

# THE DEMOCRATIC WOMEN OF ERIE COUNTY

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Constitution and Bylaws revised March 20, 2017 and adopted April 17, 2017.  
Constitution and Bylaws amended and adopted June 18, 2018.  
Constitution and Bylaws amended and adopted June 20, 2021.  
Constitution and Bylaws amended and adopted April 17, 2023.

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Democratic Women of Erie County, Ohio, in order to establish and preserve an organization dedicated to the principles of the Democratic National Committee and the Ohio Democratic Party, do hereby adopt this Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE I NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

The name of this organization shall be The Democratic Women of Erie County, Ohio.

## **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

(A) The purpose of this organization shall be as follows:

1. To perpetuate the principles of American democracy;
2. To promote citizen interest in governmental activities in order to influence the course of government on the local, state and national levels;
3. To support the principles of the Democratic Party;
4. To encourage Democratic women to seek public office and encourage other women to support them.

## **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1**

- (A) Any adult, who is a citizen of the United States and entitled to vote in any election, is eligible for membership in the Democratic Women of Erie County, Ohio.
- (B) Written application for membership in said organization shall be made to the Membership Secretary at any time on a form designated for such purpose.
- (C) Any male may apply for and receive Associate Status membership in the Democratic Women of Erie County.
1. An Associate status membership shall not permit the member to seek or hold office (elected or appointed), nor be permitted to vote in such elections.
  2. An Associate status member may serve on any committee, excluding Nominating or Bylaws Committees, with voice and vote.

### **Section 2**

- (A) Membership in this organization shall consist of the following designations:
1. Regular membership (annual payment)
  2. Senior age 62 or older (annual payment)
  3. Associate membership (annual payment)

### **Section 3**

- (A) Dues shall be paid to the Treasurer of the organization no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of January each year. Dues paid after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of January will not be pro-rated.
- (B) Dues not paid by the March meeting shall result in the member's name being removed from the roster.

### **Section 4**

- (A) All members who have paid their dues by the March meeting of the current year are entitled to the privileges of membership, including attending monthly and special meetings and the right to vote for any election and/or issue presented to the membership.
  - (1) Any member paying their dues after the March meeting shall have a thirty (30) day waiting period before having all privileges of membership.
- (B) Associate members are excluded from election of officers.

### **Section 5**

- (A) No member shall endorse any candidate running for public office in the name of the Democratic Women of Erie County, Ohio.
- (B) All literature must have the pre-approval of the Executive Board of the Democratic Women of Erie County, Ohio.

## **ARTICLE IV ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

### **Section 1**

- (A) All members in good standing and a registered Democrat shall be eligible to hold office or be a member of the Nominating Committee.
- (B) At the May meeting, in even numbered years, the membership shall nominate candidates and elect three (3) members to the Nominating Committee to serve for a two-year term.

### **Section 2**

- (A) Officers of this organization shall be the following:
  - (1) President
  - (2) Vice-President
  - (3) Secretary
  - (4) Treasurer
  - (5) Membership Secretary

### **Section 3**

- (A) The terms of the officers shall be as follows:
  - (1) President - two (2) years; elected in odd-numbers years;
  - (2) Vice President - two (2) years; shall be automatically eligible for election for a two (2) year term as President; elected in odd-numbered years;
  - (3) Secretary - two (2) years; elected in even-numbered years;
  - (4) Treasurer - two (2) years; elected in even-numbered years;
  - (5) Membership Secretary - two (2) years; elected in odd-numbered years.
- (B) Any officer is eligible to serve more than one consecutive term in the same office.

### **Section 4**

- (A) After presentation of the nominees for election to the offices for which the term will expire in December, the President shall accept additional nominations by the members either from the floor or in writing as preferred by the members present.
- (B) Election shall be held at the regular November meeting and shall be by majority vote of the membership present.

### **Section 5**

- (A) Should the President be unable to complete her term of office for any reason, the Vice President shall assume the duties of President and shall be administered the oath of office.
- (B) The office of Vice President shall be considered vacant and the vacancy filled in accordance with the provisions in this section.
- (C) In the event any other officer is unable to complete her term of office, that office shall be considered vacant and shall be filled in accordance with the provisions in this section.
- (D) Should a vacancy occur in any elected office six (6) months or more prior to the expiration of the term of that office, nominations shall be taken from the general membership and the election shall be held at the next regular meeting following the vacancy.
- (E) Should the vacancy occur in any elected office less than six (6) months prior to the expiration of the term of that office, the President, with the approval of the Executive Board, shall appoint a member to complete that term of office.

### **Section 6**

- (A) The voting procedure shall be as follows:
  - (1) Current members with dues paid no later than the March meeting of current year shall be eligible to vote.
    - a. As well as any member paying their dues after the March meeting or new members thereafter who shall have a thirty (30) day waiting period before being eligible to vote.

- (2) Eligible members shall sign in to receive a ballot from the Membership Secretary.
- (3) Acclamation vote shall be a majority vote of all members present when elected offices are uncontested.

## **ARTICLE V DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 The President shall**

- (A) Prepare an agenda and preside at all regular, special and Executive Board meetings.
- (B) Select all committee chairs set forth in Article Vi of this Constitution and Bylaws and, with the approval of the Executive Board, create such special committees as deemed necessary for the efficient conduct of business of the organization.
- (C) Act as ex-officio, non-voting member of all committees except the Nominating Committee and the Auditing Committee.
- (D) Co-sign all checks written by the Treasurer.
- (E) Perform all duties required to insure the enforcement of the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the organization and all duties incident to the office of the President.
- (F) Prepare and make available a list of current elected/appointed officers, committee chairpersons with committee members at all meetings.
- (G) Be a member or *member at-large* of the Erie County Democratic Party Executive Committee during her term of office, unless already a member.
  - (1) As a member or member-at-large, the President shall inform the Erie County Democratic Party Executive Committee of all Democratic Women of Erie County programs, events and fundraisers planned to encourage the attendance of all Executive Committee members to said events.
  - (2) As a member or member or a member at-large, the President shall report to the membership all Executive Committee meeting discussions, activities and votes — including endorsement of candidates — at the next scheduled meeting.

### **Section 2 The Vice President shall**

- (A) In the absence of the President or the inability of the President to fulfill her duties, perform the duties of the President.
- (B) Perform all other duties incident to the office of the Vice President.
  - (1) Plan the program for each regular meeting and announce it at the preceding month's meeting.
  - (2) Prepare a tentative list of programs/speakers to be presented at the Executive Board meeting in January of the new year.
  - (3) Introduce past and present officers or candidates of the Democratic Party and give them the opportunity to speak at special events and monthly meetings as requested.

- (4) Co-sign checks in the absence of inability of the President or Treasurer to fulfill her duties.

### **Section 3 The Secretary shall**

- (A) Keep the typed minutes of all meetings of the organization, including regular, special, and Executive Board meetings.
- (1) All minutes shall be delivered to *executive board members* following regular, special and Executive Board meetings prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- (2) Regular monthly meeting minutes may be read in the following open meeting and will be available for members to review 15 minutes before the start of the regular meeting.
- (B) Deliver all records to the Auditing Committee at the end of the year which shall be December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- (C) Upon expiration of her term of office, deliver all books, papers and property of the organization to her successor or the President.
- (D) Receive and deliver to the Executive Board and at the general meeting all correspondence directed to the organization.
- (E) Perform all other duties incident to the office of Secretary.

### **Section 4 The Treasurer shall**

- (A) Receive and disburse all funds of the organization under the direction of the Executive Board and co-sign all checks with the President.
- (B) Keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements, all of which disbursements shall be made by check, including the meals at the regular meetings and require and preserve supporting documents for all expenditures.
- (C) Maintain a savings account and checking account in the name of the organization.
- (D) Present monthly reports to the membership of the financial condition of the organization, which may be read in open meeting or presented to the membership in writing for their approval.
- (E) Complete and file all reports required by state law with the Board of Elections.
- (F) Present a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year at the October Executive Board meeting.
- (G) Provide a financial account of income and expenses for any special events to the Executive Board and to the general membership.
- (H) Deliver all records to the Auditing Committee at the end of the fiscal year, which shall be December 31<sup>st</sup>, for an internal audit.
- (I) At the end of her elected term, an outside audit shall be conducted.
- (J) Perform all other duties incident to the office of Treasurer

## **Section 5 The Membership Secretary shall**

- (A) Accept all applications for membership in this organization as set forth in Article III of this Constitution and Bylaws, along with the fees for such membership. Upon receipt of such application and dues, she shall deliver to the member her membership card; in addition, she shall deliver to any new member a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws, Standing Rules and a roster of members current to the preceding February.
- (B) Keep a separate, accurate record of the membership fees collected and delivered to the Treasurer, which shall include date received and date delivered to the Treasurer, delivery of fees to be in a timely manner. Said record shall be delivered to the Auditing Committee at the end of the fiscal year on December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- (C) Forward an application for membership to any members whose dues have not been paid by the third Monday in January as set forth in Article III.
- (D) Complete a roster of members, current to the last day of February, copies of which shall be provided to the members of the organization at the March meeting.
- (E) Initiate, with the approval of the Executive Board, programs to encourage membership in the organization.
- (F) Perform all other duties incident to the office of Membership Secretary.

## **ARTICLE VI. APPOINTED CHAIRS AND DUTIES**

### **Section 1 President shall appoint the following**

- (A) Parliamentarian, Chaplain, Historian, Chairperson of Ways and Means, Publicity, Social, Telephone, Political Action, Bylaws and Scholarship Committees.
- (B) The President shall, with the approval of the Executive Board, appoint an Auditing Committee which shall consist of three members. This shall occur at the end of the first year of the Treasurer's term.

### **Section 2 The duties of the Parliamentarian shall be**

- (A) To rule on all questions of Parliamentary Procedure in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of this organization and the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
- (B) To be responsible for the orderly and efficient conduct of business and shall serve to assure that meetings are conducted in the prescribed manner.
- (C) Make available the Constitution and Bylaws and the approved Standing Rules to all members.

### **Section 3 The duties of the Chaplain shall be**

- (A) To lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- (B) To conduct a brief nonsectarian invocation at the beginning of each meeting.

**Section 4 Duties of the Ways and Means**

- (A) Select a committee of at least two (2) members to devise methods of raising revenue to carry on the purpose of the organization.

**Section 5 Duties of Publicity**

- (A) To draft and deliver to the news media, notices of monthly meetings and special functions or activities of the organization.

**Section 6 Duties of Political Action**

- (A) To monitor legislative and political activity of interest to the organization.
- (B) To report such activity to the membership and to make any recommendations of action to be taken by the organization.

**Section 7 Duties of Social Chairperson**

- (A) To appoint a committee to assist.
- (B) To plan and arrange the meal for each scheduled meeting.

**Section 8 Duties of Telephone Chairperson**

- (A) To appoint a committee, sufficient in number to complete notification by phone or email to all members, at least seven (7) days prior to each scheduled or special meeting.

**Section 9 Duties of the Nominating Committee**

- (A) To select members in good standing as candidates for each office at the end of the term's expiration.
- (B) If possible, seek a minimum of two (2) candidates for each office.
- (C) To contact each candidate to obtain permission to be nominated for office.
- (D) To present the names of the candidates to the members of the Executive Board at the October Executive Board meeting.
- (E) To present the names of the candidates to the membership at the regular October meeting.
- (F) Nominations from the floor will be heard at the regular October meeting as per Article IV.

**Section 10 Duties of the Auditing Committee**

- (A) To receive all records maintained by the Treasurer of the organization, the necessary records of the Secretary and of the Membership Secretary and to examine said books and records for accuracy.
- (B) To present to the Executive Board their report, in writing, along with any recommendations or findings and present to the general membership in open meeting no later than the second monthly meeting following the end of the

fiscal year, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Section 11 Duties of the Bylaws Chairperson**

- (A) To assist the Parliamentarian and to rule on all questions pertaining to the Constitution and Bylaws.
- (B) To review the Constitution and Bylaws every four (4) years with the assistance of a committee.

### **Section 12 Duties of the Scholarship Committee**

- (A) To establish scholarship criteria, accept applications, review applicants and recommend recipients for all DWEC scholarships.
- (B) To award the Dorothy Deering Scholarship in an amount determined by the Executive Board with membership approval.

## **ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### **Section 1 The Executive Board shall consist of**

- (A) All elected officers including President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary.
- (B) The Parliamentarian and Chairpersons of the Ways and Means, Publicity, Social, Political Action, Bylaws and Scholarship Committees, and shall be chaired by the President.

### **Section 2 The Executive Board shall**

- (A) Meet a minimum of once a quarter at a time and place set by the President.
  - (1) A quorum of the Executive Board shall not be less than five (5) members to conduct business.
- (B) Have the general charge of the organization; shall initiate special programs, outline policies, and make recommendations to the membership regarding expenditures, budget and programs.

## **ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 Monthly Meetings**

- (A) This organization shall meet on the third Monday of each month, unless otherwise agreed upon by the General Membership.
- (B) Each regular meeting of the Democratic Women of Erie County shall have a program focusing on government, politics, women's issues, or political training.

### **Section 2 Special meetings for Membership**

- (A) A special meeting of the membership may be called at any time by the President.

- (1) Written notice of the purpose of the special meeting shall be given prior to the meeting.
- (2) No other business than that so stated shall be considered at said special meeting.

### **Section 3 Special Meetings for Executive Board**

- (A) A special meeting of the Executive Board may be called at any time by the President, Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer.
  - (1) Twenty four (24) hour notice of the purpose of the special meeting shall be given prior to the meeting.
  - (2) No other business than that so stated shall be considered at said special meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS**

### **Section 1**

- (A) The Constitution and Bylaws of this organization may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present at a regular meeting of the organization provided that notice has been given as set forth.
  - (1) Written notice shall be sent to all members of the date, time and location of the two (2) readings and final vote on the proposed amendment.
  - (2) A copy of the proposed amendment shall be given to the members present at each of the two (2) regular monthly meetings prior to said vote.
- (B) Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws may not be made at a special meeting.

## **ARTICLE X QUORUM**

- (A) To conduct business at a general membership meeting duly convened shall consist of a majority of members in good standing present at such meeting with a majority vote rule.

## **ARTICLE XI PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

- (A) The Constitution and Bylaws of this organization and the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all proceedings of this organization.