality of the Green's Ten Key Values in society.

1. These values are:

- a. Ecological wisdom
- b. Grassroots democracy
- c. Personal and global responsibility
- d. Nonviolence
- e. Decentralization
- f. Community-based economics
- g. Gender equality
- h. Respect for diversity
- i. Social justice
- j. Future focus / sustainability

2. These values will first be demonstrated and made real in all the actions and words of the Green Party of Florida and its members. Our personal lives are the greatest witnesses to the reality of these values.

3. Furthermore, these values shall be promoted through electoral process, research, the media, education and diverse party actions.

B. To foster the creation and development of a Green Party in each county of Florida, while continuing to support those already existing.

C. To serve as a network facilitator between the County Green Parties and recognized locals.

D. To facilitate electoral politics, campaigns and office holding statewide and among all the County Green Parties in the State of Florida.

E. To be the State Green Party for Florida in official and fraternal association with the duly constituted national green party, which is recognized and registered with the federal election authorities (FEC) and its member State Green Parties.

F. To be in collaborative unity of spirit and movement with non-affiliated local, regional, state, national and global Green associations, societies or groups.

G. To work in concert with other associations, groups, and societies when their goals and objectives advance and promote the Ten Key Values.

ARTICLE III: Membership and Organizations

A. Individual Membership

A person shall be a member of the Green Party of Florida if:

1. He or she is registered as a Green Party member with the Supervisor of Elections, or;

2. She or he is unable to register to vote with the Supervisor of Elections due to being a non-citizen, felon or under-aged person. These individuals may join the GPF if they complete and sign a valid enrollment form with a recognized local or county party, or with the GPF. The form must include the following affirmation: "I am at

least 14 years of age, I agree to adhere to the Ten Key Values and respect the Bylaws of the Party, and I attest that I am prohibited by law from registering to vote with the Supervisor of Elections because I am a non-citizen, felon or under-aged individual.”

B. Annual General Membership Meeting

1. A general membership meeting shall be held at least annually. The general membership may meet at such other times and places as may be determined by the State Coordinating Council (hereinafter State CC).

2. Annual meetings shall be called by the State CC. The State CC shall select, by consensus seeking process, an “Annual Meeting Organizing Committee (hereinafter Meeting Committee)”, which shall be responsible for:

a. Facilitating the meeting: The Meeting Committee shall propose the date, time and place for the meeting, which proposal shall be submitted to the State CC for approval through consensus seeking.

b. Meeting Agenda: In consultation with the body of the State CC, with input from any general party member, county party or local, the Meeting Committee shall draft an “Agenda Proposal” which shall be submitted to the State CC for approval through consensus seeking.

c. Meeting Announcement: The general membership shall be given a minimum of thirty (30) days advance notice of the date, time, place and agenda for the annual meeting, and all other general membership meetings, by publishing a notice on the Party’s public and functioning website.

3. Purposes of the membership meetings:

The general membership shall meet, as provided above, in order to:

a. Partake in the nomination and consensus seeking process for the selection of Officers of the Board of Trustees.

b. Partake in the nomination and consensus seeking process for the selection of Members of the Board of Trustees.

c. Approve or disapprove proposed changes to the Bylaws.

d. Approve or disapprove general proposals or resolutions, which may be presented for consideration or approval.

e. Network together, socialize, solidify relationships and plan for the future.

f. Consider and accomplish such other business as would seem appropriate and right to the consensus of the general membership.

4. Quorum

A quorum must be present at any general membership meeting, virtual or electronic, in order for the CC or the membership to exercise any of their duties and/or responsibilities. A quorum shall be constituted when there are a sufficient number of delegates and/or members participating to represent 2/3 of the total membership represented by “participating” delegates, as defined in Article V.C.8.

ARTICLE IV: Green Party of Florida Member Organizations

A. County Green Parties

1. Creation of County Green Parties

The GPF encourages the establishment of one County Green Party in each county in order to promote local elections and the growth of the Green Party, both locally and statewide, and to facilitate collaboration and communication throughout the Party.

2. Petitioning

An organized Green Party in a county may petition the Green Party of Florida for recognition as the official affiliated County Green Party for that county. This petition for recognition shall meet the following requirements:

a. The petitioning group should be organized by having approved and constituted bylaws which conform to the Ten Key Values, consensus seeking decision making and principals of decentralization; and

b. The petitioning group should have regular membership meetings and should be open for membership by all Greens within the county. The rules for membership in the County Green Party should be no more restrictive than for membership in the State Green Party.

c. The petitioning group should consist of at least ten (10) active members who are specifically enrolled as members of the County Party.

d. The petitioning group should be able to demonstrate that it is fairly representative of Green Party members in the respective county.

e. The petitioning group should be open and receptive, both in its bylaws and in reality, to the full inclusion of all Green Party Locals found and constituted within the group's respective county. At a minimum, this inclusion should provide for:

(1). Full membership in the County Party by all members of party locals who meet the membership requirements of these bylaws.

(2). Fair and proportional representation of the Party Local on the county council of the County Party.

f. The decision to petition for recognition as a County Green Party shall be made at a duly publicized meeting and shall be arrived at by consensus seeking process.

g. The petitioning group shall clearly state their commitment to abide by and respect all local, state and federal laws and regulations regarding political parties, organizations and elections.

3. Conflicting petitions for recognition as a County Party

When there are competing applications for recognition as the County Green Party for a particular county, the following procedures shall apply:

a. First each competing County Party shall be informed of the competing petitions and the competing groups shall be asked to meet and attempt to reconcile their differences, so as to encourage a merger of the groups into one County Party. Both groups should be encouraged to exercise the values of consensus, diversity, and party unity in their reconciliation efforts.

b. If such county level efforts at reconciliation and merger are not successful, then the State CC shall select three individuals who are skilled in mediation, reconciliation and consensus to serve as facilitators in new reconciliation and merger efforts.

c. If the appointed mediators report back to the State CC that they have been unsuccessful at achieving reconciliation and merger, then the State CC shall appoint a panel of six State CC members to investigate the merits of each group's petition. This panel shall be made up of members from different county parties. No member of the panel may come from the county in question or be one of the appointed mediators. The following rules shall be followed by the panel and the State Coordinating Council in making a final decision:

(1). Prior to the panel beginning its work, each competing group shall agree to abide by the final consensus decision of the whole State CC.

(2). The panel will examine and compare each county group in light of ARTICLE IV, A.2.[a-e].

(3). The panel shall attempt to reach a consensus on the appropriate group to recognize. In the event that consensus fails, then a majority vote of the panel is required to propose one county group for official recognition.

(4). Once the panel has reached its recommendation, relative to which county group should be recognized, that decision shall be published to the State CC in writing, with precise grounds for the recommendation.

(5). Finally, the State CC shall review the recommendation of the panel with due respect and shall attempt to reach consensus on the recommendation of the panel. In the event that consensus is not obtained, then the State CC shall determine which county group shall be recognized by a 2/3 vote of the State CC.

(6). The State CC shall not unreasonably delay the process of recognizing a petitioning county group or resolving any conflicts.

B. Green Party Locals

1. Creation of Green Party Locals

The Green Party of Florida encourages the establishment of Green Party Locals throughout the state, for the purpose of promoting municipal and local elections, supporting specific issues, reaching societal groups and providing the grass roots foundation to the Green Party.

2. A Local may be officially recognized by petitioning the County Green Party for the county wherein the Local is located. In the event that no County Green Party has been formally constituted for that county, then the Local may petition directly to the State Coordinating Council for recognition.

3. It is also permissible for a Local to include and geographically span several contiguous counties, where the included counties do not have sufficient members to constitute individual County Parties. These multi-county Locals may continue to function as one Local until such time as members who reside in one of the counties seek individual County Party or Local status.

4. Recognition of a Local shall not be unreasonably withheld and shall be granted when a Local meets the following qualifications:

a. The Local shall consist of at least five (5) active members who are enrolled as members of the Local.

b. The Local shall have regular meetings.

c. The Local shall be formally organized by having approved and constituted bylaws which conform to the Ten Key Values, consensus seeking decision-making and principles of decentralization.

d. The Local shall clearly affirm its commitment to abide by and respect all local, state and federal laws and regulations regarding political parties, organizations and elections.

e. All members of Locals shall be considered members of the appropriate County Green Party and the Green Party of Florida, as long as they meet the minimum membership requirements of the County and State Green Parties.

f. The Locals shall be afforded fair and proportional representation on the Coordinating Council of the County Party.

C. Green Party Caucuses

1. **Membership**

A Caucus shall consist of State Party members who share some common link beyond their County Party or Local membership.

2. **Caucus Membership Committee**

The Caucus shall have a Caucus Membership Committee to:

a. Aid polling members, via postal mail, email or phone;

b. Help the members elect any delegates to any other organization with which the caucus may be affiliated or collaborating with;

c. Help members to democratically direct mandates to such delegates;

d. Notify members of decisions made by delegates;

e. Have postal ballot elections of the delegates and of the membership committee, sent to all members of the Caucus.

3. **Decision Making**

The Caucus shall have meetings governed by a consensus, but when consensus fails, may have a fallback vote, which shall be no less than a majority. Any meeting decisions would need to be ratified by at least a majority of the Caucus members through a postal ballot.

4. **Accountability**

Any positions elected by the Caucus may be recalled or re-elected or given a specific mandate, by a decision of the Caucus members, possibly even under the threat of censure.

5. **Independent Representation**

Any delegates to another organization who are elected by the Caucus only represent the Caucus members. They shall never portray themselves as representing the entire State or National Green Party.

6. **Additional Bylaws**

The Caucus shall have its own bylaws to specify any additional rules needed, such as the composition of the membership, any affiliation with another organization, and other aspects of the Caucus that are specific to it and which may need to be changed by it. For example, the Caucus' bylaws might specify the number and election of delegates to some other organization in a manner fulfilling any requirements of that other organization.

ARTICLE V: State Coordinating Council

The principal governing and decision-making body of the GPF shall be the State CC. This Council shall be representative of the Green Party membership in each of Florida's counties.

A. Membership

The membership of the State Coordinating Council shall consist of delegates representing each Florida county with an organized and recognized County Green Party, or representing a County Local where no County Party exists.

1. Selection of Delegates

Each County Green Party or County Local (where no County Party exists) shall select by consensus or vote the appropriate number of delegates to the State CC. The County Party or County Local (where no County Party exists) shall certify the names, addresses and contact information for these delegates to the State Party Board of Trustees. Each County Party or County Local (where no County Party exists) shall select its delegates just prior to the State Party's annual meeting, so that the new delegates can be recognized at the Annual meeting. The delegates' term begins immediately after the annual meeting.

2. Authority of Delegates

Each delegate is authorized to speak and act by the membership of their County Green Party or County Local (where no County Party exists). The delegate's position and vote on matters of policy and direction for the State Party should represent the consensus of their County Party or County Local (where no County Party exists).

3. Number of Delegates

Each County Party or County Local (where no County Party exists) may select a minimum of two delegates, one of each gender. Gender diversity should be respected.

4. Elections Weight of Delegates

Each represented entity (County Party or Local) shall decide the number of votes each of their State CC delegates will have, up to the total number of members in the represented entity. However, votes shall not be split into fractions, excepting halves.

a. Determination of County Party membership for purposes of weighting delegates votes

(1). Registered voters

Membership of county parties shall be determined by an examination of the state voter rolls. The Chair, Vice-Chair, or Secretary shall send a request to the State of Florida Division of Elections for a list of all registered voters in Florida on the following dates: 60 days prior to the Annual General Membership Meeting. If the date falls on a day that is not a business day for the post office or the Division of Elections, then the request shall be sent on the first business day following that day. If a complete list is not received from the Division of Elections within two weeks, then another request shall be sent two weeks from the day the last request was sent. Requests will continue to be made in this fashion until a list is received.

(2). For members who are not registered as a Green Party member with the Supervisor of Elections:

(a). The County Party must have a current (less than one year old) enrollment form signed by each member. The County Party will then certify a membership roll to the Board of Trustees.

(b). Certification of Membership

The certification will affirm that to the best of the County Party's knowledge and belief the list contains only the names of currently enrolled, non-registered party members.

(c). Time of Certification

On the same days that the list of registered voters is requested, each County Party or Local (where no County Party exists) shall send a certification to the Secretary listing its enrolled members who are not registered as Green Party members with the Supervisor of Elections.

b. Determination of Local Party membership (where no County Party exists) for purposes of weighting delegates' votes; Each Local Green Party must have a current (less than one year old) enrollment form for each member. On the same days that the list of registered voters is requested, each Local (where no County Party exists) shall send a certification to the Secretary listing all of its enrolled members. The certification will affirm that to the best of the Local's knowledge and belief the list contains only the names of currently enrolled party members.

c. At least 30 days before any County Party or Local (where no County Party exists) shall select its delegates to the State CC, the State CC shall notify the membership of each Party's delegate selection process, of the annual general membership meeting, and of how to participate in the County, Local, and State Parties.

5. Terms

The terms of the delegates shall be for one year. Delegates may be re-elected.

6. Termination of a Delegate on the Coordinating Council

A delegate's position on the State CC shall terminate when the delegate:

- a. Term ends without re-election;
- b. Resigns; or
- c. Is recalled by the County Green Party.

7. Membership Involvement in Another Political Party

Coordinating Council members shall not serve on another political party's decision-making body. State CC members shall disclose membership in any other political party to the State CC immediately after such membership begins.

8. When Delegates are Selected

The first selection of delegates may take place when the County Party or Local (where no County Party exists) is organized. Thereafter delegates shall be selected when the previous delegates' terms are expiring, with the delegates' mandate to commence upon such expiration.

B. Duties of the Coordinating Council

- 1. To provide vision, leadership and direction to the GPF in the spirit and in the light of the Ten Key Values.

2. To coordinate state-wide Green Party actions (political, issues or electoral) between the several County Green Parties and Locals.
3. To establish and maintain a network and system of communications between and among the State CC and the several Green Parties and Locals.
4. To establish standing and ad hoc committees to carry out the work of the Party on a state level.
5. To select and name delegates to represent the GPF within or with other national and state organizations. Delegates so named are guided and mandated in their representation by the State CC, and are responsible to and report to the State CC.
6. To encourage and assist County Green Parties and Locals to establish themselves and carry out their individual purposes and mandates.
7. To participate in electing Officers of the Board of Trustees at the annual general membership meetings.
8. To participate in electing Members of the Board of Trustees at the annual general membership meetings.
9. To oversee and supervise the activities of the GPF Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall receive its direction and mandate from and is directly responsible to the State CC.
10. To take responsibility for the effective state-wide communication and dissemination of Green values, issues and projects to the Florida general public.
11. To periodically review and where necessary propose or recommend changes to these bylaws to be ratified by the general GPF Membership.
12. To recognize and welcome newly established County Green Parties and Locals.
13. To provide for the official endorsement of GPF candidates, as provided for in these bylaws. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted in a way which would limit the freedom of a County Green Party or Local to endorse and run candidates at their level of political responsibility.
14. To call and organize, at least once annually, a general membership meeting.
15. To prepare and propose a slate of Board of Trustee candidates to the general membership, prior to the annual general membership meeting.
16. To prepare an agenda for the annual general membership meeting, through the Annual Meeting Organizing Committee, and to give final approval to the agenda.

C. State Coordinating Council Meetings

The Coordinating Council shall meet at such times and places as determined by the State CC through consensus seeking process.

1. The Council shall meet, however, at least once each year.
2. The Annual Meeting of the State CC may be at the same time and place of the annual general membership meeting.

3. Notice

Notice of the State CC's annual meeting shall be made at least 30 days prior to the meeting, and shall be made by a method normally used to notify State CC members of State CC business. General notice shall be made to County Green Parties and Locals by their Coordinating Council delegates and shall be the responsibility of said delegates.

4. Open meetings

All meetings shall be open to the general membership of the GPF. Participation in consensus process, or where necessary, voting, is open to delegates and individual members. If a member chooses to participate directly in the decision making process and personally cast her or his vote, then that person's party membership must first be verified. For each member whose membership is verified, the delegates from that participating member's County Party or Local shall lose one vote from their total election weight for the remainder of the meeting, unless the individual(s) leaves or chooses not to continue to participate.

5. Minutes

Written minutes shall be kept to include: agenda items, actions to be taken, and person(s) responsible for the actions.

a. Reading of minutes

The minutes shall be read / amended / approved at each Coordinating Council meeting.

b. Availability of minutes

The minutes shall be made available to the general party membership, through each County Party's or Local's delegates to the State CC.

6. Electronic Communications

In order to facilitate the continuity of the business and work of the State CC and the state committees, it is permissible for the participating delegates and/or committee members to communicate and vote through the use of telephonic communications, email, or other similar communications.

a. The State CC shall develop and adopt written rules for the presentation of proposals, and the official decision-making process for deciding upon proposals, through the medium of email or through the mixed medium of email, telecommunications and mail. Until these rules are formulated and passed, the following minimum rules shall apply:

(1). When there is a vote or efforts to obtain consensus, it shall be necessary for a scribe to be appointed to note the proposals, issues, questions, and the vote or consensus. The "minutes" of such deliberations must be written and made available to party members upon request.

(2). Participation in the above-described electronic meetings shall constitute the presence of each person at such meeting.

7. Quorum

A quorum must be present at any CC meeting, virtual or electronic, in order for the CC or the membership to exercise any of their duties and/or responsibilities. A quorum shall be constituted when there are a sufficient number of delegates and/or members participating to represent 2/3 of the total membership represented by "participating" delegates, as defined in Article V.C.8.

8. Delegate Participation

Delegates to the State CC shall be required to actively participate in CC decision-making processes. A delegate shall be deemed “non-participating” if any of the following occurs:

- a. If the delegate declines to participate in CC decision making over the course of one month’s time; or
- b. If the delegate does not participate in three consecutive CC votes; or
- c. If the delegate misses more than one regularly scheduled meeting where business is to be conducted, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall determine whether a delegate is non-participating. When such a determination is made, notice shall be sent by certified mail to both the delegate and the delegate’s County or Local Party. The change of status shall take effect seven (7) days after the receipt of the notice.

A delegate or the delegate’s County or Local Party may contest the determination of non-participatory status by filing a protest with the Secretary within five (5) days of receiving the notice. This protest should clearly state the reasons why the determination is incorrect. A timely protest shall be considered by the Board of Trustees, whose determination on the matter shall be final. In the event of a timely protest, the change of status shall take effect immediately upon the final determination of the Board.

If a delegate is deemed non-participating, the delegate does not lose the right to vote her or his County or Local’s full weighted vote. The only effect of being deemed non-participating is that the delegate’s weighted vote does not count toward a quorum.

A delegate’s full status will be restored, and their weighted votes again counted toward quorum, if they demonstrate a commitment to participate. Such commitment will be demonstrated if the delegate actively participates in three consecutive Coordinating Council votes conducted in any venue.

If a delegate is unavailable to participate in State CC decision making because of a vacation, work conflict or for any other reason, the delegate’s County or Local Party may, by notifying the GPF Secretary in writing, name a temporary alternative delegate, change delegates or allow other delegates to cast their full weighted vote.

D. Committees

Through the State CC, the GPF shall constitute such standing and ad hoc committees as are necessary to do the state-wide work of the Party.

1. Committee members shall generally consist of such interested State CC, County Party, and Local members who may volunteer to participate on them.
2. Where it is necessary for the efficient functioning of a committee, the State CC may cap the number of committee members of a particular committee by consensus or 2/3 vote of those Council members voting on the issue.
3. The committees shall function according to Green concepts of consensus seeking, but may decide issues by a 2/3 vote of those committee members voting on the issue.
4. The Board of Trustees shall work with the state committees in the following ways. The Board shall:
 - a. Work to coordinate the work of the state committees;
 - b. Aid the committees in developing strategies, objectives, work plans and the individual committee budgets;

- c. Compile periodic reports on the work of the committees; and
- d. Provide counsel and advice to the individual committees to aid the committees in their work

E. National Delegates

The state coordinating council (state CC) shall elect Delegates to the National Committee of the Green Party of the United States (GPUS). A Delegate is first, and overall, a representative of the Green Party of Florida (GPF)

1. Numbers of Delegates: To the extent possible, the state CC shall elect the number of Delegates permitted by the rule and determination of the authorizing body of the GPUS, and shall elect such alternative Delegates as seems appropriate

2. Qualification of Delegates and Alternative Delegates:

- a. The Delegates shall be members of the GPF
- b. The Delegates should be members in good standing in their county Green party and their election should be ratified by the membership of such county Green party. Where the Delegate comes from a non-organized county, evidence must be presented that the Delegate serves with the approval of local Greens from her/his respective county.
- c. The Delegates should be individuals who have demonstrated their commitment and contributions to the advancement of the GPF and/or their local county parties, and have been involved with the GPF (county GP Delegate to GPF, GPF Officer, GPF Board of Trustee Member, or GPF Committee Member) at the state level for at least one year

3. Election and Term:

- a. Delegates will normally be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting and shall serve until the following Annual Membership Meeting.
- b. Diversity: In electing Delegates the state CC shall respect diversity, seeking gender and regional balance, and to the extent possible, racial diversity
- c. Vacancy: Should a Delegate position be vacated for any reason during that Delegate's term, the Co-chairs, with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees, shall fill that position by selecting one of the elected Alternative Delegates. The new Delegate will then serve until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the state CC or the membership. The state CC shall at that time either ratify and approve such nomination or elect a new Delegate to finish the term of the original Delegate. Such new Delegate shall serve only until the following Annual Membership Meeting, where new elections shall be held.

4. Delegate Responsibilities: GPF Delegates to the GPUS are expected to serve in the following capacities:

a. **Representative Role:** The Delegate is an envoy, an emissary and an ambassador of the state CC to the GPUS. It is vitally important for the Delegate to recognize and respect her/his role as an elected representative of the GPF and as such:

(1). The Delegate serves as the voice of the state CC. This requires continuous reporting to and consultation with the state CC (see below). Delegates are expected to respect the following principles in their representation of the GPF.

(a). **Official GPF Positions:** GPF Delegates shall faithfully represent the official positions of the GPF (resolutions or platform) both in National Committee discussions and votes. Where the Delegate's personal politics, ideas, or vision is different from that of an official GPF position, then the Delegate must set aside her/his own views and faithfully represent the state CC at the GPUS.

(b). **Where the state CC has not adopted an official GPF position,** the Delegates are encouraged to the extent possible to represent the diversity of significantly supported and expressed GPF opinion in their formal votes. The Delegates shall seek to measure the diversity and strength of GPF opinion through the process of reporting to the GPF, seeking informal feedback and engaging in discussion with other GPF Delegates.

(c). It is also understood that Delegates will engage in GPUS discussions in the normal course of their representation. Where the GPF has no official position, but the Delegates have reported to the GPF and received informal feedback, they may represent such feedback as the general position or positions of the GPF. Where the GPF has no official position or has not indicated its general position(s), Delegates are free to engage in such discussion, but must refrain from presenting their personal opinion as that of the GPF.

b. **Responsibilities:** The Delegate's direct responsibilities are:

(1). **To Report:** To provide to the state CC regular, clear, objective reports as to the important discussions and issues at the GPUS.

(a). **Form of Reports:** In principle, these should be short, concise summaries reasonably calculated to inform the state CC of the issues, without overburdening them with copies of all discussions. Important documents and statements should be forwarded with an explanatory statement to inform the state CC of the significance of the document to the GPF.

(b). **Unified Reports:** Where possible the Delegates should collaborate together to provide agreed upon, unified reports. It would be acceptable for the Delegates to agree among themselves to divide the reporting responsibilities so that each Delegate is responsible for certain subject areas. In the event that the Delegates cannot agree upon a unified report, then each shall submit individual reports, as defined in 4(b)1.

(c). **Recommendations:** It is important for the Delegates to provide the state CC with their concise insights and recommendations of subjects and issues under discussion at the GPUS. By making recommendations and allowing the state CC to express itself, statements relayed to the GPUS will carry the weight of being considered GPF positions.

(2). **Participation:** The Delegates shall actively represent the state CC in the business of the GPUS and shall establish a good and participatory voting record. Where possible, considering time and finances, the Delegates should attend the annual GPUS Convention

(a). Delegates are expected to vote on every GPUS proposal. Should a Delegate be unavailable during a voting period, s/he is expected to ensure an alternate is prepared to cast a ballot. A voting record below 80% will be cause for review of the Delegate's status, along with consideration of recall (see Section 5 below).

(b). Alternate Delegates should monitor the GPUS posts as necessary to perform the duties of a voting GPUS Delegate on short notice.

5. Resignation and Recall: Given the essential importance of harmony between the positions and objectives of the state CC and its Delegates to the GPUS, it is important that provisions be made in the event that a conflict in positions and objectives should arise between the state CC and its Delegates. It is therefore provided:

a. Resignation: When a Delegate realizes that her/his own personal positions and objectives are in conflict with the state CC and s/he cannot subsume her/his ideas, objectives or positions to those of the state CC, then such Delegate should tender her/his resignation to the state CC

b. Recall: Should the state CC realize that a conflict has arisen between themselves and an elected Delegate, the state CC must make a good faith effort to resolve the conflict using the consensus seeking process. If resolution of the conflict has been unsuccessful, the state CC may recall the Delegate using the consensus seeking process. The state CC may also, by the same process, recall a Delegate who fails to fulfill her/his responsibilities as defined above. In such cases, the Delegate's position shall be filled as previously provided in Section 3(c) of this Article.

ARTICLE VI: State Board of Trustees

In order to meet the requirements of the state's electoral and corporate laws, and in order to serve the needs of the State CC, a State Board of Trustees (hereinafter Board) shall be instituted. The Board of Trustees shall receive its direction and mandate for action directly from the State Coordinating Council, and is responsible directly to the State CC.

The Board will serve as an advisory-working committee for the State Party. The members of the Board should be chosen from among the state membership for their experience, wisdom, dedication, proven party work and leadership abilities.

In its leadership role as the state party's advisory-working committee, the Board shall assist and help guide the Party in strategic planning, party building, leading state-wide initiatives, and other such projects as are necessary or directed by the State CC.

A. Membership

1. Number

The Board of Trustees shall be composed of seven (7) working members. The number of Board members shall be determined by the members participating at the annual general membership meeting, including the State CC delegates (who shall vote their adjusted weighted vote).

2. Composition

The working Board shall consist of two co-chairs of different genders, an official Florida state listed treasurer, an assistant treasurer, an official Florida state listed secretary, a recording secretary and a communications secretary.

3. Board members must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

4. Each board member must be a member of the GPF and of a County Green Party or Local.

5. Selection of Board of Trustees

a. The State CC may, but is not required to, propose a slate of candidates for the Board of Trustees to the general membership.

b. GPF members may nominate qualified individuals to serve on the Board.

c. Diversity

Gender, ethnic, and regional diversity shall be considered, respected, and promoted in the nomination of Board members.

d. The Board of Trustees are elected at the annual general membership meeting.

(1). Where the slate of nominated members does not exceed seven (7) members, then the slate may be approved by consensus seeking process.

(2). Where the panel of nominated members exceeds seven (7) members, then a vote shall be taken of the members participating at the annual general membership meeting, including the State CC delegates (who shall vote their adjusted weighted vote).

(3). Each open position shall be voted on individually, and each member of the State CC's vote shall be weighted as provided in ARTICLE V, A.3.

(4). The Board of Trustee candidates receiving the highest votes shall be elected.

e. In the event that a Board member vacates her/his position during her/his term of office, the State CC shall vote within thirty (30) days to replace that Board member.

B. Composition & Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

1. Designated Officers and Responsibilities

The Green Party of Florida's belief in decentralized and grass root democracy mediates against the concentration of authority or power in the hands of single individuals. The designation of Officers of the Board of Trustees (hereinafter, the Board) and the State Executive Committee respects these principles, but also acknowledges the need for the exercise of organized team leadership. These leadership positions should, thus be considered administrative rather than authoritative in nature. Members elected to the Board of Trustees also serve as members of the State Executive Committee. The officers are responsible to the Board of Trustees, who in turn answer to the State CC.

a. Co-chairs

Serve as the SEC Chair and Vice Chair for the purpose of fulfilling state and federal election law and state corporation law requirements. The co-equal co-chairs are responsible for the following:

- (1). Providing unifying direction to the State Board of Trustees;
- (2). Drafting an agenda and chairing regular meetings of the Board;
- (3) Helping the Board to coordinate and achieve its work; and
- (4). Assisting the Board in coordinating and assisting the work of the State Party committees.

b. Official Secretary

Serves as the SEC's official Florida state listed secretary for the purpose of fulfilling state and federal election law and state corporation law requirements. Receives and sends official party correspondence and keeps copies of all official documents.

c. Official Treasurer

Serves as the official treasurer of the Party for the purpose of fulfilling state and federal election law and state corporation law requirements. The treasurer is also responsible for presenting financial reports to the Board of Trustees, State CC and the General Membership Meeting.

d. Deputy Treasurer

Trains under the official treasurer and also in charge of state fund raising efforts.

e. Recording Secretary

Maintains the minutes of the Board of Trustees, the minutes State Coordinating Council and the minutes of the meeting(s) of the General Membership. To record and report State CC proposals, votes, and resolutions.

f. Communications Secretary

Liaison to the state IT team. Has access to GPFL's information resources to maintain party communications between and among the State CC and the various county parties and locals as well as outside inquiries. Keeps track of delegate and local contact information, adds new delegates and contacts the appropriate official state spokespersons for comments or appearances.

2. Board of Trustees Responsibilities

The members of the Board shall:

- a. Serve as the members of the State Executive Committee;
- b. Develop a State Party strategic plan (to be approved by the State CC);
- c. Do party building;
- d. Lead state-wide initiatives, and other such projects as necessary or directed by the State CC; and
- e. Serve as liaison to the various state committees.

3. Selection of Officers

The election of SEC officers shall normally take place during the annual membership meeting. The SEC officers shall also serve as the officers of the Board

- a. A Chair, Vice Chair, 3 secretaries and 2 Treasurers shall be elected by majority vote of the SEC members participating at the annual general membership meeting.
- b. In nominating and electing officers and Board members, respect and consideration should be given to gender diversity.

4. Vacancies

Any vacancy occurring in any office by death, resignation or otherwise may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the State Coordinating Council at any regular or special meeting.

C. Meetings

The Board of Trustees will meet once each month or as often as deemed necessary to fulfill its responsibilities. The Board of Trustees should meet immediately after the annual General Membership meeting. The Board of Trustees' meetings shall be run by consensus process in the manner of general meetings. The Board shall conduct its business by correspondence, email and telephone conferences. The Board shall keep and publish minutes from its meetings.

1. Quorum

A quorum must be present at any Board meeting, virtual or electronic, in order for members to exercise any of their duties or responsibilities. A quorum shall be constituted when 2/3 of the Board is present (5 members).

ARTICLE VII: Election Organization and Rules

It is the intent and purpose of these bylaws to conform with the requirements of all Florida election law, regulations and rules. To the extent that any provision of these bylaws conflicts with any provision of Florida election Law, regulation or rules, then such provision shall yield to the relevant Florida Law, regulation or rule to the extent of such conflict.

A. State Executive Committee

For the purposes of conforming to the requirements of the Florida Statutes, including but not limited to Florida Statutes §103.091, the State Executive Committee (hereinafter, SEC) shall be constituted and shall function under the following terms and conditions:

1. The Board of Trustees and the members of the state Coordinating Council shall serve as the SEC.
2. The SEC shall elect officers consisting of a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer at the Annual Membership Meeting, for the purpose of complying with Florida Statute Section 103.091(3). The chair and vice chair shall serve as co-equal co-chairs of the SEC and the Board.
3. In the event that a member of the Green Party of Florida is elected to any of the offices as provided for in the Florida Statutes §103.091 (6)(a)2-3 (e.g. U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, a statewide office, etc.), then such person shall be a member of the SEC as provided for in the above-referenced statute.
4. The term of office of the SEC shall correspond to the terms of office of the Board of Trustees and the State CC.

5. Duties of the SEC

In keeping with the Green Party philosophy of democratic decentralization and grass roots participation, the foundational authority of the SEC comes from the State CC, which is in turn empowered by the represented County Green Parties and Locals. These duties are as follows:

- a. To file with the Department of State the names and addresses of its chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer and members [Florida Statute §103.091(3)] in accordance with Article VII Section A(2) of these Bylaws;
- b. To file a copy of its constitution, bylaws, and rules and regulations with the Department of State [Florida Statute §103.091(3)];
- c. To sign and certify a constitution of the Green Party of Florida once a constitution is drafted and approved by the membership of the Green Party of Florida [Florida Statute §103.021(1)(a)1];
- d. To sign and certify such bylaws or amendments to the bylaws as may be approved by the Green Party of Florida [Florida Statute §103.121(1)(a)2];
- e. To certify any party nominations approved by the State CC, when required by law;
- f. To oversee the conduct of campaigns for party nominees, as approved and authorized by the State CC;

- g. To oversee the raising and expenditure of party funds, as approved and authorized by the State CC;
- h. To certify candidates for presidential elections as approved and authorized by the State CC, delivering a certified copy thereof to the Governor prior to September 1 of each presidential election year.
- i. To be accountable to the State Party for the funds of the Party and their proper expenditure. The SEC shall ensure that all accounts are maintained according to the requirements of state law and that all required reports are made in a timely, correct fashion.
- j. To conduct its meetings according to accepted practices on consensus seeking decision making.

B. County Executive Committee

For the purpose of conforming to the requirements of the Florida Statutes, including but not limited to Florida Statutes §103.091, the State CC shall recognize County Executive Committees (hereinafter CEC) for each County Green Party requesting such designation. These CECs shall be constituted and shall function under the following terms and conditions:

1. The county council or other governing body as determined by the bylaws of the County Green Party, shall serve as the CEC.
2. For the purposes of constituting the CEC, the county governing body shall designate from among themselves a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer.
3. In the event that a member of the County Green Party is elected to any of the offices as provided for in Florida Statute §103.091(6)(a)1 (e.g. state legislature), then such person shall be a member of the CEC as provided for in the above referenced statute.
4. The terms of office of the members of the CEC shall correspond to terms of office of the members of the governing body of the County Green Party.

5. Duties of the CEC:

In keeping with the Green Party philosophy of democratic decentralization and grass roots participation, the foundational authority of the CEC comes from the general membership of the County Green Party. The duties of the CEC are:

- a. To file with the SEC and with the Supervisor of Elections the names and addresses of its officers and members [Florida Statute §103.091(3)];
- b. To sign and certify a constitution of the County Green Party, once a constitution is drafted and approved by the membership of the County Green party [Florida Statute § 103.121(1)(a)1];
- c. To sign and certify such bylaws or amendments to the bylaws as may be approved by the general membership of the County Green Party [Florida Statute § 103.121(1)(a)2];
- d. To certify any party nominations approved by the County Green Party general membership, when required by law [Florida Statute § 103.121(a)4];
- e. To oversee the conduct of campaigns for County Party nominees for county and Local elections, as approved and authorized by the County Party general membership [Florida Statute § 103.121(a)5];

f. To oversee the raising and expenditure of County Party funds, as approved and authorized by the County Party general membership;

g. To be accountable to the County Party and their Supervisor of Elections for the funds of the County Party and their proper expenditure. The CEC shall ensure all accounts are maintained according to the requirements of state law and all required reports are made in a timely correct fashion;

h. To conduct its meetings according to accepted practices of consensus seeking decision-making.

C. Candidates for Office

1. Any candidate for public office who desires to run as a member of the Green Party of Florida may be nominated by the Green Party of Florida if that member and that member's campaign committee (if applicable) agrees to:

a. Promote the Ten Key Values and the platform of the Green Party of Florida; and

b. Be solely responsible for all financial obligations incurred by the candidate's electoral campaign; and

c. Be solely responsible for compliance with all requirements of law for reporting campaign income and expenditures; and

d. Accept campaign contributions in accordance with state and federal law, the ten key values and any additional limits which may be set by the Green Party of Florida.

2. Endorsement Process

a. Statewide offices, U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate:

(1). The Green Party of Florida Coordinating Council, in consultation with the CECs and Locals, shall determine if a candidate meets the qualifications for receiving the official endorsement of the Green Party of Florida.

(2). In the event there is more than one qualified candidate for the same office, then the State CC shall:

(a). Attempt to encourage a consensus between the potential candidates, wherein one would seek an alternative available office or withdraw in the support of other.

(b). In the event no consensus is available, then the issue of which candidate shall receive the official endorsement of the Green Party of Florida shall be determined by the nomination process as described below.

b. State Legislature, County or Local office:

If there is a recognized CEC, then that CEC shall determine if a candidate meets the qualifications for receiving official endorsement of the Green party of Florida.

(1). In the event that the constituency of the public office sought includes more than one county, then the several CECs shall make a joint determination for endorsement.

(2). If there are not Green Party CECs in the constituency of the office, then the candidate may apply to the State CC for endorsement.

(3). In the event that there is more than one qualified candidate for the same office, then the CEC shall follow the procedures as provided for the State CC in such circumstances (See ARTICLE VII, C.2.a.2).

3. Nominating Process

Where there is more than one qualified candidate for the same office and resolution cannot be obtained through consensus seeking process, then selection for endorsement shall be decided by nomination.

a. Notice of the nomination process shall be provided as follows:

(1). Statewide offices, U.S. House Of Representatives and U.S. Senate

Notice shall be provided to each member of the State Coordinating Council by the method commonly used to announce meetings. Notice shall provide:

- (a). The office sought
- (b). The names of the candidates
- (c). The voting deadline
- (d). The nominating meeting place, date and time
- (e). Elections method or methods to be used

(2). State Legislative, County or Local office

Notice shall be provided to each member of the County Green Party by the method provided in their bylaws.

(3). Candidates who wish to have mailed notice must take financial responsibility for the printing and mailing of the notice.

b. Nominating Meeting

(1). A nominating meeting of the appropriate body shall be conducted after due notice to members.

(2). The candidates shall have sufficient time allotted which allows each of them and their supports to speak for their candidacy.

c. Participants

(1). State-wide offices, U.S. Congress

Members of the State CC shall exercise their weighted votes after consultation with and direction from their County Party membership.

(2). State legislative, County and Local offices

All enrolled members of the County Party may vote.

d. Elections

The appropriate governing body (State Coordinating Council) or the County Party governing body shall fix a vote deadline. The voters may vote by mail, written ballot, or e-mail, as permitted in the notice. The candidate receiving the largest vote shall be endorsed.

ARTICLE VIII: Decision-Making

Decision-making wherever required within these bylaws shall be conducted according to the following rules and guidelines:

A. The preferred method of decision-making within the Green Party of Florida shall be consensus seeking.

B. Where consensus is not reached within the time allocated on the agenda, then a vote may be called. The process for calling a vote and voting is as follows:

1. It is necessary for there to be a 2/3 vote of the members voting on the question in order to put a proposal or other matter to a vote.

2. A vote of a 2/3 majority is required in order to confirm decisions brought to a vote.

3. The percentage of the vote is calculated by first counting the number of votes cast. A member may vote "for" or "against," or may abstain from voting. If the member abstains from voting, the abstention will not be considered a vote cast for the purposes of calculating the percentage of the vote.

C. Elections for the Board of Trustee members and officers. The Board and officers shall be elected by the method provided for in the appropriate section of these bylaws (See ARTICLE VI, A.4 and ARTICLE VI, B.2).

ARTICLE IX: Amendments

These bylaws may be altered or repealed, or amended by a 2/3 vote of the State CC voting on the issue.

A. Proposals for Changes to the Bylaws

Proposals for change may be put forth by the State CC, a state bylaw committee, County Parties, Locals or individual general members.

B. Consultation with County Party or Locals

The delegates of the State CC have a positive and affirmative obligation to provide appropriate notice (as provided in their bylaws) to their County Party or Local members of a proposed change or amendment of the bylaws. The delegates should then obtain clear direction from their County Party or Local membership, and they should vote according to such direction.

C. Consensus or Elections on Changes to the Bylaws

Changes to the bylaws may be made through consensus, or failing that, by a 2/3 vote of the State CC delegates voting on the issue.

ARTICLE X: Code of Conduct and Dispute Resolution

A. Code of Conduct

The GPFL Code of Conduct applies to delegates from Local Chapters to the State Coordinating Council, Elected members of the GPFL Board, Membership of any State-Level Committees, and anyone else serving in an appointed or elected capacity at the State-Level.

- 1.) The GPFL does not tolerate discrimination or derogatory or degrading language or actions on the part of any individual involved in the GPFL. This includes all hate speech, discrimination, and slurs directed at an individual based on race, ethnicity, sex, age, socioeconomic class, sexuality, gender identity, and physical or mental ability. As a general principle, all points of view will be heard in appropriate debate and expressed in a respectful manner. Name-calling and ad hominem insults against people's character are considered Violations of this Code of Conduct.
- 2.) There is zero tolerance policy for threats of violence for all communication made electronically/telephonically or in person, implied or explicit, whether through official or unofficial channels. Threats of violence should always be taken seriously because the only way to know for sure if a given threat is sincere is when it is acted upon, which would be too late. Furthermore, the psychological trauma that threats of violence create exists regardless of the sincerity of the offending party. Green party members come from many different struggles, and may have experienced physical or emotional abuse in the past that could trigger trauma from threats made in the present. As such, a strong zero-tolerance stance towards threats of violence is to be taken for all communication between GPFL members moving forward.
- 3.) Members shall not engage in disruptive behavior that would hinder the democratic function of any GPFL body. This includes electronic communication, telephonic, in-person communication, and abuse of procedure and process.

B. Dispute Resolution Committee

- 1.) The Dispute Resolution Committee will be established annually at the Annual General Membership Meeting.
 - a.) Each Local affiliate chapter shall appoint/elect a member of their Local Chapter to serve on the Dispute Resolution Committee.
 - b.) Appointed or active members of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall not also be a member of the Coordinating Council or Board of Trustees.
 - c.) The Dispute Resolution Committee shall meet following their appointment at the Annual General Membership Meeting or shall hold a conference call on the GPFL council line within 15 days of the ASM to select Co-Chairs for the Committee and a Secretary.

- 2.) Membership and duties of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be established as follows:
 - a.) There shall be two Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs of the Dispute Resolution will be entrusted by the committee to receive complaint of violations of the Code of Conduct through a dedicated webpage on gpfl.org or through a dedicated @gpfl.org e-mail address. The Co-Chairs will be entrusted to share complaints with the larger Dispute Resolution Committee. Identity of the complaining party shall be shared as well unless there is a legitimate request for anonymity based on probability of retaliation by the offending party.
 - b.) There Shall be one Secretary. The Secretary will be responsible to document the minutes of any Dispute Resolution Committee Meetings (real or electronic). The Secretary shall be further responsible for submitting any recommendations of the Dispute Resolution Committee to the Coordinating Council as proposals for action.
 - c.) All members of the committee, including Co-Chairs and Secretary, shall be considered voting members.
- 3.) All official decisions of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be made by a quorum of voting members. Quorum is defined as at least two-thirds of the voting members. Each committee member has a personal obligation to review and assess complaints on a case by case basis. Therefore each committee member has one vote on the committee. A two-thirds majority of a committee meetings quorum is necessary for the committee to make a recommendation of action to the Coordinating Council.
- 4.) Complaint of a violation of the Code of Conduct must be submitted within 60 days of the alleged violation. Violations even when there is documented proof of occurrences not brought to the attention of the Committee for action within 60 days shall not be considered by the committee.
- 5.) The primary task of the Dispute Resolution Committees is to resolve disputes, with meting out punishment only as a last result. Resolution may take the form of apologies, or rectification of erroneous charges. Should it be determined that a member (hereafter referred to as the “violator”) has indeed violated the Code of Conduct, the committee may make any of the following recommendations for action:
 - a.) Request a sincere apology and/or retraction from the Violator.
 - b.) Formally issue a motion of censure against the Violator
 - c.) Issue a warning to a 1st time Violator, warning that repeated violations of the Code of Conduct could lead to additional corrective actions.
 - d.) Temporary or Permanent removal of the violator from GPFL moderated social media groups and chats.
 - e.) Suspension of the violator for a period of up to 6 months from service on the GPFL Coordinating Council while the member remains in good standing at large with the GPFL. Suspension means that the violator will be removed from any GPFL Coordinating Council Email Lists or workspaces and violators shall not be permitted to attend meetings of the Coordinating Council real or electronic during the suspension.
 - i.) When a Local Chapter has had a delegate suspended from the Coordinating Council the Local Chapter has 45 days to acknowledge GPFL’s suspension of the delegate and make the appointment of an alternate delegate to serve during the suspension only.
 - f.) Recall of the violator from the Board of Trustees appointment with a call for a new election/appointment with the member remaining in good standing.
 - g.) Suspension or removal of the violator from any GPFL Committee other than the Board of Trustees or Coordinating Council.
 - h.) Violator be stripped of their good standing in the GPFL and be barred from serving in any capacity inside the State Party Structure.

6.) The Coordinating Council shall have 45-days to vote on any proposal made the Dispute Resolution Committee as outlined above. The proposal shall be required to pass by the same standards as any other proposal under Article VIII of these bylaws. In the case where action proposed by the Dispute Resolution Committee falls under actions outlined in Article X Section B.5.a through c, should the Coordinating Council fail to uphold its obligation to vote on a proposal from the Dispute Resolution Committee within 45-days the recommendation of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be considered adopted and implemented immediately following 45-days of inaction by the Coordinating Council. In the case where action proposed by the Dispute Resolution Committee falls under actions outlined in Article X Section B.5.d through h, should the Coordinating Council fail to uphold its obligation to vote on a proposal from the Dispute Resolution Committee within 45-days the recommendation of the Dispute Resolution Committee shall be considered dropped immediately following 45-days of inaction by the Coordinating Council.