

## **BYLAWS**

### **MORRIS PLAINS DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE IN THE COUNTY OF MORRIS AND THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

#### **ARTICLE I**

##### **NAME and PURPOSE**

- Section 1:** This organization shall be known as the Morris Plains Democratic Committee, hereinafter referred to as the “MPDC” or the “Committee.”
- Section 2:** The purpose of the MPDC is to provide the voters of Morris Plains with a choice in local elections and to provide a forum in which the issues of importance to local Democrats can be heard and acted upon.

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### **AUTHORIZATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

- Section 1:** These Bylaws are in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:1-1 et seq. (Title 19), Elections of the Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey as amended and supplemented. This Statute will hereinafter be referred to as Title 19.
- Section 2:** Municipal Committees in general and this MPDC in particular are authorized and controlled by Title 19, specifically N.J.S.A. 19:5-1 et seq. Any conflict between these bylaws and the provisions of Title 19 shall be resolved in favor of Title 19, unless superseded by Court Order or subsequent statutory enactment.
- Section 3:** The MPDC shall be free to act in all instances to achieve its stated purposes, except where restricted by applicable law.

#### **ARTICLE III**

##### **MPDC MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1:** **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**  
The statutory membership of the MPDC shall consist of the following:

- 1. Elected County Committee Members/District Chairs**
- 2. Appointed County Committee Members/District Chairs**
- 3. Officers of the Executive Committee**

These persons have all rights and responsibilities of membership in the MPDC. They are hereinafter referred to as Committee Members.

**Section 2: Elected County Committee Members/District Chairs**

Two County Committee Members/District Chairs shall be elected from each election district. The eligibility to be elected to the MPDC shall be limited to those registered Democratic voters whose legal domicile is within the election district which they seek to represent in the Borough of Morris Plains, County of Morris. An elected County Committee Member shall have all rights and responsibilities of a Committee Member of the MPDC and of a Committee Member of the Morris County Democratic Committee (MCDC).

**Section 3: Term of Office**

Election to the MPDC shall be held every two years in odd numbered years. The term of office shall be two years.

**Section 4: Appointed County Committee Members/District Chairs**

If two persons are not elected in the primary election as County Committee Members/District Chairs from any of the election districts or if an immediate vacancy is otherwise caused to occur in any election district, the MPDC Chairperson may nominate, subject to the approval by majority vote of the Committee Members present, a qualified individual(s) as defined by Section 1 of this Article from that district or those districts within the Borough of Morris Plains to fill any such vacancy(ies) for the remainder of the two year term. All duly appointed person(s) shall have all rights and responsibilities as if a duly elected Committee Member of the MPDC and of a Committee Member of the Morris County Democratic Committee (MCDC).

**Section 5: Officers of the Executive Committee**

The Officers of the MPDC shall constitute the Executive Committee. According to NJSA 19:5-2, Executive Committee Officers need not be County Committee Members, but must be registered Democratic voters in the Borough of Morris Plains. Appointed Officers shall have all rights and responsibilities of a Committee Member of the MPDC.

**Section 6: Committee Member Vacancy**

When a Committee Member ceases to be a resident of the election district from which elected or appointed or when a Committee Member otherwise serves written notice of resignation from the MPDC upon the Chairperson, an immediate vacancy shall be deemed to exist. Such vacancy shall be construed as an immediate vacancy in the MPDC, and if the Committee Member is also a County Committee Member in the Morris County Democratic Committee (MCDC), this will also be construed as a vacancy in that position.

**Section 7: ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

A Committee Member or Associate Member may nominate an Associate Member to the MPDC to be approved by a majority of the Committee Members at any duly constituted MPDC meeting. An Associate Member is defined as a registered Democratic voter who resides within Morris Plains and who regularly attends MPDC meetings and consistently volunteers for the activities of the Committee. According to NJSA 19:5-2, Associate Members are ineligible to vote on official actions of the Committee. However, the Chairperson shall solicit the input and guidance of Associate Members on all other matters before the Committee at its regularly scheduled meetings.

**Section 8: Attendance Requirements**

If a duly elected or appointed Committee Member or Associate Member has three (3) unapproved absences per two (2) year term at formal MPDC meetings, then his/her membership will be reviewed by the Officers and then said member may be subject to termination.

**Section 9: Termination**

Membership in the MPDC shall be terminated by death, voluntary withdrawal, changing your permanent residency from the Borough of Morris Plains to another municipality, town, or city, or expulsion, and thereafter all rights of the member shall cease. Any Committee Member or Associate Member voluntarily withdrawing from membership shall submit a written notice to the MPDC upon the Chairperson.

A Committee Member or an Associate Member may have their membership terminated by a majority vote of the Committee Members of the MPDC. The Officers, by affirmative majority vote of all Committee Members present and voting at any duly constituted meeting of the MPDC, may suspend or expel a Committee Member or an Associate Member for cause after an appropriate hearing and recommendation by the Officers.

The Executive Officers may recommend expelling a Committee Member or an Associate Member from the MPDC for any of the following reasons, based on a majority vote of the Executive Committee:

1. failure to comply with the Bylaws;
2. failure to meet attendance requirements as set forth in Section 8 of this Article;
3. failure to participate within the organization;
4. conviction for any criminal offense; or any other behavior deemed to be detrimental to the MPDC by the Executive Officers of the MPDC.

**ARTICLE IV**

**ORGANIZATION AND TERMS**

**Section 1:** The organizational meeting of the MPDC shall be held on the first Monday following the odd numbered year primary elections. The hour and place of said meeting should be designated in a written notice given by the Chairperson of the outgoing MPDC to each member-elect. At this meeting the members of the new MPDC shall elect by a majority vote of the Committee Members present, persons who are registered Democratic voters with a legal domicile in the Borough of Morris Plains, County of Morris, to the following offices:

1. **Chairperson**
2. **Vice-Chairperson**
3. **Treasurer**
4. **Secretary**
5. **Sergeant-At-Arms**
6. **Membership Chairperson**
7. **Development Chairperson**
8. **Voter Engagement Chairperson**

- Section 2:** Vacancy of an office in the MPDC shall be filled by a majority vote at the next MPDC meeting.
- Section 3:** The term for each Officer and Committee Member of the MPDC shall be two years or until each of their successors is elected. Each outgoing Officer shall turn over all of his/her records to the outgoing Chairperson, who shall then turn over all such records to one of the incoming Committee Members.
- Section 4:** All elected Officers of the MPDC serve at the pleasure of its members. As such, the Committee Members have the right to remove Officers upon a vote of two-thirds of their entire membership of the MPDC.
- Section 5:** The sitting Chairperson, after natural completion of a duly elected term, may become Chairperson Emeritus by self-declaration or acclaim. In order to serve in this role, the Chairperson Emeritus must be a member of the MPDC, either by election or appointment as permitted by these Bylaws. The Chairperson Emeritus position shall be non-voting on the Executive Committee. However, the Chairperson Emeritus shall be a resource to provide guidance, historical perspective and direction to the existing Chairperson and the Executive Committee. The duration of the Chairperson Emeritus term shall be indefinite unless otherwise terminated in a manner consistent with Section 8 of Article III. For the avoidance of doubt, there may be more than one Chairperson Emeritus serving simultaneously on the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- Section 1:** All Officers shall be empowered to make expenditures and otherwise incur debts on behalf of the MPDC in connection with the performance of their duties, as described herein. Any expenditure of money or debts in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) requires the approval by majority vote of the members of the MPDC.
- Section 2: Chairperson shall:**
1. Preside at all meetings, enforce the Bylaws of the MPDC and perform all duties required of him or her by law.
  2. Be empowered to call special meetings. The Chairperson shall at the written request of a majority of the Committee Members call a special meeting within a reasonable time for the purpose or purposes specified. If failing said request then the next Officer in line shall do so.
  3. Have the authority to appoint Chairpersons and members of all standing and special committees and serve as *ex-officio* member of all such committees. All Committee Members shall be promptly notified of such appointments.
  4. Have authority to make deposits into and withdrawals from the MPDC bank account.
  5. Have a continuing duty to report to the County Chairperson any vacancies, resignations and Committee positions filled pursuant to Title 19:5-2 or 19:5-3. A report of resignation shall be accompanied by a letter of resignation signed by the resigning member. If the resigning Committee Member fails to provide such a letter, then a letter stating that the resignation or vacancy has occurred signed by

the chair of the municipal committee shall be provided to the County Chairperson and the resigning member. Notice of vacancies in the membership that are filled pursuant to Title 19:5-2 or 19:5-3 shall be accompanied by a certificate of acceptance signed by the newly selected member.

6. Act as the spokesperson and chief executive officer.
7. Delegate responsibilities to the Vice-Chairperson or other officers as deemed necessary.
8. Provide to all Committee Members copies of the Bylaws in keeping with Title 19.

**Section 3: Vice-Chairperson shall:**

1. Assist the Chairperson in the execution of the Chairperson's duties.
2. Assume the duties of the Chairperson, including the duty to call special meetings in his or her absence or in the event of a vacancy in the Chairpersonship.
3. Where practical or defined by law, the Vice-Chairperson shall be of a different sex than the Chairperson.

**Section 4: Treasurer shall:**

1. Maintain the MPDC's bank account, including authority to make deposits and withdrawals.
2. Maintain an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements of the funds of the MPDC and present a written report of such accounting at each regular meeting of the MPDC.
3. Subject the MPDC financial records to an annual audit by two members of the MPDC, not including the treasurer.
4. Respond in a timely manner to formal requests by members-elect for access to the complete financial records of the MPDC or for a copy of the balance sheet of the MPDC showing its assets and liabilities as of the close of business on the date of the preceding primary election.
5. File any and all reports as required by law or required by the New Jersey Election Commission and/or applicable law.

**Section 5: Secretary shall:**

1. Maintain an accurate record of the proceedings of each meeting of the MPDC and present written minutes thereof for the MPDC approval at the next regular meeting. In the event that the secretary is absent from any meeting, the Chairpersons shall temporarily appoint a Committee Member present to act as Secretary in order to fulfill these duties for that meeting only.
2. Maintain attendance records for all meetings as required by the New Jersey Election Commission and/or applicable law.
3. Prepare correspondence as authorized by the members of the MPDC and maintain a permanent record/file of all materials and communications.

**Section 6: Sergeant at Arms shall:**

1. Preserve order and decorum at meetings and rule on all questions of order.
2. Assist the Chairperson in enforcing the Constitution and Bylaws of the MPDC at all meetings.

**Section 7:       Membership Chairperson shall:**

1. Assist the MPDC Chairperson in the recruitment of annual dues paying members who support the mission and activities of MPDC. These members shall be designated "MPDems Members."
2. Establish ad hoc groups or committees of MPDems Members, as deemed appropriate, to support MPDC activities, including but not limited to canvassing, holding candidate meet & greets and forums, voter registration, phone banking, challenging at the polls, and events.
3. Maintain MPDems membership records in cooperation with the Chairperson and the Treasurer. These records shall consist of member contact information, history of member dues and donations, and history of volunteer activities.
4. Assist the Chairperson in encouraging the attendance of MPDems Members at MPDC regular meetings. According to NJSA 19:5-2, MPDems members, as described in this section, are ineligible to vote on official actions of the Committee unless they are also an elected or an appointed Committee Member of MPDC. However, the Chairperson shall solicit the input and guidance of MPDems members on all other matters before the Committee at its regularly scheduled meetings.
5. Recommend to the Committee for its approval in August of each year the membership fee applicable for the upcoming year.

**Section 8:       Development Chairperson shall:**

1. Assist the Chairperson of the MPDC to cultivate, recruit and endorse local candidates for the following purposes: (1) To recommend candidates to stand for election to the Borough Council in primary elections or to fill a ballot vacancy due to ineligibility or resignation of a nominee and (2) to recommend candidates to fill vacancies that may occur on the Borough Council.
2. When deemed appropriate or necessary, schedule Development Committee meetings to interview and endorse candidates for the purposes designated in (1.)
3. Schedule information sessions and events to cultivate and acknowledge public service in our community.

**Section 9:       Voter Engagement Chairperson shall:**

Assist the Chairperson of the MPDC with a planned annual strategy of voter engagement activities, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Manage ongoing voter registration efforts.
2. Oversee an annual Vote by Mail campaign.
3. Pursue opportunities for voter information gatherings.
4. Recruit Democratic liaisons in multi-housing buildings to cultivate relationships with residents who are Democratic voters.
5. Identify and maintain relationships with contacts at local senior living developments to cultivate relationships with residents who are Democratic voters.
6. Assist local candidates' campaigns with voter engagement activities.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **DUTIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Section 1:** It shall be the duty of the Committee Members of the MPDC to perform the following functions:
1. Identify and encourage Democratic candidates to run for office.
  2. Encourage voter registration.
  3. Encourage Democratic voting in all elections by canvassing their districts and other Get Out the Vote activities.
  4. Attend, whenever possible, Borough Council and other Borough Governmental meetings.
  5. It shall be the further duty and privilege of each Committee Members of the MPDC to recommend for each Democratic candidate in all elections the name of one (1) Morris County registered Democrat to serve as poll watcher in the name of and for the protection of that candidate at the time of the election. These recommendations shall be forwarded to the MPDC Chairperson at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the county deadline for the primary and general elections. The candidate shall make the final choice of challengers.
  6. It shall be the duty and privilege of each Committee Member of the MPDC to recommend the names or names of registered Democratic voters to serve as a poll watcher. These recommendations shall be forwarded to the MPDC Chairperson at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date for their presentation to the Morris County Board of Elections.
  7. Perform other duties which may be requested by the MPDC Chairperson.
  8. Each Committee Member shall have the responsibility of newcomer outreach in their respective Morris Plains Districts and shall report accordingly to the full Committee of their outreach activities.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **MEETINGS AND VOTING**

- Section 1:** In addition to the biennial MPDC organizational meeting, at least nine (9) additional meetings per year shall be called by the Chairperson to conduct such business as comes before the MPDC. The MPDC may also call special meetings as necessary.
- Section 2:** No official action shall be taken at an MPDC meeting unless a quorum, consisting of at least two elected officers and at least 50% of the members of the MPDC, is present. The Chairperson shall not declare the absence of a quorum until 15 minutes after the starting time designated for the meeting.
- Section 3:** Approval of all questions or ballots put to a vote requires a majority vote of the Committeepersons present. Absentee voting and proxy voting are not permitted.
- Section 4:** The Officers of the Committee appointed or not elected-shall be allowed to vote on all official actions of the MPDC.

**Section 5:** All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised. Any conflict shall be resolved in favor of these Bylaws, except as noted in Article II.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Section 1:** The Development Committee shall consist of five MPDC Committee Members and Associate Members appointed by the MPDC Chairperson. The Development Committee shall cultivate, recruit and endorse candidates for the following purposes:

1. To recommend candidates to stand for election to the Morris Plains Borough Council in primary elections or to fill a ballot vacancy due to ineligibility or resignation of a nominee.
2. To recommend the names of three (3) persons to submit to the Morris Plains Borough Council to fill a vacancy therein.
3. To ensure that the requirements set forth by N.J.S.A. 40A:16 et seq. (N.J.S.A. 40A:16-1 through N.J.S.A. 40A:16-23 and any additions thereto), particularly regarding timeliness of submissions are met.<sup>1</sup>

**Section 2:** Periodic meetings of the Development Committee for the purposes of candidate cultivation and recruitment shall be scheduled as deemed necessary by the Development Committee Chairperson.

When scheduling meetings for the purpose of interviewing and endorsing candidates, the Development Committee Chairperson shall notify MPDC Committee Members in writing at least seven (7) days in advance of such meetings. Acceptable methods of notification may include e-mail, text, telephone, Facebook, Twitter, or the MPDC Website. The seven-day notice will not be strictly enforced, but instead will be a best and reasonable effort to notify.

**Section 3:** Candidates must be registered Democrats who are eligible to run for office in the Morris Plains Borough.

---

<sup>1</sup> If the incumbent whose office has become vacant was elected to office as the nominee of a political party, the municipal committee of the political party of which the incumbent was the nominee shall, no later than 15 days after the occurrence of the vacancy, present to the governing body the names of three nominees for the selection of a successor to fill the vacancy. The governing body shall, within 30 days after the occurrence of the vacancy, appoint one of the nominees as the successor to fill the vacancy. If the governing body fails to appoint one of the nominees within the time prescribed herein, the municipal committee that named the three nominees shall, within the next 15 days, appoint one of the nominees as the successor to fill the vacancy, and such person shall be sworn in immediately. If the municipal committee which nominated the incumbent fails to submit the names of the nominees within the time prescribed herein, the governing body may, within the next 15 days, fill the vacancy by the appointment of a successor from the same political party which had nominated the incumbent whose office has become vacant. If, on the effective date of this act, the governing body had previously received from the municipal committee the names of three nominees to fill any such vacancy and had not filled the vacancy, the governing body, within 30 days after the effective date of this act, shall appoint one of the nominees as the successor to fill the vacancy.



**Section 4:** Once candidates have been identified, they will be invited to meet with the Development Committee by the Committee Chairperson via the methods and means found in Section 2. At the start of the meeting, the Chairperson shall ask all candidates to come forward. Each candidate will draw a number to determine the order in which they will present themselves to the Development Committee.

Each candidate will be given five (5) minutes to speak. Following all of the candidate's presentations, time will be given for the candidates to answer questions from members of the Search and Development Committee. The Search and Development Committee will then withdraw to vote. The voting will take place by secret ballot.

For the recommendation of candidates to the MPDC Chairperson (1) in a primary election, (2) to fill a ballot vacancy due to ineligibility or resignation of a nominee, or (3) for submission of names of candidates to the Borough Council to fill a vacancy therein, the voting procedure will be as follows:

Each Development Committeeperson shall cast one (1) vote for a candidate. The candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped from the ballot and this process will continue until the required number of candidates is "Endorsed." A majority of the votes of the Committeepersons present constitutes an "Endorsement," which will be ratified by the Executive Committee.

Although the Development Committee's goal is to produce qualified candidates, there are times and circumstances where that may not be possible. If there are too few qualified candidates to provide an adequate number of endorsed candidates or if there is a substantial, articulable reason for the Development Committee rejecting the candidate(s) and therefore not having the necessary number of endorsed candidates, there will be no Development Committee endorsed candidate for the position under consideration. The Development Committee is under no obligation to endorse any candidate.

## **ARTICLE IX**

**Section 1** The Morris Plains Democratic Committee Bylaws shall be reviewed and re-adopted every two years immediately following the bi-annual Reorganization meeting and/or as required by applicable law.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **ADMENDMENTS**

**Section 1:** Amendments to the Bylaws shall be approved by two-thirds of the Committeepersons present at either the biennial organizational meeting, regular or a special meeting called for the purpose of amending these Bylaws. The proposed amendments shall be set forth in writing in the meeting notice, which shall be postmarked, if mailed or issued, not less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting date. Alternate acceptable methods of notification may include e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, or the MPDC Website

- Adopted:** May 5, 2009 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey.
- Amended:** June 1, 2009 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey.
- Amended:** January 19, 2010 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey.
- Amended:** November 20, 2012 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey.
- Amended:** November 18, 2014 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey.
- Amended:** November 15, 2016 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the home of Christina Genest, 11 Forest Avenue in Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** September 19, 2017 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** May 15, 2018 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** March 19, 2019 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center in Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** May 18, 2021 at the regular MPDC meeting held via Zoom
- Amended:** February 15, 2022 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center, Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** September 19, 2023 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center, Morris Plains, New Jersey
- Amended:** March 19, 2024 at the regular MPDC meeting held at the Morris Plains Community Center, Morris Plains, New Jersey