

STANDARD BYLAWS OF THE LAKELAND DEMOCRATIC CLUB

**ARTICLE 1 – NAME**

The complete name of this organization shall be The Lakeland Democratic Club

**ARTICLE II - OBJECT AND PURPOSE**

The object of this organization shall be to stimulate active interest in political and governmental affairs; to strengthen and to further the ideals and principles of the Democratic Party; to provide reasonable and ongoing financial support to the county Democratic Executive Committee; to promote participation among Democrats; to support and elect the duly selected nominees of the Democratic Party in national, state, and local campaigns; and to foster good fellowship among Democrats. In all Primary elections, no candidate will be endorsed or supported individually by this club. At no time will members of this organization support a candidate from another Party.

**ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

Democrats registered to vote in Polk County interested in the objectives of this club shall be eligible for membership. No other residency restriction may be placed upon membership or the privileges of membership in this club. In accordance with Article VI of the Florida Democratic Party Bylaws, with the exception of the organizational meeting of this club, those members permitted to vote in any club election for officers or board members must have been a member of the club at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date of such election. Officers and directors shall be required to execute the Loyalty Oath in the form included in the Bylaws of the Florida Democratic Party.

**ARTICLE IV – DUES**

**Section 1:** Annual dues shall be determined following an annual evaluation of the Board of Directors of the dues contributed by Club members. The Board of Directors shall make a recommendation annually to the Club's membership as to the amount of the dues assessment. A change in Club dues shall be enacted only upon a majority vote of those present and voting providing a quorum is present at a regular Club meeting considering a change in the dues assessment. Dues shall be payable to the Treasurer by January 15<sup>th</sup> for the ensuing Club year, or at the time of becoming a member, and paid again on the normal due date. If authorized by the Board of Directors, member dues paid during the final three (3) months of the preceding year may be credited as full payment for the ensuing Club year.

**Section 2:** At any time, annual Club dues may be augmented by Club sponsored fund-raisers, provided that the funds raised are devoted to Club sponsored programs to enhance membership, improve communications with Club members and their sponsoring county Democratic Executive Committee (DEC), and informing the community at large regarding Democratic Party policies and programs only. Annually, funds derived from club dues and other income, not to exceed an aggregate of \$500.00 in any one year, may be contributed to Democratic Party candidates. Such contributions shall be reported individually to their county DEC in a timely manner, not to exceed 45 days from the date of any such contribution.

**Section 3: Annual Party Contribution:** In January of each year, each Democratic Club chartered under the rules of the Florida Democratic Party shall pay an annual contribution, based on membership as of December 31 of the preceding year, to the Democratic Executive Committee based on the following calculation:

0-50 members .....	\$25.00
51-100 members .....	\$50.00
101-300 members.....	\$75.00
301-500 members .....	\$100.00
501-750 members .....	\$150.00
751-1,000 members .....	\$250.00
1,000 plus members .....	\$500.00

Eighty percent (80%) of the contribution shall remain with the Democratic Executive Committee and twenty percent (20%) of the contribution shall be remitted to the Florida Democratic Party by the county Democratic Executive Committee no later than April 1 of each year of the Club's existence. The failure of the county Democratic Executive Committee to remit the Annual Party Contribution for a certified club shall be grounds for removing the Club's charter by action of the State Central Committee only.

**Section 4:** At the time of the Club's Charter Recertification in July of each odd numbered year when the Club applies to the county Certification Committee for a Certificate of Compliance, the Club shall submit its latest bank statement(s) to the Certification Committee. The Certification Committee shall be empowered to augment the Club's Annual Party Contribution by an amount not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the balance in the Club's bank accounts and other financial instruments -- including checking, certificates of deposit (CD), and savings accounts -- to be paid to the county Democratic Executive Committee for the purpose of supporting the election of nominated Democratic Party candidates following the Primary Election only.

**ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

**Section 1:** The officers of this club shall be a President, Vice President[s], Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary by the membership. Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws.

**Section 2:** All terms of office shall be for one or for two (2) years. Commencing in a year in which an amendment to these Bylaws affecting the duration of the term of office is adopted, terms of office may be staggered for the year following adoption only permitting certain officers to serve for a one-year term and the remaining officers to serve for a full two-year term. Officers shall be eligible for unlimited terms in the same office.

**ARTICLE VI - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1:** The President shall preside at all meetings of the Club and Board of Directors, of which the President is automatically Chair; shall be ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; shall appoint all Standing and Special Committees and their respective chairs; shall represent the Club at county, district and state functions; shall give guidance to the respective committee chairs in their work; and shall perform all duties normally pertaining to the office of President.

**Section 2:** The Vice President[s] shall render all possible assistance to the President in matters pertaining to the Club, and shall assume the office in the absence of the President, or the President's inability of to serve.

**Section 3:** The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all meetings of the Club and the Board of Directors; shall maintain a current list of members with addresses, phone numbers and precinct numbers; and shall possess and maintain the official copy of the Club's Bylaws, with any and all amendments to the Bylaws properly recorded. The current list of Club members shall be based a record of dues paying members provided by the Treasurer on January 15th for the ensuing Club year, or at the time of becoming a member, and paid again on the normal due date established by the Board of Directors.

**Section 4:** The Treasurer shall receive all monies collected by the Club; shall keep an accurate record of receipts and expenditures; shall present a statement of all income and expenditures occurring since the previous meeting of the Club, and at other times when formally requested by the Board of Directors; and shall pay out funds only as authorized by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the Club shall audit all records maintained by the Club Treasurer regularly, and, if a discrepancy is noted, the discrepancy shall be reported to the Club's members.

**Section 5:** The Parliamentarian shall give advice to the Chair on matters of parliamentary procedure. The Chair may consult with the parliamentarian prior to meetings to anticipate problems and determine proper procedure. During meetings, the parliamentarian shall give advice when called upon by the Chair. The Chair retains the right to make a final ruling and may accept or reject the advice of the parliamentarian, except as otherwise noted in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The Central Committee also reserves the right to overrule any decision of the parliamentarian.

## **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** Regular meetings of the club shall be held monthly, on the first Thursday of the month unless otherwise ordered by the club or by the board of directors.

**Section 2.** The president or a majority of the board of directors may call special meetings, with one week's notice to the members. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call.

**Section 3.** Twenty percent (20%) of the total membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business at any regular or special meeting. A majority vote is necessary to carry motions.

**Section 4.** All meetings shall be in a facility accessible to the physically handicapped.

## **ARTICLE VIII - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Section 1:** The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers and a minimum of four (4) elected Directors.

**Section 2:** The annual election of Directors shall be held at the March meeting. Commencing in a year in which an amendment to these Bylaws affecting the duration of the term of office is adopted, terms of office may be staggered for the year following adoption only permitting certain Directors to serve for a one-year term and the remaining Directors to serve for a full two-year term.

**Section 3:** The duties of the Board of Directors shall be to plan and organize each monthly meeting of the Club and make recommendations to the Club's membership that will facilitate the transaction of Club business during regular and special meetings. No action of the Board of Directors shall be in conflict with any action taken by the Club's membership at regular or special meetings.

**Section 4:** Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be at least one week prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Club, or at the request of the President or three (3) members of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall investigate all excuses for nonattendance of Board members at regular or special meetings and shall determine whether good and sufficient reason existed for any absence. Members wishing to be excused from a Board meeting must submit an excuse to a Club officer. Members with two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from regular or special Board meetings may be removed from the Board by a majority vote at a meeting with a quorum of the Board of Directors present and voting.

**Section 5:** Five (5) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 6:** Any member may be removed from office upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire membership of the club at any regular or special meeting after ten (10) days notice to the membership that a motion for the purpose of removal of said member will be considered at the regular or special meeting. The removal may be for causes including, but not limited to, the following: malfeasance, misfeasance, neglect of duty, incompetence, permanent inability to perform official duties, and conviction of a felony involving moral turpitude.

#### **ARTICLE IX – ELECTIONS**

**Section 1.** Officers shall be elected at the annual meeting held in March of each year with the exception of the charter year.

**Section 2.** The president, as chairman, shall appoint a Nominating Committee at the regular meeting in December. This committee shall be composed of five (5) members who shall be appointed by the president. This committee shall present a candidate for each elective office at the annual meeting in January. Additional nominations from the floor shall be in order at that time.

**Section 3.** With the exception of the organizational meeting, there shall be a forty-five (45) day membership requirement prior to a member being permitted to vote or participate in any club election of officers or board members.

**Section 4.** If a vacancy occurs in the office of president, the vice president shall become president. When they occur, vacancies shall be filled by the club at a regular meeting.

**Section 5.** Voting for officers and directors must be by secret ballot. Proxies and absentee voting are prohibited.

#### **ARTICLE X - STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Section 1:** The Board of Directors is responsible for establishing the Standing Committees of the Club. The President shall appoint the membership of the Standing Committees promptly after each annual meeting.

**Section 2:** The Board of Directors of the Club is empowered to establish those Standing Committees necessary to: a. Propose and adopt an annual budget; b. Provide accurate audit records of the Club's financial activities administered by the Treasurer; c. Maintain and amend the bylaws as may be required for time to time; d. Support Democratic candidates for public office; e. Establish and maintain eligibility criteria for Club membership; f. Communication of the purpose and policies of the Club to the general public; and g. Discover and develop means of raising funds to sustain Club programs and coordinate its fund raising activities.

#### **ARTICLE XI – ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROVISION**

The club hereby adopts and shall enforce the following anti-discrimination provisions:

1. No Democratic Loyalty Oath should be used which has the effect of requiring members of the Democratic Party to condone or support discrimination on the grounds of race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, economic, status, ethnic identity, national origin, physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression.
2. The time and place for all public meetings of Democratic Party clubs should be publicized fully in such a manner as to assure timely notice to all interested persons, and should be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, economic, status, ethnic identity, national origin, physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity and expression.
3. In order to fully and adequately inform prospective and current members of a full description of the legal, practical and pertinent procedures for selection of all Democratic club representatives and officers, the club should publicize fully, and in such a manner, as to assure notice to all interested Democrats in time to have adequate opportunity to participate.

## **ARTICLE XII- AMENDMENTS**

The bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at a regular meeting pursuant to notification in writing one week prior to the meeting. Bylaws and any changes or amendments are subject to approval by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Certification Committee (DEC chairman, state committeeman and state committeewoman) and the Florida Democratic Party Committee on Clubs, Organizations, and Caucuses together with copies of the minutes of the meeting at which these amendments were adopted.

## **ARTICLE XIII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the club in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and the rules of the county Democratic Executive Committee, Florida Democratic Party and National Democratic Party.

## **ARTICLE XIV – ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Section 1.** Charter Recertification: In July of each odd numbered year the club shall apply to the Certification Committee of the county Democratic Executive Committee for a Certificate of Compliance. Failure to do so shall result in the forfeiture of all rights and privileges of the use of the word Democrat, Democratic, or derivative thereof. The Certification Committee shall be empowered to implement the provisions of Article IV (Dues), Section 4, at its discretion during the recertification process.

**Section 2.** Dissolution: In the event this club wishes to dissolve, a resolution stating the date of dissolution and the reasons for the dissolution shall be adopted by a majority vote of the club after being submitted in writing at the previous meeting. When the club disbands for any reason, the club's assets and funds, after all debts are satisfied, shall become the property of the county Democratic Executive Committee.

**Section 3.** Grievances: Clubs disputes and grievances may be resolved with the county chairman, state committeeman and state committeewoman of the county Democratic Executive Committee in the county of charter. Should one (1) person hold two (2) of these offices, the vice chairman of the county Democratic Executive Committee shall also be involved in said resolution. Such resolution may be appealed to the county Democratic Committee whose decision shall be final unless appealed to the Judicial Council not later than forty-five (45) days from the date of said decision.