

Green Party of Napa County Bylaws

Date Last Approved: April 13, 2005

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE AND VALUES

The Green Party of Napa is a political party of individuals committed to working towards the goals of the Green Party as defined by the 10 Key Values.

The Ten Key Values are:

1. Ecological Wisdom
2. Grassroots Democracy
3. Social Justice
4. Nonviolence,
5. Decentralization
6. Community-Based Economics
7. Feminism
8. Respect for Diversity
9. Future Focus/Sustainability
10. Personal & Global Responsibility

See <http://cagreens.org/platform> for full explanations of these values.

The Green Party of Napa will abide by all laws of the State of California pertaining to political parties and the By-Laws of the Green Party of California.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

A. Definition

Membership is open to any person registered in the Green Party who lives in Napa County. Anyone may become a supporting member by paying an annual fee. People who are ineligible to register to vote (because of age, lack of citizenship, etc.) but are helping to achieve the goals of the Green Party of Napa may become members by being approved by the County Council, subject to the approval of the general membership. These unregistered members may attain the rights and responsibilities of membership, but they may not run for public office.

B. Member Rights And Responsibilities

1. Members may:
 - a. Form and serve on committees
 - b. Participate in the decision-making process as described in Article III, Section F and the Addendum re: Consensus-Seeking Process

at meetings and participate in any actions agreed upon at meetings.

- c. Approve and amend the Bylaws of the Green Party of Napa
 - d. Run for County Council or other offices (if they are registered in Napa County)
 - e. Remove Council members according to procedures in these Bylaws
 - f. Serve as delegates to state meetings as defined in these Bylaws
2. Members are NOT empowered to:
- a. Represent the Napa County Green Party (e.g., act as spokesperson) without the consent of the general membership.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

All meetings shall be open to all interested members and observers and shall be announced in advance. Attendance and a summary of decisions shall be recorded at all General and County Council meetings and shall be available for viewing by any interested member. A Quorum will exist for the purpose of both opening a meeting and making decisions when at least 4 Active Members are present.

A. General Meetings

General meetings shall be held at least twice a year.

B. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the County Council, appropriate committees or upon agreement of the membership at a general meeting.

C. Agenda

The agenda for general meetings shall be set by the County Council or a committee appointed to do so by the Council. Members may submit agenda items to the Council for consideration. Meeting agendas shall be posted or distributed at every meeting.

D. Closed Session

The General Assembly may choose to go into closed session with a 2/3 majority vote. Only Green Party members from Napa County may attend closed sessions.

E. Functionaries To Assist Group Process

Facilitator(s): Provides non-directive leadership; assists process clarity; honors agenda

contract; promotes good will. A facilitator does not give personal opinions unless s/he clearly relinquishes role and speaks as an individual. Gender balance between co-facilitators is desired.

Time Keeper: Keeps group aware of time status when it is important.

Note Taker: Records minutes of meeting, highlighting decisions made and tasks taken on by the members. The note taker shall receive copies of all proposals brought before the membership. These will be included in the record as received and as amended during the session with notation as to disposition of the proposal.

Scribe: Records on board or piece of paper concerns or items of discussion that come out at meeting.

Vibes Watcher: Keeps emotional level of meeting on even keel; role may be filled by an individual or the whole group.

F. Decision Making

All members, and observers when time permits, may participate in the decision making process. In the event that a vote is necessary to make a decision, only members may participate. If a member cannot attend a meeting, s/he can send (by any means, including email) a written statement to be read by another member if the subject is on that meeting's agenda.

Consensus is a process of decision-making in which all legitimate concerns of group members are addressed to the satisfaction of the group.

A proposal is a positive statement of a possible action for a group to take.

A concern is a statement of how the proposal as stated might conflict with the group's stated purpose or shared values. Concerns are resolved as the proposal is explained or changed to address them.

Decisions of the Green Party of Napa shall be made using the consensus-seeking process as follows:

1. Consensus is sought after adequate discussion, including the repeated asking for and discussion of any unresolved concerns, within the time and content limits of the agenda.
2. Any stand-asides will be recorded.
3. In calling for a consensus, any unresolved concerns will be recorded, and those unresolved concerns will signal a move to a vote.
4. Voting will be on the basis of a two-thirds majority for business and procedural questions and a two-thirds majority to amend, repeal, or replace bylaws and to make policy decisions.

See Addendum for more a detailed summary of the Consensus-Seeking Process.

With consensus (4/5 majority fall-back vote), the General Assembly may exercise its right to exclude an individual (and not others) who fails to honor the process and principles of the Green Party.

G. On-Line Proposals

1. The Council may choose to allow voting on General Membership issues to be conducted across an electronic medium, such as a telephone or the Internet, in between regularly scheduled Council meetings.
2. Any Green Party member may propose to discuss and vote on a motion on-line by contacting all Council members and providing the details of the proposal, along with a timeframe for discussion and a timeframe for voting.
3. If no Council member objects to the on-line voting process for this proposal within 48 hours of being contacted, the proposal may be considered and decided on-line by the General Membership.
 - a. Contact may be defined as sending an e-mail to a Napa Green Party member e-mail address that has been previously identified or used by the Councilmember as a working e-mail address to be used for Napa Green Party matters.
 - i. An e-mail address that ‘bounces’ or otherwise returns a message that indicates that the account is inactive will be presumed to not be a working e-mail address for purposes of this section.
 - b. If the Council maintains a private e-listgroup for use by the General Membership, then the proposal may be considered and decided on-line if no Councilmember objects within 48 hours of the proposal being posted to the e-listgroup.
4. In the absence of any statement by the member making the proposal, the timeframe for discussion will be:
 - a. 96 hours for discussion.
 - b. 72 hours for voting.
5. Any member may request and be granted an extension of either timeframe of 48 hours during the discussion and the voting process without a vote. A maximum of 2 extensions per issue may be granted in this way under this paragraph; additional extensions for any one issue must be voted on by the General Membership before being granted.
6. Members must post their vote to the rest of the group during the voting period; the Council Secretary will be charged with tallying the votes unless the Secretary is the author of the proposal, in which case one of the Co-Coordinator will tally the votes for the group.
7. The motion will be considered as adopted if no unresolved, blocking concerns remain at the end of the voting period (i.e. by consensus). Unresolved concerns may be posted and debated during the voting period in order that they may be resolved prior to the end of the voting period.

8. Any on-line motion which fails to be adopted by consensus may, at the discretion of the author of the proposal be
 - a. Placed on the Council agenda at the next Council meeting, or
 - b. Placed on the next General Assembly agenda
 - c. Re-submitted to the General Membership by electronic media, with unresolved concerns addressed up-front.

ARTICLE IV: COUNTY COUNCIL

A. Size and Method of Election

1. The number of seats on the County Council will be determined by the Secretary of State before each County Council election. The Napa Registrar of Voters will notify the Green Party of Napa of the number of seats. The structure of the County Council is set by Article 4-1.3 of the Green Party of California Bylaws.
2. The County Council election shall take place according to state law and in a manner consistent with the Bylaws of the Green Party of California. If the county council is being elected at a general meeting, as prescribed in the California Green Party bylaws, the election is considered uncontested if there are 7 candidates or less, and contested if there are more than 7 candidates. Candidates and voters must be residents of Napa County and have up-to-date registration with the Green Party. Party membership may be verified by review of a current list of Green Party members from the Registrar of Voter's office. Absentee or proxy ballots are not permitted for the election of County Council members. In the event of an uncontested election, voting may be by consensus or by secret ballot. In the event of a contested election, voting will take place by secret ballot using the choice voting method, as outlined in the Green Party of California Bylaws.
3. A first alternate and a second alternate to the County Council may be elected at a general membership meeting. Alternates are eligible to assume the role of a full member of the county council when a county council member resigns or is otherwise not present for a meeting.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

The County Council shall be responsible for all activities relating to conducting the day-to-day business of the county chapter and any policy level decisions shall require the approval of the membership. These general responsibilities include the following:

1. Attend Council meetings
2. Attend general meetings
3. Uphold the stated purpose and values of the Green Party of Napa
4. Establish agendas and select facilitators for general meetings
5. Publicize council and general membership meetings
6. Monitor and assist committee work; refer matters to committees.
7. Request and receive regular reports from committees.

8. Authorize specific expenditures using consensus-seeking process for those under \$100; expenditures over \$100 require the consent of the general membership. The council must report expenditures to the general membership at each general membership meeting, or at least a yearly basis.
9. Ensure that the decisions of the membership are implemented.
10. Ensure that minutes are recorded and maintained for County Council and general meetings.
11. Make statements in the name of the Green Party of Napa or authorize others to do so that are consistent with the policy of the general membership.
12. Ensure that the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the Green Party of Napa are fulfilled.
13. Make interim policy decisions, which must be approved by the general membership at the next general meeting.

C. Meetings

Council meetings shall be held at least twice per year. A quorum will consist of a majority of active County Council members. County Council members who have two consecutive unexcused absences are considered inactive. The County Council will contact inactive members to clarify their intended status.

D. Vacancies

Any council member automatically resigns in the event:

1. The member submits a letter of resignation to the County Council
2. The member moves out of the County;
3. The member registers with another political party (whether qualified or not);
4. The member fails to maintain an updated, accurate voter registration;
5. The member misses three consecutive meetings, without County Council notification and approval.

Vacancies shall be filled by unanimous appointment of the Council, subject to the approval of the general membership. In the event that the number of County Council members falls below 4 members, all business of the County Council will cease except activities required to elect a minimum of 5 total members of the County Council.

E. Recall Procedure

Any County Council member may be removed by the membership at a general meeting. A proposal to this effect may be brought before the membership and the Consensus-Seeking Process [described in the Addendum]

will be used. If a vote is required, two-thirds of the membership must approve the recall.

F. On-Line Proposals

1. The Council may choose to allow voting on Council issues to be conducted across an electronic medium, such as a telephone or the Internet, in between regularly scheduled Council meetings.
2. Any Councilmember may propose to discuss and vote on a motion on-line by contacting all Council members and providing the details of the proposal, along with a timeframe for discussion and a timeframe for voting.
3. If no other Councilmember objects to the on-line voting process for this proposal within 24 hours of being contacted, the proposal may be considered and decided on-line by the Council.
 - i. Contact may be defined as sending an e-mail to a working councilmember e-mail address that has been previously identified or used by the Councilmember as a working e-mail address to be used for Council matters.
 - a. An e-mail address that ‘bounces’ or otherwise returns a message that indicates that the account is inactive will be presumed to not be a working e-mail address for purposes of this section.
 - ii. If the Council maintains a private e-listgroup for its exclusive use, then the proposal may be considered and decided on-line if no Councilmember objects within 48 hours of the proposal being posted to the private e-listgroup.
4. In the absence of any statement by the Councilmember making the proposal, the timeframe for discussion will be:
 - a. 72 hours for discussion.
 - b. 72 hours for voting.
5. Any Council member may request and be granted an extension of either timeframe of 48 hours during the discussion and the voting process without a vote by the Council. A maximum of 2 extensions per issue may be granted in this way under this paragraph; additional extensions for any one issue must be voted on by the Council before being granted.
6. Council members must post their vote to the rest of the group during the voting period; the Council Secretary will be charged with tallying the votes unless the Secretary is the author of the proposal, in which case one of the Co-Coordinator will tally the votes for the group.

7. The motion will be considered as adopted if a majority of Council members post 'yes' votes during the voting period and no unresolved, blocking concerns remain at the end of the voting period. Unresolved concerns may be posted and debated during the voting period in order that they may be resolved prior to the end of the voting period.
8. Any on-line motion which fails to be adopted may be returned to the Council agenda at the next Council meeting or General Assembly at the discretion of the author of the proposal.

G. Sharing of Voter Lists

1. The Napa County Green Party agrees to follow the rules and regulations of both the State of California and the Department of Elections of Napa County.
2. Each local will be provided a copy of the data for the area it represents.
3. Party activists (tabling, outreach, newsletter, etc.) shall be given lists of voters in areas as needed for ongoing projects.
4. County Council members who are helping a local to organize shall be given a copy of the data for the area indicated, and a prior draft of any or all documents being sent out by another project involving the Napa County Green Party and any or all of its members.
5. Any local who obtains a more recent list than is owned by the County Council will make that information available to the County Council and keep the Council updated on changes. Distribution of this information to any third parties will be only with the express written agreement of the County Council.
 - a. This applies to list(s) provided by the County's Department of Elections to the Green Party of Napa County and/or any other lists purchased or obtained by the County Council.
6. Any list of voters or other information purchased or obtained by the locals is the property of that local provided that they comply with Rule (e).
7. The County Council nor any registered Green working with the Napa County Green Party may give out the Napa County e-mail lists to any other group. The Napa County Green Party's email list is for the strict use by the County, in agreement of the Greens who have agreed to be on the list.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Officers are those County Council members and other members who are appointed by the general membership to fulfill certain duties.

- A. As its first order of business after the primary, the Council will elect two Co- Coordinators from among its members. The Co- Coordinators will have no decision-making authority of and by themselves, either separately or jointly.
1. The Co- Coordinators will act as liaisons between the **Green Party of Napa** and the Secretary of State, the County Clerk, and the **Green Party of California** Coordinating Committee. In the role of liaison, the Coordinator will only forward decision(s) duly reached under these Bylaws. The Coordinator will forward all communications from these bodies to the Secretary within four days.
 - i. All checks drawn against the **Green Party of Napa** account will be signed by the Treasurer and one of the Co- Coordinators.
 - ii. One of the Co- Coordinators will serve as interim Secretary until the Council elects one.
 - iii. Each Co- Coordinator shall serve a term of two years. One Co- Coordinator will be elected each year to provide a staggered basis of terms. A Co- Coordinator may serve up to two consecutive terms.
- B. As its second order of business, the Council shall elect a Treasurer from among the registered members of the **Green Party of Napa**.
1. On or prior to the 15th of each month, or as requested by the Council, the Treasurer shall provide the Council with written reports of all transactions during the preceding month. On or prior to the 15th of each month, the Treasurer shall file all required reports with the Treasurer of the **Green Party of California**.
 2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for fulfilling all the requirements of the Political Reform Act and the California Fair Political Practices Commission.
 3. The Treasurer will serve a term of two years. The Treasurer may serve up to two consecutive terms.
 4. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate records of all funds at the Council's disposal, including the origin of the funds, the balance on hand, money available to any member of the Green Party of this County at any Council meeting. The Council must also grant requests, in a timely fashion, by party members for examination of the records outside of the meeting.
 5. In the event that one of the Co- Coordinator seats becomes vacant, the Treasurer will act in the role of the 2nd Co- Coordinator for the Council until elections can be held to fill the vacant Co- Coordinator seat.
- C. As its third order of business, the Council shall elect a Secretary from among its registered members.
1. The Secretary shall take written minutes of all Council meetings. Minutes shall be distributed to Council members before the start of the next Council meeting.

2. The Secretary will serve a term of two years. The Secretary may serve up to two consecutive terms.

ARTICLE VI: LOCALS

The County Council will certify or decertify local chapters of the Napa Green Party. A certified local must meet the following requirements:

- A. Define their geographic boundaries
- B. Adopt By-Laws in accordance with the By-Laws of the Green Party of California.
- C. Comply with regulations of the California Fair Political Commission and the Federal Election Commission and the Federal Election Commission
- D. Select a Treasurer

See Article IV, section G for bylaws on sharing of voter lists.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

The members or the County Council may create committees and approve their purpose, activities, authority and duties. Once committees have been approved, they will remain in existence once the general membership has approved their formation as long as they:

- A. Regularly report to the general membership
- B. Adhere to the Bylaws and values of the Napa Green Party
- C. Have a purpose

Members or the County Council may dissolve a committee if it fails to meet the above criteria or when it has fulfilled its purpose.

ARTICLE VIII: FISCAL POLICY

Green Party funds are to be used only for party building, electoral and candidate support. Special purpose fund raising will be allowed.

ARTICLE IX: DELEGATES TO THE STATE MEETING

A. Selection

1. Balance is encouraged in gender, ethnicity, area, age, culture and physical ableness
2. It is encouraged that at least one of the delegates be someone who has prior state meeting experience
3. Actual selection will be done by preference voting if there are more members interested than allotted delegates' seats.

B. Responsibilities

1. Accurately represent the views of the membership

2. Report back in detail to the membership in oral or written form
3. Co-ordinate with other delegates and any participants so that attendance at as many working groups and their subsections as is possible is achieved in order to make as full a report as is possible to the membership
4. Keep in mind Green values and conduct themselves accordingly
5. Read the GREEN PARTY OF NAPA's state meeting orientation packet and all information pertinent to the specific meeting to be attended
6. Attend the required new delegate orientation (if a first-time delegate)

ARTICLE X: ENDORSEMENTS

The membership may decide to endorse initiatives or candidates, within the parameters of the California state election codes, using the Consensus-Seeking Process [described in the Addendum of these Bylaws]. The candidate or initiative committee would then be allowed to use the name of the Green Party of Napa as an endorsing organization.

ARTICLE XI: BYLAW AMENDMENT AND RATIFICATION

A. Amendment

These bylaws may be amended by the general membership. Amendment procedure will be the Consensus-Seeking Process [described in Article III, Section F and the Addendum of these Bylaws].

Green Party of Napa
BYLAWS ADDENDUM
Consensus-Seeking Process

A proposal may be presented to the County Council for inclusion on the agenda of a general meeting, or it may grow naturally out of a meeting discussion. Either way, the proposal presenter provides a brief statement on the proposal, giving a written copy, if available, to the note taker. The facilitator determines if a quorum exists. If one does, the consensus-seeking process begins:

1. The presenter answers “clarifying questions” from members.
2. The facilitator checks for affirmations and concerns.
3. Concerns are listed by a scribe where all can see them.
4. The facilitator gets a feel for the group’s assessment of the proposal.
5. The group seeks to resolve those concerns deemed legitimate by incorporating them into the proposal. The presenter must agree to modifications before they can be made. The note taker reads back any modifications to be sure they are properly recorded.
6. The facilitator asks if there remain any unresolved concerns:
 - a. If there are no remaining concerns, the proposal is adopted with a plan for implementation.
 - b. If concerns remain, go to the next level for resolution.
7. The facilitator asks those holding concerns if they are willing to allow the group to adopt the proposal without their approval with their unresolved concerns being listed with the plan for implementation:
 - a. If those holding such concerns are agreeable, these “stand aside” concerns are recorded by the note taker and included in the minutes with the adopted proposal.
 - b. If someone holding a concern is unwilling to stand aside, go to the next level for resolution.
8. The facilitator addresses the remaining concerns one at a time as follows:
 - a. The concern is restated.
 - b. Questions clarify the concern.
 - c. Discussion focuses on the single concern.
9. The facilitator asks if all concerns are resolved:
 - a. If yes, the proposal is adopted.
 - b. If no, the facilitator asks for stand asides.
 - c. If a concern remains and the person is unwilling to stand aside, go to the closing options.

10. If time is being kept, the timekeeper will notify the facilitator when three minutes remain in the time allotted for the proposal. At this point, the presenter will decide on a closing option. Closing options are the prerogative of the proposal presenter:
- a. Send or return the proposal to a committee for further refinement and an attempt to resolve the legitimate concerns raised.
 - b. Suggest the empowerment of an ad hoc committee made up of the representatives of the remaining concerns and advocates of the proposal to reach some fair resolution:
 - (i) to act on behalf of the membership if time is critical or
 - (ii) to return to a subsequent meeting with a recommendation for adoption.
 - (iii) Request additional agenda time in the meeting to reach a resolution of any remaining concerns.
 - (iv) Request that the membership use the voting option.
 - (v) Withdraw the proposal.

Requests for additional agenda time for an item will include a specific number of minutes and whether the time will be added to the length of the meeting or if it will come from some other item. A two thirds vote of the membership is necessary to approve the request for more time.

11. When the closing option of voting is selected by the presenter of the proposal, the facilitator will proceed with the following steps:
- a. The note taker will be asked to read the proposal as it stands.
 - b. The total “yes,” “no” and “abstaining” votes of the active members shall be recorded and included in the meeting minutes.
 - c. Two-thirds is necessary to approve a business item. Abstentions are not counted in calculating the percentage vote; however, if 1/3 or more of those voting abstain, the proposal fails.
12. **Points of Order:** Any member may signal the facilitator by raising two hands if s/he:
- a. Believes a violation of this procedure has taken place (POINT OF PROCESS)
 - b. Does not understand the procedure (POINT OF CLARIFICATION)
 - c. Has knowledge of an item of information that is important to the discussion (POINT OF INFORMATION).