



## RULES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR CANDIDATES SEEKING ENDORSEMENT BY FCDC FOR NONPARTISAN OFFICES

### I. The Application, Required Documents, Filing Fee and Timelines

- A. Candidates seeking an endorsement for School Board must complete and submit the Application for Endorsement by the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (the "Application"), a Questionnaire for Candidates Seeking FCDC Endorsement for School Board in General or Special Elections ("Questionnaire") and a non-refundable \$300 filing fee to FCDC Headquarters by 5pm on April 1 of the general election year.
- B. Candidates seeking an endorsement for Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District ("Soil & Water") must submit a resume that includes environmental community involvement, complete and return the Application and submit a non-refundable filing fee of \$100 to FCDC Headquarters by 5pm on April 1 of the general election year.
- C. No request for endorsement will be considered without submission of required forms and payment of fees. When the prospective candidate may be subject to the Hatch Act and is prohibited from formally requesting an endorsement, the signers of the Nomination Form for Persons Recommending Candidates Subject to the Hatch Act for FCDC Endorsement (the "Nominators") shall sign and submit the Application on the candidate's behalf, other required documents and the relevant filing fee to FCDC Headquarters by 5pm on April 1 of the general election year.
- D. FCDC will distribute the Candidates' Applications and Questionnaires or resumes to its members by whatever means FCDC deems appropriate to inform members about candidates.
- E. FCDC will vote on endorsements for nonpartisan at-large elections at its General Meeting in May of the general election year. Up to ten days of early in-person voting is permitted in a manner and time deemed appropriate by the FCDC Chair.

### II. School Board Candidates (Other Than At-Large)

- A. An FCDC District (defined according to the organization of FCDC) may recommend for FCDC endorsement one candidate for the school board office that represents their Magisterial District. FCDC Districts may determine their own method and schedule for voting on the endorsement recommendations.
- B. At the FCDC May meeting, the District's candidate for endorsement shall be introduced and recommended by the District Chair or the Chair's designee. After all District school board candidates have been introduced and recommended by their respective District Chairs, the FCDC Chair shall ask for a Motion to endorse the candidates individually or as a whole, at the Chair's discretion. If necessary, discussion on the motion shall not exceed 10 minutes.

- C. The method of voting may be voice vote or by show of hands, at the FCDC Chair's discretion. A majority of members present voting in favor of the motion to endorse the candidate(s) shall constitute approval of FCDC endorsement.

### **III. At-Large Office Candidate Presentations**

- A. Upon arrival at the May FCDC meeting, members will check in and voting eligibility will be confirmed. Only FCDC members in good standing – those whose membership is approved by a meeting of the County Committee prior to April 15 of the general election year – may vote; the FCDC chair may set a deadline for membership applications to be received for consideration. Once a member's eligibility is confirmed, the voter will be provided a ballot for each at-large office. Members must be present at the time of balloting in order to vote. No proxies are permitted.
- B. Candidates shall have the opportunity to address the FCDC membership as follows:
1. Candidates for at-large School Board will be presented in the order of the ballot as previously determined (see Section IV.A). The Chair will introduce each at-large candidate, then the candidate will provide an opening statement not to exceed the maximum length of time determined in advance by the Chair and communicated to the candidates prior to the meeting. Only candidates, or a representative of each candidate subject to the Hatch Act, will be permitted to speak.
  2. Opening statements shall be followed by a question and answer period, not to exceed a maximum time period previously determined by the Chair and communicated to the candidates and membership in advance. Questions for the candidates will be drawn randomly from members in a method determined by the Chair. Each candidate that wishes to respond shall have up to two minutes to answer each question.
  3. Voting for at-large offices will be closed 10 minutes after the completion of the question and answer period.
- C. The process described above will be repeated for Soil & Water candidates after completion of the at-large School Board candidates.

### **IV. At-Large Candidates Ballots and Method of Voting**

- A. A ballot will be prepared that lists all at-large candidates for School Board. A separate, differently colored, ballot will be prepared for Soil & Water candidates. Candidates' names will appear in the order established by drawing lots at a time, place and manner established by the FCDC Chair. Candidates may be present for the drawing of lots, if they so choose.
- B. If a candidate wishes to withdraw from consideration for an endorsement, the candidate must notify the FCDC chair in writing by 5pm one week before voting begins.
- C. Eligible voters may vote for up to three candidates on each ballot using any mark (i.e. check mark, "X", circle, or numbers 1, 2, 3). Voters bear the responsibility to clearly mark their preference. Ballots with more than three candidates selected will be discarded.
- D. Marking a ballot for fewer than three candidates will not invalidate the ballot for purposes of

counting it toward candidates whose selection is clearly marked. For example, if only one candidate is selected on a ballot, the ballot will be counted for the selected candidate only.

## **V. At Large Vote Tally, Certification and Announcement**

- A. Except in accordance with this paragraph, no ballots will be counted until all eligible voters have cast their votes. Counting will commence immediately at the end of voting. In the event that circumstances (time constraints on meeting space, for example) prohibit completion of ballot counting, the FCDC Chair may direct ballot boxes to be sealed and counting continued at a time and location to be announced by the Chair.
- B. The FCDC Chair will act as, or designate, the Voting Process Director (VPD). The VPD will appoint a Teller Committee to count the votes. This committee will be comprised of one or more representatives of each qualified candidate (provided that the same number are appointed from each campaign), as well as a Head Teller and up to three other FCDC members.
- C. All members of the Teller Committee must agree to be sequestered and not to communicate with anyone outside the Teller Committee from the time the first ballot box is unsealed until the time that the results are certified. Teller Committee members must surrender electronic communications devices during this period to the Head Teller. The VPD will make suitable arrangements for escorting Tellers incommunicado outside the sequestration area for reasons of acute personal need.
- D. The FCDC Executive Director, Chair and three Vice Chairs may observe the activities of the Teller Committee. Only these individuals and the VPD may enter the sequestration area or leave it unescorted, and all must agree not to disclose information about the ballot counting to any person other than the VPD prior to the time the FCDC Chair announces the Teller Committee's report.
- E. Prior to counting votes therein, each ballot box will be examined outside the sequestration area by candidate representatives and the VPD. The VPD will then deliver each box to the Teller Committee.
- F. The members of the Teller Committee will remove the ballots from the ballot box and place them in the sequestration area. The number of ballots must be counted to make sure that the number of ballots returned is no greater than the number of ballots issued. If more ballots are received for counting than the number records indicate were issued, the VPD will investigate the situation and recommend to the FCDC Chairman what steps should be taken.
- G. The Teller Committee will tally, record, and verify the results of the endorsement voting. The Teller Committee must agree upon the results and affix their signatures upon the written certification of the results.
- H. After consultation with the campaign representatives and the Head Teller, the VPD may approve modifications to the Teller Committee procedures if they will, under the conditions then existing, improve the fairness, accuracy, and/or confidence in the result of balloting. All activities of the Teller Committee will occur under the direction of the Head Teller. The Head Teller is responsible for ensuring that Teller Committee members understand how the ballots will be tabulated.

- I. The three candidates with the largest number of votes shall be declared the winners of FCDC's endorsement for at-large School Board and Soil and Water offices PROVIDED THAT such candidate receives a vote on at least ten percent (10%) of the ballots cast. The Head Teller, upon certification of the Teller Committee, will transmit the results of the balloting to the FCDC Chair who shall announce the results in the manner deemed appropriate to best inform the candidates, FCDC membership, and general public (in that order). It's possible this announcement may not occur on the same night as balloting.

## **VI. Special Elections**

If a vacancy occurs in an at-large or a Magisterial District office, such that a special election is called by the Board of Elections, FCDC shall use the following endorsement process.

- A. Candidates, or their Nominators if the candidate is subject to the Hatch Act, must file the Application and Questionnaire or resume, as relevant, and filing fee, with FCDC on the date determined and announced by the FCDC Chair.
- B. If more than one candidate for an at-large office is eligible for FCDC's endorsement, the Chair of FCDC shall call for a vote of members using the process defined in Section III – IV above, subject to an appropriate schedule to coincide with the special election calendar.
- C. If only one candidate for an at-large office is eligible for FCDC's endorsement, the Chair of FCDC shall establish such time limitations for a speech by the candidate, followed by questions submitted in writing by FCDC members present and answers by the candidate as the FCDC Chair deems appropriate. Thereafter, the Chair shall call for a vote by voice vote or show of hands. Endorsement is granted if the candidate receives a majority of the votes cast by members present.
- D. In the case of school board special elections other than at-large seats, the relevant FCDC District committee may recommend for FCDC endorsement not more than one candidate per special election office. FCDC shall use the procedures set forth in Section II above for final endorsement.
- E. The day, time and place for voting by FCDC members to endorse nonpartisan at-large or school board candidates in a special election shall be established by the FCDC Chair, recognizing that time is of the essence.

## **VII. Adoption, Rules of Order**

- A. These "Rules and Procedures Governing the Selection Process for Candidates Seeking Endorsement by FCDC for Nonpartisan Offices," in a general or special election will be in effect when adopted by a majority vote of members present at a FCDC General Meeting.
- B. Except where it may be inconsistent with these Rules and Procedures, the FCDC Bylaws or the Virginia Democratic Party Plan, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* will govern the conduct of the FCDC General Meeting at which endorsement for a nonpartisan office will be decided.