

Proposed Changes to PAD Bylaws

Proposed Text of Plymouth Area Democrats Bylaws for Adoption March 2021

(Change call outs and reasons for changes follow)

- I. **Name.** The name of this organization is “Plymouth Area Democrats”.
- II. **Regional Committee.** The Plymouth Area Democrats shall serve as a regional political committee of the New Hampshire Democratic Party. As such, the member towns of the Plymouth Area Democrats shall include the following: Alexandria, Ashland, Bridgewater, Bristol, Campton, Dorchester, Ellsworth, Groton, Hebron, Holderness, Lincoln, Plymouth, Rumney, Thornton, Warren, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, and Woodstock, New Hampshire.
- III. **Purpose.** Its purpose shall be to promote the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party in the State of New Hampshire and the nation through the election of duly nominated candidates; and by aiding our government to function effectively as a true democracy and a government representative of the people.
- IV. **Functions**
 - 1) To be a voice to the NHDP and the Democratic Party for our Democratic regional constituents and candidates
 - 2) To coordinate with the Grafton County Democratic Committee and the other regional committees in Grafton County on political matters of countywide importance
 - 3) To administer the affairs of the Democratic Party within the member towns.
 - 4) To exercise leadership within the member towns and cooperate with the various town committees in the support of Democratic candidates for local and county offices, and with the Democratic State Committee in the support of Democratic candidates for national and state offices.
 - 5) To provide rules and regulations as may be required for the functioning of the Plymouth Area Democrats.
 - 6) To expand and strengthen the Democratic Party by maintaining open and public proceedings.
 - 7) Through the Town Chairs, to fill any vacancies in nominations for State Representative and State Convention Delegate as provided by RSA 655:37. In the case of a multi-town legislative district, the Chairs of any respective towns/cities shall work with the regional committee in filling vacancies.
 - 7) To appoint inspectors of election as provided by RSA 658:2.

- V. **Membership.** Membership shall consist of all registered Democrats in the regional committee member towns. **Active members** are defined as members who A) regularly attend General Meetings or B) regularly participate in committee functions or activities or C) regularly contribute funds to the committee.
- VI. **Officers.** The following officers shall be elected at a caucus to be convened between January 15 and April 1 of any even numbered year for Chair or Co-Chairs, Secretary and Technology Officer; and any odd numbered year for Vice Chair, Treasurer and Communications Officer, or as may be necessary to fill a vacancy. Nominations to fill officer vacancies may be made by the Nominating Committee or by any member at the time of the caucus. Only registered Democrats may vote for the officers. The officers named here are together the members of the **Executive Committee**. All decisions of the executive committee shall be made by a majority vote of the Officers present.

Chair or Co-Chairs: The Chair or Co-Chairs shall preside over all meetings of the regional committee and provide leadership consistent with the interests of the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates for public office in general elections. The Chair or Co-Chairs (or designee) will attend all meetings of the Grafton County Committee and cooperate with the reasonable requests of the state Democratic Party acting through the New Hampshire State Committee or the Grafton County Committee.

The Chair or one Co-Chair plus one other officer (which may be the other Co-Chair) shall be required for any monetary disbursement outside of budgeted items/amounts.

Vice Chair: The Vice Chair shall undertake all the duties of the Chair or Co-Chairs when the Chair or Co-Chairs are unavailable. The Vice Chair is responsible for maintaining a list of active members of the respective committee and to increase the membership of the committee and the number of active members.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall maintain books of account for the committee consistent with the obligations imposed by the laws of the state of New Hampshire and directives from the Democratic Party acting through the State Committee or the County Committee. The Treasurer or designee shall be solely responsible for issuing checks for budgeted items. Expenditures for items not listed in the budget or for amounts significantly in excess of the budgeted amounts require the majority consent of the Executive Committee. Exceptions for minor items such as office supplies, etc. or for emergencies may be made at the Treasurer's

discretion; provided, however, that in such cases, notification to the Executive Committee shall be made as soon as possible.

No individual member or group of members shall act independently to authorize an expenditure or reimbursement.

The Treasurer shall, in accordance with the directions of the Executive Committee, be responsible for presenting a budget at the last scheduled meeting of a calendar year, to be approved by a majority of the members present. The members present at such meeting may modify the proposed budget prior to the vote of approval. The fiscal year shall run from January 1 through December 31.

Secretary: The Secretary shall record minutes of all committee meetings and cause them to be distributed to the members within a reasonable time.

Technology Officer: The Technology Officer shall develop, maintain and manage the PAD Website and be responsible for maintaining the email list of members. Additionally, this officer shall send out electronic and news worthy messages to the PAD membership when requested to do so by the Chair, Co-Chairs or Vice Chair when requested in a timely fashion. The Technology Officer shall provide assistance to Democratic candidates for office or current Democratic officeholders with their technology needs and shall work closely with the publicity officer to disseminate publicity.

Communications Officer: The Communications Officer will manage mass and social media communications for the organization. The Communications Officer shall also work with the other officers to develop strategies to increase PAD's ability to increase the number of active members.

- VII. **Advisory Board.** An Advisory Board of no fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9) members may be appointed by a majority of the officers and shall advise the executive committee in the fulfillment of the mission of the Plymouth Area Democrats.
- VIII. **Nominating Committee.** A Nominating Committee of no fewer than two (2) nor more than five (5) members shall be appointed by a majority of the officers, and shall search out and vet qualified candidates for opening executive committee seats and bring names to the membership before scheduled elections or as may be necessary to fill a vacancy.
- IX. **Terms of Office.**
Each Executive Committee officer shall serve for a term of two (2) years.

Each officer shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Each member of the Advisory Board shall serve for a term of two (2) years and shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than four (4) consecutive terms.

Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve for a term of two (2) years and shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than four (4) consecutive terms.

X. **Powers and Duties.** The Plymouth Area Democrats shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Elect Officers
2. Support the State Committee and respective County Committee
3. Recruit Democratic candidates for public office
4. Provide material and financial support to Democratic candidates for public office when available; the Executive Committee shall determine the allocation of any such support
5. Adopt a plan to increase public participation, voting, and membership in the Democratic Party
6. Approve an annual budget to support the mission and activities of the organization
7. Raise funds to carry out its functions
8. Take any action supporting the goals and aspirations of its Mission Statement

XI. **Meetings.** The Committee shall meet at least eight (8) times a year, and shall have such other and further meetings as the organization may deem necessary or desirable. Meetings, including elections and votes of the body on regular business motions may be held in-person, via telephone conference, or internet technology.

XII. **Notice of Meetings.** The Communications Officer shall give notice of all meetings to the members by means calculated to assure the broadest possible attendance.

XIII. **Conduct of Meetings.** Meetings may include the following:

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of guests present
3. Report by member(s) who serve in elected office
4. Report of Secretary and adoption of minutes
5. Report of Treasurer

6. Report of Chair or Co-Chairs
7. Report of Vice Chair
8. Reports of any ad-hoc committee
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Address by guest, if any

Meetings are informal, but in the instance of division, Roberts Rules of Order shall be employed as they may be applicable to these proceedings, and the Secretary shall record all votes.

XIV. **Special Meetings.** The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) may call special meetings from time to time.

XV. **Standing/Ad-Hoc Committees.** The following standing committees shall be formed. Each standing committee shall report regularly to the Chair on its activities and make recommendations as needed.

- A. Executive Committee
- B. Nominating Committee
- C. Such other standing and ad-hoc committees, such as fund-raising and finance, program committee, public relations committee, policy committee and membership committee, as the Officers may deem necessary and appropriate to fulfill and promote the organization's purposes.

XVI. **Amendment.** Plymouth Area Democrats may amend these by-laws at any properly noticed meeting by a two-thirds vote, provided there are at least ten (10) members present at the time.

Adopted as amended this ___xth___ day of ___March___, 2021.

Change Callouts and Change Reasons

KEY: BLACK text = Existing Bylaw text, no changes

BLUE text = Commentary. Will not appear in the text of the adopted Bylaws

RED text = Proposed additions to the text of the Bylaws

PURPLE text = Existing Bylaw text proposed to be deleted or replaced with new text

NOTE: capitalization, punctuation, and formatting changes are not called out

- I. **Name.** The name of this organization is “Plymouth Area Democrats”.
- II. **Regional Committee.** The Plymouth Area Democrats shall serve as a regional political committee of the New Hampshire Democratic Party. As such, the member towns of the Plymouth Area Democrats shall include the following: Alexandria, Ashland, Bridgewater, Bristol, Campton, Dorchester, Ellsworth, Groton, Hebron, Holderness, Lincoln, Plymouth, Rumney, Thornton, Warren, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, and Woodstock, New Hampshire.
- III. **PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTION:**
Purpose. Its purpose shall be to promote the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party in the State of New Hampshire and the nation through the election of duly nominated candidates; and by aiding our government to function effectively as a true democracy and a government representative of the people.
REASON: TO BRING PAD BYLAWS IN CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH NHDP LOCAL COMMITTEE BYLAWS TEMPLATE
- IV. **PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTION:**
Functions
 - 1) To be a voice to the NHDP and the Democratic Party for our Democratic regional constituents and candidates
 - 2) To coordinate with the Grafton County Democratic Committee and the other regional committees in Grafton County on political matters of countywide importance
 - 3) To administer the affairs of the Democratic Party within the member towns.
 - 4) To exercise leadership within the member towns and cooperate with the various town committees in the support of Democratic candidates for local and county offices, and with the Democratic State Committee in the support of Democratic candidates for national and state offices.
 - 5) To provide rules and regulations as may be required for the functioning of the Plymouth Area Democrats.
 - 6) To expand and strengthen the Democratic Party by maintaining open and public proceedings.
 - 7) Through the town chairs, to fill any vacancies in nominations for State

Representative and State Convention Delegate as provided by RSA 655:37. In the case of a multi-town legislative district, the Chairs of any respective towns/cities shall work with the regional committee in filling vacancies.

7) To appoint inspectors of election as provided by RSA 658:2.

REASON: TO BRING PAD BYLAWS IN CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH NHDP LOCAL COMMITTEE BYLAWS TEMPLATE

V. **PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD THE FOLLOWING NEW SECTION:**

Membership. Membership shall consist of all registered Democrats in the regional committee member towns. **Active members** are defined as members who A) regularly attend General Meetings or B) regularly participate in committee functions or activities or C) regularly contribute funds to the committee.

REASON: TO BRING PAD BYLAWS IN CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH NHDP LOCAL COMMITTEE BYLAWS TEMPLATE AND TO DEFINE ACTIVE MEMEBER

VI. **Officers.** The following officers shall be elected on or before March 31 of any even numbered year for chair or co-chairs, secretary and technology officer; and any odd numbered year for vice chair, treasurer and publicity officer, or as may be necessary to fill a vacancy. **Nominations to fill officer vacancies may be made by the Nominating Committee or by any member at the time of the caucus. Only registered Democrats may vote for the officers.** The officers named here are together the members of the **executive committee**. All decisions of the executive committee shall be made by a majority vote of the **Officers present**.

PROPOSED CHANGE – REPLACE “elected on or before March 31” WITH “elected at a caucus to be convened between January 15 and April 1”

PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD “Nominations to fill executive committee officer vacancies may be made by the Nominating Committee or by any member at the time of the caucus. Only registered Democrats may vote for the officers.” to clarify the open nature of the officer nomination process.

PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD “of the Officers present”

REASON: TO BRING PAD BYLAWS IN CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH NHDP LOCAL COMMITTEE BYLAWS TEMPLATE

Chair or Co-Chairs: The chair or co-chairs shall preside over all meetings of the regional committee and provide leadership consistent with the interests of the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates for public office in general elections. The chair or co-chairs (or designee) will attend all meetings of the **Grafton** County Committee and cooperate with the reasonable requests of the state Democratic Party acting through the **New Hampshire** State Committee or the **Grafton** County Committee.

The chair or one co-chair plus one other officer (which may be the other

co-chair) shall be required for any monetary disbursement outside of budgeted items/amounts.

PROPOSED CHANGE - ADD "Grafton"..."New Hampshire"..."Grafton"
REASON: CLARIFICATION OF ENTITIES

Vice Chair: The vice chair shall undertake all the duties of the chair or co-chairs when the chair or co-chairs are unavailable. The vice chair is responsible for maintaining a list of active members of the respective committee and to increase the membership of the committee and the number of active members.

Treasurer: The treasurer shall maintain books of account for the committee consistent with the obligations imposed by the laws of the state of New Hampshire and directives from the Democratic Party acting through the State Committee or the County Committee. The treasurer or designee shall be solely responsible for issuing checks for budgeted items. Expenditures for items not listed in the budget or for amounts significantly in excess of the budgeted amounts require the majority consent of the Executive Committee. Exceptions for minor items such as office supplies, etc. or for emergencies may be made at the treasurer's discretion; provided, however, that in such cases, notification to the Executive Committee shall be made as soon as possible.

No individual member or group of members shall act independently to authorize an expenditure or reimbursement.

The treasurer shall, in accordance with the directions of the Executive Committee, be responsible for presenting a budget at the last scheduled meeting of a calendar year, to be approved by a majority of the members present. The members present at such meeting may modify the proposed budget prior to the vote of approval. The fiscal year shall run from January 1 through December 31.

Secretary: The secretary shall record minutes of all committee meetings and cause them to be distributed to the members within a reasonable time.

Technology Officer: The technology officer shall develop, maintain and manage the PAD Website and be responsible for maintaining the email list of members. Additionally, this officer shall send out electronic and news worthy messages to the PAD membership when requested to do so by the chair, co-chairs or vice chair when requested in a timely fashion. The technology officer shall provide assistance to Democratic candidates for office or current Democratic officeholders with their technology needs and shall work closely with the publicity officer to disseminate publicity.

Publicity Officer: The publicity officer shall develop press releases and articles for a wide distribution of media outlets announcing upcoming

events, meetings and reporting newsworthy items for PAD members and local voters in the 18 towns served by PAD. The publicity officer shall also work with the chair, co-chairs, vice chair, and other officers to develop strategies to increase PAD's ability to increase the number of voters with whom it connects.

PROPOSED CHANGE – REPLACE PUBLICITY OFFICER SECTION WITH THE FOLLOWING:

Communications Officer: The communications officer will manage mass and social media communications for the organization. The communications officer shall also work with the other officers to develop strategies to increase PAD's ability to increase the number of active members.

ALSO REPLACE ALL REFERENCES TO PUBLICITY OFFICER WITH COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

REASON: TO ACCOUNT FOR CHANGES IN THE ROLE DRIVEN BY SOCIETAL CHANGES AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

- VII. **Advisory Board.** An Advisory Board of no fewer than three (3) nor more than nine (9) members may be appointed by a majority of the officers and shall advise the executive committee in the fulfillment of the mission of the Plymouth Area Democrats.

PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD NEW SECTION: “Nominating Committee. A nominating committee of no fewer than two (2) nor more than five (5) members shall be appointed by a majority of the officers, and shall search out and vet qualified candidates for opening executive committee seats and bring names to the membership before scheduled elections or as may be necessary to fill a vacancy.

REASON: TO DEFINE THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE WITH THE SAME LEVEL OF SPECIFICITY GIVEN THE ADVISORY BOARD IN THE BYLAWS

- VIII. **Terms of Office.** Each officer shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD “Each executive committee officer shall serve for a term of two (2) years.” AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TERM OF OFFICE SECTION. REASON: LENGTH OF TERM OF OFFICE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS IS IMPLIED IN THAT ELECTIONS ARE DEFINED AS BEING ON EVEN (OR ODD) YEARS, BUT IS NOT SPECIFIED.

Each member of the Advisory Board shall serve for a term of two (2) years and shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than four (4) consecutive terms.

NOTE: NO PROVISION FOR TERMS OF OFFICE OR ELIGIBILITY ARE LAID OUT FOR STANDING OR AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES.

PROPOSED CHANGE – ADD “Members of the nominating committee shall serve for a term of two (2) years and shall be eligible for election or appointment to their respective offices for no more than four (4) consecutive terms.

REASON: TO DEFINE THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE WITH THE SAME LEVEL OF SPECIFICITY GIVEN THE ADVISORY BOARD IN THE BYLAWS

IX. **Powers and Duties.** The Plymouth Area Democrats shall have the following powers and duties:

9. Elect Officers
10. Support the State Committee and respective County Committee
11. Recruit Democratic Candidates for Public Office
12. Provide material and financial support to Democratic candidates for public office when available; the Executive Committee shall determine the allocation of any such support
13. Adopt a plan to increase public participation, voting, and membership in the Democratic Party
14. Approve an annual budget to support the mission and activities of the organization
15. Raise funds to carry out its functions
16. Take any action supporting the goals and aspirations of its Mission Statement

PROPOSED CHANGE - ADD “Provide material and financial support to Democratic candidates for public office when available; the Executive Committee shall determine the allocation of any such support”...”Raise funds to carry out its functions”

REASON: TO ADD FINANCIAL OPERATIONS TO THE POWERS AND DUTIES

X. **Membership and Meetings.** Membership shall consist of all registered Democrats and interested participants in the towns listed above. The committee shall meet at least twice a year, and shall have such other and further meetings as the organization may deem necessary or desirable.

PROPOSED CHANGE – REPLACE WITH “Meetings. The committee shall meet at least eight (8) times a year, and shall have such other and further meetings as the organization may deem necessary or desirable. Meetings, including elections and votes of the body on regular business motions may be held in-person, via telephone conference, or internet technology.”

REASON: TO BRING PAD BYLAWS IN CLOSER ALIGNMENT WITH NHDP LOCAL COMMITTEE BYLAWS TEMPLATE; MEMBERSHIP NOW DEFINED IN SECTION V; ADD OPTION OF TELECONFERENCE FOR ELECTION AND VOTING PROCEDURES

XI. **Notice of Meetings.** The ~~chair~~ **Communications Officer** shall give notice of all meetings to the members by means calculated to assure the broadest possible attendance.

XII. **Conduct of Meetings.** Meetings may include, **at a minimum**, the following:

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of guests present
3. Report by member(s) who serve in Elected Office
4. Report of Secretary and Adoption of Minutes
5. Report of Treasurer
6. Report of Chair or Co-Chairs
7. Report of Vice Chair
8. Reports of any ad-hoc committee
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Address by guest, if any

Meetings are informal, but in the instance of division, Roberts Rules of Order shall be employed as they may be applicable to these proceedings, and the Secretary shall record all votes

PROPOSED CHANGE – Delete “, at a minimum,”

REASON: TO REMOVE UNNECESSARY RESTRICTION ON MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

XIII. **Special Meetings.** The Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) may call special meetings from time to time.

XIV. **Standing/Ad-Hoc Committees.** The following standing committees shall be formed. Each standing committee shall report regularly to the Chair on its activities and make recommendations as needed.

- A. Executive Committee
- B. Nominating Committee
- C. Such other standing and ad-hoc committees, such as fund-raising and finance, program committee, public relations committee, policy committee and membership committee, as the Officers may deem necessary and appropriate to fulfill and promote the organization’s purposes. **All chairs of any ad hoc committees formed shall serve on the Executive Committee.**

PROPOSED CHANGE – STRIKE “All chairs of any ad hoc committees formed shall serve on the Executive Committee.”

REASON: THIS PROVISION SEEMS ARBITRARY, WHY WOULD AD HOC COMMITTEE CHAIRS BE GRANTED AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SEAT AND VOTE, BUT NOT STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS? EXPANDING THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BASED ON SHORT-TERM PROJECT NEEDS DOES NOT SEEM RATIONAL.

XV. **Amendment.** Plymouth Area Democrats may amend these by-laws at any properly noticed meeting by a two-thirds vote, provided there are at least ten (10) members present at the time.

Adopted as amended this ___xth___ day of __March___, 2021.