



Green Party of Whatcom County

Whatcom County, Washington, USA

Bylaws

Adopted by the membership in June, 2013

ARTICLE I. NAME

1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Green Party of Whatcom County; also known as the Whatcom Green Party.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND VALUES

2.1. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this organization shall be to work toward a Green society as represented by the Key Values of the Greens:

1. ***Respect for Diversity*** - We honor the biological diversity of the Earth and the cultural, racial, sexual and spiritual diversity of its people. We respect the dignity of all individuals, and their right to access and fully participate in all aspects of our society.
2. ***Feminism and Gender Equity*** - We are committed to gender equity in all aspects of our society. We wish to replace top-down domination with cooperation, compassion, communication and understanding.
3. ***Social Justice*** - We oppose systemic global injustice and poverty. All oppression including that based on race, class, gender, age, citizenship or sexual orientation must end.
4. ***Grassroots Democracy*** - The influence of big business and big government combined is undermining genuine democracy. To help overcome this, we promote public participation at all levels of government. We believe that electoral systems need reform to enable full and more equitable access by all people.
5. ***Non-Violence*** - Violence is shortsighted, morally wrong and ultimately self-defeating. We must develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work globally to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction.
6. ***Ecological Wisdom*** - We support a sustainable society that utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit from the practices of our generation. We seek to protect ecological diversity and balance.
7. ***Decentralization*** - Decision-making in our social, political, and economic institutions should reside at the individual and local levels, consistent with ecological sustainability, civil rights, and social justice.

8. ***Community-Based Economics*** - We seek a new economics based on global ecological sustainability, livable wages, sufficient social safety nets, and democratically accountable businesses. Balanced local economies create more equitable and stable communities.
9. ***Personal & Global Responsibility*** - We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of our planet. We take personal responsibility in upholding our values.
10. ***Future Focus*** - As did the Iroquois, we strive to create a society where the interests of the Seventh Generation are considered equal to the interests of the present.

2.2. Methods

This organization may use any and all methods of non-violent social change: direct action, community organizing and education, personal empowerment, issue campaigns, ballot initiatives, and/or electoral campaigns; and their related strategies and tactics.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Eligibility for Membership

Membership in the Whatcom Green Party is open to Whatcom County residents, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, spiritual belief, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, or physical challenge, who pays dues or do work (amount and type determined by the Coordinating Council) in lieu of payment. To become members, applicants must sign a statement indicating their general agreement with the Key Values of the Greens and the Bylaws of the Whatcom Green Party. Applicants' anonymity will be protected upon request. A check box will be provided for this purpose on the application form.

3.2. Powers and Duties of Members

Members have the right to vote, to serve on the Coordinating Council and related groups and committees, and to receive the newsletter of the Whatcom Green Party. The Coordinating Council will determine what constitutes a quorum of the membership.

Membership in the Whatcom Green Party is based on mutual respect. Members are encouraged to embrace the principle that Green success is based on unity, placing the harmonious well-being of the Party ahead of personal ambition and self-interest. Members participate in good faith in discussion and decision making and resolve conflicts peaceably. Members shall refrain from abusive and disruptive behavior. Any member who fails to fulfill these responsibilities may be subject to suspension or removal (see section 4.10).

ARTICLE IV. STRUCTURE

4.1. The Membership Meeting

The Membership Meeting shall be open to all members of the Whatcom Green Party.

4.2. Sessions of the Membership Meeting

The Membership Meeting shall be held monthly. Preliminary notice and the agenda of the Membership Meeting shall be made available to all members at least one week in advance by email or mail.

4.3. General Powers of the Membership

The Membership shall have final approval over all Whatcom Green Party policies and finances. It may elect or recall the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and at large members of the Coordinating Council; revoke the charter of a working group; amend the Bylaws as necessary.

4.4. Coordinating Council

The Membership shall elect a minimum of five Members of the Whatcom Green Party to its Coordinating Council. The Council shall consist of five at-large members, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Potential candidates will self-nominate and must be approved (seconded) by at least two other members to become candidates. After a short speech, the membership will choose Council members from among the candidates by consensus or secret ballot. A serious attempt will be made to maintain equity of representation in the Council based on gender, race, and economic status.

Co-facilitators will be chosen at each Coordinating Council meeting to lead the following Membership Meeting, plan the agenda, and publicize it to the Membership. Equal gender representation will be maintained among facilitators.

4.5. Coordinating Council Sessions

The Coordinating Council shall meet at least once a year. The time, place, and agenda shall be publicized to all members, and the meeting shall be open to all members. Any member in good standing may propose agenda items. Consensus decisions are encouraged, but in the event that a vote is required, only Council members may vote and a simple majority is sufficient for approval. A majority of the Council members present constitutes a quorum.

4.6. Coordinating Council Powers

In all matters, the Coordinating Council must bear in mind that they are merely appointed "servants" of the Whatcom Green Party membership and act only in the best interest of the Party's principles. No member of the Party shall be placed in a position of unqualified authority over others. In all actions, the Coordinating Council shall be answerable to the Membership.

The Council shall, from time to time, appoint a "Chair", whose specific duties and powers shall be defined by a policy vote of the Membership, with the main purpose of effecting smooth communications with the public and the press by defining a preferred contact person. The internet system shall craft a custom email address: chair@GpoWC.org, to be used by an appropriate officer.

The Coordinating Council shall facilitate work between Membership Meetings; shall oversee press and media activities; and shall serve as a primary liaison body with other organizations. The Coordinating Council shall make endorsements and statements only in keeping with policies set by the Membership. If and when necessary, the Coordinating Council shall serve as the Legal

Board of the organization. All Coordinating Council decisions are subject to review and revision by the Membership.

4.7. Coordinating Council Terms of Service

The three or more at large Coordinating Council members and the Secretary and Treasurer shall serve for two-year terms, and shall be limited to two consecutive terms, after which they shall be ineligible for service for a period of not less than one year. The Treasurer may be exempted from this requirement if her/his skills are necessary to filling the office effectively.

4.8. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for taking and publishing minutes of all Membership and Coordinating Council meetings, notifying the membership of upcoming meetings, and keeping and making available accurate records including the mailing and phone contact list. The Secretary shall exercise special care to make all records, announcements, and other important communication easily accessible to members without Internet access. The Secretary's duties shall also include maintaining a Party post office address.

4.9. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall prepare yearly budgets and monitor ongoing expenses. The Treasurer shall keep the accounting, or arrange with a qualified professional to do so, and will report monthly to the Coordinating Council and the Membership Meeting. The Treasurer and one other specified Council member may sign checks.

4.10. Removal

Any member of the Coordinating Council or Membership may be suspended or removed for cause by a two thirds vote of the Coordinating Council, to be approved by the Membership subject to appeal (see section 4.11). The term of suspension or removal shall be determined by the Coordinating Council and subject to review by the Membership. A suspended member may not participate in consensus decision making, voting, or electronic communications. A removed member is restricted as a suspended member is, and additionally may not attend meetings.

4.11. Appeals

Any member who is suspended or removed from membership may appeal her/his suspension or removal. Appeals may be made to the Coordinating Council or directly to the Membership. One appeal may be submitted per term of suspension or removal. Appeal decisions made by the Coordinating Council must be approved by the Membership.

4.12. Other Functional Bodies

The Membership may establish other functional bodies and working groups as necessary to initiate and coordinate the activities of the Party. The Coordinating Council may establish such bodies on an interim basis, pending review and confirmation by the Membership. Proposals for new functional bodies shall be supported by at least three members in good standing, and shall clearly define the charter of the proposed new body.

ARTICLE V. DECISIONS

5.1. Methodology

The Whatcom Green Party shall seek consensus on all decisions, open-mindedly hearing all views and concerns. Where consensus cannot be reached within the necessary time frame, and the decision making process is not governed by other parts of these Bylaws, decisions by all bodies of the Whatcom Green Party shall be approved on a two-thirds majority vote. If a vote is taken, the Whatcom Green Party shall honor and respect the minority opinion and ensure its expression in an appropriate manner.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

6.1. Procedure for Amendment

Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be submitted to the Secretary no later than three weeks prior to the Membership Meeting at which the proposed Amendments shall be considered. In order to be considered, an Amendment must have the support of three members in good standing.

6.2. Notification

The Secretary shall communicate to all members at least two weeks in advance of a Membership Meeting at which an amendment or amendments to these Bylaws are to be considered [a] the date of the meeting, [b] the complete text of the amendment(s) under consideration, and [c] any other information useful in considering the value of the proposed amendment(s).

6.3. Ratification

Amendments to these Bylaws may only be adopted by consensus or by a three-fourths vote of a Membership Meeting.