

**INDEPENDENT NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOCRATS CONSTITUTION  
AS AMENDED NOVEMBER 30, 2006**

**Article I Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Independent neighborhood Democrats, hereafter referred to as IND.

**Article II Purpose**

- (1) To bring the people of the 52nd Assembly District into active participation in the political process.
- (2) To develop coalitions of neighborhood organizations and groups in order to foster a greater civic and political voice for our community.
- (3) To translate civic activity into positive political activity.
- (4) To develop ongoing projects and programs that will involve and enrich the people of the 52 Assembly District.
- (5) To encourage the participation of all Democrats in the affairs of their Party, to encourage enrollment in the Democratic Party and to work toward the election of Democratic candidates who are responsible to the needs of the community.
- (6) To seek and support candidates for party and public office with ability and integrity and to encourage the appointment of qualified public officials and employees.

**Article III Membership**

- (1) **Qualifications** Any person of good will, who has reached voting age, and is dedicated to furthering the purposes as stated in Article III, shall be eligible for membership.
- (2) **Classes and Privileges** There shall be the following classes of members:
  - a. **Regular Members:** Shall enjoy all of the rights and privileges of membership subject to limitation specified in this Constitution.
  - b. **Honorary Members** Shall enjoy the right to participate in all the activities of the Club, but shall have no vote and shall not be entitled to hold office or to be a member at large of the Executive Board. Honorary members shall be selected by the President of the Club, by and with the consent of the Executive Board, and shall pay no dues.
  - c. **Special Members:** The membership shall be empowered to create other categories of non-voting membership.
- (3) **Dues** shall be established by the General Membership and shall be payable upon admission to membership and each January 1 thereafter. Any person first becoming a member after the first day of November of any year shall remain a member in good

standing for the succeeding calendar year without the payment of additional dues. Members in good standing for the year previous may reinstate their good standing status, if the loss of such was due only to the failure to pay dues, by payment of dues at any time during the current year.

- (5) Each member will be encouraged to participate in the activities of Standing or Special Committees.
- (6) **Expulsion** The expulsion of any member for conduct contrary to the best interests of IND, or contrary to the purposes of IND as set forth in Article II, may be proposed by a petition stating the reasons therefore, signed by at least 5 members of the Executive Board or 10 members of IND, and submitted to the Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall present the petition at the next meeting of the Executive Board. At that meeting, the petition may be dismissed by a majority vote of the full Executive Board. If the petition is not so dismissed, the proposal shall be tabled until a subsequent meeting of the Executive Board held not less than two weeks thereafter. The Corresponding Secretary shall give the member in question at least 10 days notice, by registered mail, of the time and place of such meeting, the charges against such member and the member's right to present a statement in person, or in writing, to such a meeting. A vote of at least 2/3 of the full membership of the Executive Board shall be required for expulsion. If the Executive Board votes to expel a member, the decision may be appealed by said member or by any other member at the next general meeting of IND, provided that such expelled or other member notifies the Recording Secretary or the President by registered mail of the intention to make such appeal. If such an appeal is taken, the determination of the Executive Board shall be inoperative unless and until ratified by a vote of 2/3 of the members present and voting at the next general meeting and shall be the first item on the agenda of said meeting.
- (7) **Members Entitled to Vote** All members in good standing prior to the date upon which any such vote is taken and all persons who shall have been members in good standing at any time during the preceding year, but who are in default as of such date and who shall have cured their default upon the date upon which the vote is taken, shall be entitled to vote.

All new members who have attended at least 3 General Membership meetings within 12 months of joining, shall be entitled to vote.

Any member who is a voting member of any other political club which operates exclusively or primarily within the 52 Assembly District is ineligible to vote in IND. This restriction remains operative until 60 days after he/she clearly affirms in writing to the Executive Board that he/she will vote only in IND.

- (8) Each new member, upon admission, shall receive a copy of the IND Constitution.

#### **Article IV Executive Board**

- (1) **Function** The Executive Board shall be the governing body of IND. It shall direct and supervise the policies, management and procedures of the Club, shall authorize the expenditure of Funds in the interest of the Club, and in pursuance of these functions may

make such rules and regulations not inconsistent with this Constitution as it shall deem necessary and proper. The Executive Board shall also study questions involving political action and make recommendations of the general membership. However, the Executive Board shall not make recommendations to the General membership regarding the endorsement of candidates or nominees in primary or general elections.

- (2) **Membership of the Executive Board** The Executive Board shall consist of all officers of IND, the immediate past-President, and 10 to 20 members at large. The precise number of Executive Board members shall be determined following nominations at the election meeting immediately prior to the election thereof. At-large members will be elected in the manner and at the time prescribed herein for officers of IND.
- (3) **Eligibility for the Executive Board** Any regular voting member in good standing who has been an active member of IND for at least one year and who is not an officer or member of the executive board of another political club shall be eligible for election to the Executive Board providing they have attended at least three general membership meetings in the preceding 12 months, excluding candidate endorsement meetings.
- (4) **The Chairperson** of the Executive Board shall be elected at the first Executive Board Meeting after the general election of the IND. The Chairperson will preside over meetings of the Board and insure that its policies and decisions are implemented.
- (5) **Meetings** The Executive Board shall meet on the call of the President within 20 days following the annual meeting and thereafter shall meet regularly (once every month) on such dates as it may determine. Special meetings may be called at any time upon at least 24 hours notice by the Chairperson or in his/her temporary absence, by the Secretary, and shall be called by the Chairperson upon the written petition of 5 or more members of the Executive Board.
- (6) **Quorum & Voting** A majority of all the members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every member of the Executive Board shall be entitled to one vote on all questions, which must be cast in person and not by proxy, and except as elsewhere provided in this Constitution, all questions shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting.
- (7) **Removal for Absences** In addition to removal under Article III, Section 6, if any member of the Executive Board shall miss three successive Board meetings, the matter of the removal of such member shall automatically appear on the agenda of the first Board meeting following the third such absence. The member in question shall be given notice by registered mail of such meeting by the Corresponding Secretary, and shall be given an opportunity to show cause why such absences should be excused Unless the Executive Board shall by majority vote to accept the reasons given for such absences, the member in question shall be removed, but shall have the right to appeal to the membership at large as provided in this Constitution

## Article V Officers

### A.

(1) **President** The President shall preside over all general and special meetings. The President shall conduct the day-to-day affairs of the organization as chief administrative officer of the Club, and perform such other duties as the Executive Board may designate from time to time. He/she shall submit an annual State of the Club Report to the membership. The president shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees.

(2) **First Vice President** Shall perform such special duties of the President in his/her absence. Subject to the direction of the President and the Executive Board, shall supervise the activities of the standing and special committees and shall also perform such special duties as assigned by the President or the Executive Board.

(3) **Second Vice President** shall perform such special duties as assigned by the President of the Executive Board and see that Robert's Rules Governing Parliamentary Procedure is followed. Questions regarding Parliamentary Procedure shall be directed to and answered by the Second Vice President.

(4) **Treasurer** Shall collect dues, record the date on which dues are received, maintain records sufficient to establish eligibility to vote pursuant to the Article III (7) herein; disburse funds only pursuant to the policies set by the Executive Board and maintain complete records of all financial transactions of IND. All organization funds must be kept in local banks and all records shall be open to inspection by the Executive Board on reasonable notice. The Treasurer, upon reasonable notice from the Executive Board, shall be prepared to deliver a financial report at any general membership and/or Executive Board meeting. An annual report shall be submitted in writing to the entire membership by mail in January prior to the annual nominating meeting.

(5) **The Recording Secretary** Shall be responsible for preparation and safekeeping of all minutes of all proceedings of IND and such additional functions as the President or Executive Board may direct.

(6) **Corresponding Secretary** Shall be responsible for preparation and mailing of all notices and shall conduct IND's correspondence pursuant to and in accordance with directions of the President and/or Executive Board. The Corresponding Secretary shall also be responsible for maintaining a list of club members and a mailing list.

B. **Eligibility** Any regular voting member in good standing who has been a member of IND for at least two years shall be eligible to be nominated for and to hold office, provided, however, that no member shall be eligible to hold more than one position on the Executive Board at the same time.

C. **Vacancies** If the office of President shall become vacant, the First Vice President shall immediately succeed to such office and shall serve as such for the remainder of the unexpired term. If any other office shall become vacant, the Executive Board at its next meeting shall appoint from the membership of IND an officer who shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

D. **Terms of Office** Officers shall be directly elected by a vote of the membership

pursuant to the procedures set forth in Article VII at the annual election meeting in February for a term of one year commencing at the time of the election and shall serve until their successors have been elected at the next annual election meeting and shall have been qualified. The President may be elected to no more than two consecutive one-year terms.

- E. **Removal** The removal of any officer or member of the Executive Board from office for conduct inimical to the best interests of the Club or contrary to the purposes of the Club, as set forth in Article II hereof, may be proposed by a petition enumerating the reasons therefore, signed by at least 5 members of the Executive Board or 15 members of the Club and submitted to the Corresponding Secretary. The Corresponding Secretary shall present the petition at the next meeting of the Executive Board. At that meeting the Petition may be dismissed by a majority vote of the full membership of the Executive Board. If the Petition is not dismissed, the proposal shall be tabled until a subsequent meeting of the Executive Board, to be held not less than two weeks thereafter. The Corresponding Secretary shall give the officer in question at least 10 days notice by registered mail of the time and place of such meeting, the charges against her/him, and his/her right to make a statement in person or in writing to such meeting. A vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the full membership of the Executive Board shall be required for removal. If the Executive Board votes to remove an officer, the decision may be appealed by said officer, provided that such officer notifies the Corresponding Secretary or the President of his/her intention to make such appeal within one week of the decision. If such appeal is taken, the determination of the Executive Board shall be inoperative unless and until ratified by a vote of a majority at a membership meeting to be held no more than 14 days from the date of such appeal.

#### **Article VI Meetings**

(1) **Annual Nomination Meeting** A meeting shall be called in January of each year at which nominations of officers and at-large members of the Executive Board will be made.

(2) **Annual Election Meeting** The annual election meeting of the Club shall be held during the month of February on a date to be fixed by the Executive Board.

(3) **Other Meetings** of the Club, other than the annual nomination and election meetings, may be called at any time by the President on the written request of at least 20 members. There shall be at least 6 other meetings during each year, excluding the nominating meeting in January.

(4) **Notice** All members shall be given at least 14 days written notice of the annual election meeting, and at least 4 days written notice of other ones.

(5) **Quorum** One quarter of the membership, or 30 members, whichever is smaller, of the total voting membership shall constitute a quorum at meetings.

(6) **Voting** Except as elsewhere provided in this Constitution, every member shall be entitled to one vote which shall be cast in person and NOT by proxy, and a majority shall be a majority of those voting.

(7) **Agenda** The Recording Secretary shall prepare an agenda for each meeting, which shall consist of all items of business directed to be placed thereon by the President or Executive Board.

## **Article VII Elections**

(1) **Time** Officers and members-at-large of the Executive Board shall be elected at the annual election meeting.

(2) **Nominations** Nominations shall be made from the floor at the January meeting and can be made and seconded only by voting members in good standing. The Corresponding Secretary shall notify the members of the Club of the names of any person nominated. Only members in good standing and entitled to vote may be nominated. No member may be nominated for more than two offices

(a) Nomination of Executive Board members at the Election Meeting:  
Nominations may be made from the floor at the Election Meeting.

(b) Additional nominations for Executive Board Members-at-Large may be made from the floor at the election meeting. Nominations for officers may be made from the floor at the election meeting only if no candidate has previously been nominated for that office.

(3) **Voting Procedure** Voting shall be by secret written ballot except in the case of uncontested elections, where voting may be by acclamation.

(a) **Officers** There shall be a separate vote for each office in the order listed in this Constitution. Each member entitled to vote shall have one vote for each position to be filled. If one candidate does not receive a majority of the votes cast, there shall be a runoff between the two candidates with the highest number of voted.

(b) After the officers have been elected, there shall be a single ballot for members-at-large of the Executive Board. Each member entitled to vote shall have as many votes as there are members-at-large to be elected. In the event of any tie which makes it impossible to determine which nominees are elected, the nominees who are among the group receiving the highest number of votes and who are not so tied shall be declared elected and additional ballots shall be taken among those so tied, until the required number shall be elected.

## **Article VIII Endorsement of Candidates and Ballot Issues**

(1) IND shall endorse candidates for public and political office and adopt positions on ballot issues at meetings of the general membership. The general membership may delegate the actual right of endorsement of candidates for county committee posts and delegates to judicial conventions to a special committee selected for that purpose.

(2) The membership of the Club may delegate the function of endorsing in primary elections candidates who run in districts including areas outside the 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District to a Convention of other body in which IND is represented. In such event, the constitution of such Convention or body shall supersede this Constitution to the extent inconsistent herewith and the provisions of this Constitution concerning endorsements of candidates shall be read as requiring endorsement of such Convention or body.

(3) **Notice** As to the endorsement of candidates for public office, the written notice requirement under Article VI (3) herein shall apply. This requirement may be waived upon

the agreement of 2/3 of the members present.

- (4) **Eligibility** Only members entitled to vote pursuant to Article III (7) may vote to endorse candidates for public and political office.
- (5) **Endorsement Procedure** In order to obtain IND's endorsement, a candidate or ballot issue must receive a majority of the total votes cast. Every ballot shall include the option of No Endorsement. In the event that no candidate or ballot initiative receives a majority of the total votes cast, there shall be successive run-off elections in which the candidate receiving the least number of votes in the immediately preceding ballot shall be dropped until either a candidate or the option of No Endorsement receives a majority of votes cast.

#### **Article IX Political Action**

- (1) No member of IND shall use the name of IND in any way which may indicate support by the club of any candidate, without prior authorization by the Executive Board in writing, or by the general membership.
- (2) Violation of Section 1 of the Article shall be cause for immediate suspension of the rights and privileges of such member by a majority vote of the Executive Board at a meeting of such Board at which the member in question shall have been invited and shall also automatically constitute grounds for expulsion under the procedures provided herein.
- (3) Any member of the Executive Board who desires to work for or publicly endorse a candidate opposing IND's endorsed candidate shall be given the opportunity to suspend his or her membership on the Executive Board for the duration of that campaign. If a member of the Executive Board does not exercise this option and found to have violated this provision, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned his/her position on the Executive Board.
- (4) No officer of IND shall use his or her office as a vehicle to aid the campaign of an opposition candidate, nor may any suggestion of affiliation with IND be used in oral or written material in connection with a campaign that has not received the endorsement of the general membership.

#### **Article X Committees**

- (1) Standing Committees are:
- (a) Membership
  - (b) Community Action
  - (c) Finance and Fundraising
  - (d) Information Committee
- (2) The President, with the consent of the membership and the Executive Board may create special committees as deemed necessary, including a Campaign Committee.

- (3) Members of all committees shall volunteer or be appointed by the President. The Chairperson of any committee may be removed by the members with the consent of the President and the Executive Board.

#### **Article XI Meeting Procedure**

Procedure at membership meetings shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order (Revised) in the absence of any contrary provision in this Constitution and unless such rules are suspended by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at any meeting.

#### **Article XII Amendments**

- (1) Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by the Executive Board or by written petition signed by 20 members or 15 percent of the membership, whichever is greater. In the event an amendment is proposed by petition, the President must be notified by registered mail 15 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the general membership so that the proposed amendment may appear on the agenda.
- (2) Notification to membership concerning a proposed amendment shall be made at least 10 days before the meeting and shall be as follows: Constitutional amendments will be voted on. The substance of the proposed amendment shall be set forth in the mailed meeting notice.
- (3) Proposed amendments shall have priority over all other business, with the exception of old business, on the agenda.
- (4) To be effective, any proposed amendment must be approved and adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at such meeting.