

WimDems Governance & Bylaws

Article I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be The WimDems, and may interchangeably be designated as the Wimberley Democrats.

Article II: PURPOSE

The primary purpose of The WimDems [Wimberley Democrats] is to foster an active, informed, and growing community of Democrats in the Wimberley area and help to elect Democratic candidates.

We believe in the ideals and values of the Democratic Party. We believe that democracy works best when more people participate. We believe that we should encourage our members to support our Democratic Party candidates, and to follow the example set by the Texas Democratic Party and Democratic National Committee to support local candidates, financially and through volunteerism. We believe that, through our participation, we can make a difference in our community, state, and our country.

This Democratic Club of Wimberley Valley will reflect the Hays County Democratic Party organization, with its official documents, created in accordance with the Texas-wide Democratic Party Documents. In accordance, Steering Committee members will refrain from public support for a candidate of another party.

Article III: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 1: Organization Overview

The Wimberley Democrats shall be an organization of politically like-minded individuals. The WimDems is governed by a Steering Committee composed of Officers, Precinct Chairs, and Subcommittee Chairs. Each member of the Steering Committee will have one vote. In the absence of a Subcommittee Chair, the Subcommittee's Co-chair will cast that subcommittee's vote.

Local precincts represented are currently identified as Precincts 333, 335, 337, and 339.

Section 2: Membership, Dues, & Meetings

Membership is open to all Democrats who reside in Hays County who support the purpose of this organization.

Since dues are not charged, a working membership roster is kept, for contact information to facilitate notification and communication. The WimDems will however, accept contributions needed for their general expenses for operations, meetings costs, etc.

During election years, general meetings shall be held on a regular basis set by the Steering Committee in order to educate voters and provide members with opportunities to know candidates and their positions prior to the primary and general elections. Such meetings will be publicized to the membership by email and by notice in area newspapers, and when possible to those without email by phone and postcards.

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Article IV: STEERING COMMITTEE

Section 1: Governance

The Steering Committee of The WimDems [Wimberley Democrats] shall be composed of the following officers: one chair, Vice-Chairs as needed, one secretary, one treasurer, one registrar, one phone bank coordinator, one block walk coordinator, and one volunteer coordinator. In addition to the officers, the following members have seats on the Steering Committee: the precinct chairs for all local precincts (serving ex officio), and chairs of all Subcommittees. Chairs of Ad Hoc Committees do not have seats on the Steering Committee. At the discretion of the Steering Committee, the Vice-Chair's position may become two positions, with the senior member mentoring the junior member. Past officers may be invited to contribute their expertise, if available and when needed.

Meetings of the Steering Committee of the WimDems shall be held as needed and shall be called by the Chair, and at the request of Steering Committee members or a block of members. Steering Committee meetings will be open to area Democrats.

Section 2: Elections & Nominations

Steering Committee Officers shall be elected every two years during non-statewide election years at the Spring Annual Meeting, by simple majority vote of the members present and voting. In case of a plurality vote among three or more nominees, a runoff shall be held between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes. For an uncontested position, a voice vote will be taken. For a contested position, the vote will be conducted by show of hands; a paper ballot may be used if requested by any member present.

Nominations & Ballots - Nominations are open to volunteers and to the recommendation of other members. An opportunity to nominate oneself or others will be provided to the members; the Steering Committee will contact all nominees to verify interest and contact information. Nominations received 30 days prior to the Spring Annual Meeting and verified by the Steering Committee will be publicized to the membership via electronic communication at least 14 days prior to the Spring Annual Meeting in WimDems election years (odd-numbered years). In addition, any member of The WimDems can nominate himself or herself or another member from the floor at the election meeting.

Voting - All members are entitled to vote. Members present at the annual meeting may vote at that time. If a member cannot be present because of absence from county, physical inability, or illness, then a written, signed proxy with full contact information (i.e. first and last name, physical address, phone number, email address) may be given to another WimDems member or electronically submitted to a WimDems officer to vote in the stead of that individual member.

The officers of the Steering Committee shall be elected by the affirmative vote of the majority of the general membership of The WimDems present and voting at the Annual Meeting in a WimDems election year. Full terms of office shall be for two years. Elected officers may serve consecutive terms without limit.

All subcommittees elect their own leaders.

Precinct Chairs are selected by the County Party (or elected by voters if contested).

Section 3: Resignation or Removal of Members

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Resignation – Any officer or other Steering Committee member may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Chair or the Secretary of The WimDems. Unless otherwise specified in such written notice, such resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by such officer, and the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective, unless expressly so provided in the resignation.

Removal – Any Steering Committee or subcommittee member may be removed for cause by action of the Steering Committee. Grounds for removal shall include, but not be limited to: 1) statements or activities which are detrimental to the WimDems, or which are in opposition to the principles of the organization; 2) failure to attend at least seventy five per cent (75%) of all regular Steering Committee meetings, or 3) taking actions as a Steering Committee Member which are not permitted under these by-laws which may result in legal or financial liability, or functional impairment of the Organization.

Any Steering Committee or subcommittee member may be removed, either with or without cause by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Steering Committee Officers, and a successor elected by a majority vote of the entire Steering Committee at any time.

Vacancies – A vacancy may, at any time, be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Steering Committee Officers.

Article V: STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Quorum – A majority of the current Steering Committee members must be present in person in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Steering Committee. The act of a majority of the Steering Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Steering Committee, although not that of the general membership.

Article VI: OFFICERS AND DUTIES

CHAIR

The Chair is the chief governance officer (CGO) of The WimDems and as such oversees, guides, coordinates, and calls steering committee meetings where all the business of The WimDems is coordinated, such as planning future general membership meetings. The CGO chairs meetings, signs necessary documents and coordinates with the Treasurer for payment of space rentals and other accounts payables, and coordinates arrangements for all WimDems events and other events in conjunction with other Community Clubs, the Hays County Democratic Party, and the Texas Democratic Party. Provides annual report at the Annual Meeting.

VICE CHAIR (CHAIR PRO TEM)

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair presides over meetings, prepares agendas and fulfills duties of the Chair. The Vice Chair assists the Chair as requested and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning. In the event of the illness, death, or long-term disability of the Chair, or if a vacancy in the Chair position occurs, the Vice Chair becomes the Chair Pro Tem and assumes all duties of the Chair until a new Chair is elected, including signatory authority for the purposes of banking transactions. (This position does not imply automatic succession to the Chair.) This position may be split between two people, designated as First and Second Vice-Chair.

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SECRETARY

The Secretary records the minutes of the Steering Committee meetings and annual meetings as required as proof for officers to be added to signatory card to maintain the bank account ; maintains records of policies and procedures adopted; ensures such records are archived; supports all other officers in their work, as necessary; and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning. Minutes shall be submitted to the Chair within 7 days of the meeting.

TREASURER

The Treasurer maintains bank account and financial records; provides written reports as requested and at the Annual Meeting; collects, records, and deposits donated funds; coordinates with the Chair for payment of all authorized expenses, and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning.

REGISTRAR

The Registrar maintains the database from sign-in sheets and website registrations; provides phone lists, and other communication-related reports as needed to the Chair and others as designated by the Chair; maintains up-to-date contact information, respecting confidentiality. The Registrar is responsible (in coordination with the Chair) for publicity to the membership and news outlets, and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The Volunteer Coordinator recruits and schedules existing volunteers for upcoming club activities and opportunities. He/she helps club officers and committee Chairs learn best practices to maintain and attract volunteers, and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning. Upon request, the Registrar will provide the current list of volunteers for any designated club activity.

BLOCK WALK COORDINATOR

The Block Walk Coordinator leads door-to-door block walks in the Wimberley area. He/she provides training to all new block walk volunteers; works with any VAN-accessible WimDems member to enter VAN data after walks; register voters during walks if they are a Deputy Voter Registrar in Hays County; recruits new volunteers; and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning. They use lists generated by a Wimberley precinct chair or other members who have VAN access. Upon request, the Registrar will provide the current list of block walk volunteers, and the Block Walk Coordinator will provide the Registrar with all new volunteer contact info.

PHONE BANK COORDINATOR

The Phone Bank Coordinator leads phone banks in the Wimberley area. Phone bank goals vary from GOTV, event announcements, volunteer/member recruitment, etc. He/she provides training to all new phone bank volunteers; works with any VAN-accessible WimDems member to enter VAN data after phone banks; and participates in Steering Committee meetings and planning. They use lists generated by a Wimberley precinct chair or other members who have VAN access. Upon request, the Registrar will provide the current list of phone bank volunteers, and the Phone Bank Coordinator will provide the Registrar with all new volunteer contact info.

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Article VII: FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES

Section 1: Receipt of Funds

Cash donations and donations by check at events shall be totaled and recorded by the Treasurer and another member of the Steering Committee at the end of each event and a record of the income submitted to the Chair within 24 hours. All donations shall be deposited by the Treasurer within three business days from their receipt.

Section 2: Banking Transactions

The Treasurer and the Chair of The WimDems shall have signatory authority on The WimDems bank account. Each shall have read-only privileges for online banking; however The WimDems will require a written monthly statement from the bank.

Section 3: Disbursement of Funds

Financial transactions which have a value of \$150 or more shall require majority approval of the Steering Committee. Such approval may be obtained by written consent of a simple majority of the entire Steering Committee members. Such consent may be obtained by email provided that all members of the Steering Committee are addressed in such email.

All checks, drafts, or orders for payment of money up to \$150 shall be signed by either the Treasurer or Chair. Payments in excess of \$150 shall require the signature of both the Chair and the Treasurer, or another designated officer with signatory authority.

Section 4: Reimbursements

WimDems will not reimburse for any expenses not accompanied by proof of purchase, rental, etc. No officer with signatory authority will reimburse him- or herself without prior approval by a majority of members of the Steering Committee; best practice requires that another officer with signatory authority do so.

Section 5: Audit of Financial Statement

The WimDems GPAC financial reports are posted at least twice each year on the Texas Ethics Commission website. www.ethics.state.tx.us. These reports include all contributions and expenditures by the club, and are available to the public 24/7. The Steering Committee can at its discretion create an ad hoc Financial Audit Committee that will provide a written report within 30 days of audit completion.

Section 6: Dissolution

No part of the net earnings of this organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that this organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this document. If this organization is to be dissolved, the executive Steering Committee, with the agreement with any active members, will assign any funds or assets to another Democratic organization, in keeping with the agreed upon mission of The WimDems.

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Article VIII: COMMUNICATION POLICY

Section 1: Photography Policy

Photos suitable for sharing on the WimDems website or Facebook page are those for which the individuals in the photograph chose to be photographed when invited. In general, informal snapshots that show the face of the individual will not be shared publicly on our website or social media without permission.

Section 2: Email Alerts for Actions or News Items Pertaining to Non-Party Issues

At the discretion of the Chair, the Registrar, or the Steering Committee by vote, the Registrar will inform the membership of issues before the Legislature or Congress on items that are strongly identified as core to the identity of the party. Other news items that may interest some of the readers may be sent out with just an FYI approach, without any action being urged.

Article IX: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Section 1: Provisional Approval/Implementation by Steering Committee

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new bylaw proposals may be approved by a two-thirds vote of the entire Steering Committee followed by ratification by the general membership. A Steering Committee member may vote by written proxy given to another Steering Committee member. General membership will be informed in a timely manner by newsletter of each specific change approved and provisionally implemented by Steering Committee and feedback is always welcome.

Section 2: General Comment Period / Review of Proposed Changes

Any proposed changes to the Bylaws will be distributed to the membership electronically by March 1st prior to the next Annual Meeting with all changes clearly marked for ease of review and general comment. All proposed changes will be designated as either 1) provisionally implemented and operated upon by the Steering Committee and include details about time of implementation OR 2) a new proposed change or addition for consideration. All members are welcome to propose additional changes and offer comment throughout the year, or during this General Comment period between March 1st and March 15th. Steering Committee may provisionally implement some or all membership requests for changes prior to the Annual Meeting.

Section 3: Ratification Process by Membership

All provisionally implemented changes shall be ratified by a voice vote of the majority membership present (including written proxy votes) at the next annual meeting. In the event of confusion with the voice vote, a vote by show of hands may be taken to determine if majority is achieved for the final vote on ratification.

Article X: NON-DISCRIMINATION

The WimDems shall not practice or permit discrimination in any manner on the basis of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or disability.