

Delegate Election Special Rules and Standing Rules Amendment Explanation

Prepared by the Rules Committee of the Washington County Democrats

One of the main goals of the Rules Committee in the past year and a half has been to replace the delegate election rules with a cleaner, clearer, and more gender inclusive process. Following the special committee's work on creating a very inclusive process, back in February the Rules Committee created a new replacement rule that we intended to be part of the Bylaws revision we were working on. With the COVID emergency, it is looking less and less likely that the rules committee will be able to complete and present the bylaws revision before the Organizational Meeting. Since we need these rules before the November Organizational Meeting, the Rules Committee has decided to make the changes to our current rules now so that we can see them in action and make any necessary changes before the Organizational Meeting.

The goal of this rules change is to create a single unified rule that guides the organization meeting, the central committee throughout the year, and the delegation chairs. This is the culmination of a two year process, and captures the direction recommended to the special committee on gender equity, as well as the committee's ultimate recommendations. This rules change also solves a minor conflict written in the rules that caused confusion in the summer of 2019.

To these ends, the first part is to replace SRO #4 with the new delegate election rules, and the second part is to clean up the Standing Rules #4 and #5 to remove conflicts with the new process.

The rule is built to be a bit general so it can survive redistricting changes, and as a result, some language may seem unfamiliar. To assist in understanding the change, here is a breakdown of what each section is doing:

Section 1 creates base eligibility for what is required for a person to run as a delegate. Any person who satisfies this requirement can run, but whether or not they can be elected is determined by Section 2. Base Eligibility is determined by the Democratic Party of Oregon (DPO), and while we can make changes, the DPO would also have to make changes to accommodate us. The Rules Committee felt it best to just stick to the DPO requirements.

The primary goal of Section 2 is to create and maintain a gender balance in the delegation. The Special Committee on Gender Equity recommended in 2019 to allocate

a spot for non-binary members of the party, and so the Rules Committee did so by adopting the language of the State Central Committee which served that purpose well. The Rules Committee also accounted for the fact that with the upcoming census, our county may receive an additional delegate (bringing our total to 12). Note: If no Non-Binary Democrat runs for a delegate position, this rule accounts for that in Section 5 and will allow a full delegation to attend all SCC or CD meeting.

Section 3 involves the process of taking votes and determining who is elected onto the delegation. The Special Committee on Gender Equity and the Rules Committee both grappled with weighing what is more important, balance of gender representation, or the primacy of votes. Both goals are valid and should be respected, but either taken at their fullest extent creates a conflict where either gender balance is ignored, or whoever got the most votes is ignored. In 2019, the Special Committee on Gender Equity recommended a process to resolve this issue, and the Rules Committee wrote it up into a rules-y format in this section, and solved a few minor issues with the process.

The process is intended to be as simple for the voter as possible, and we've been testing this process for every election of delegates and alternates for the last 2 years. As a voter, you will receive a single ballot with every candidate on it, and you can vote for as many candidates as there are delegate positions (currently 11, but may be more in the future). As a voter, you do not have to consider gender balance or your own personal ranking, you can simply vote for the candidates you like. Section 3's process will order the candidates by the number of votes they get, then select the candidates that can serve on the delegation while ensuring gender balance.

Section 4 covers the resignation of a delegate and the elevation of an alternate to a delegate position. This resolves a minor conflict in the current rules and requires some removals of text in different places around the special rules of order and standing rules. This is to help guide the Delegation Chair in their process of keeping our delegation going. It doesn't really modify the process as it works today, it simply fixes an inconsistency in the rules that was found in Summer 2019.

Section 5 ties the whole process together and assists the delegation in providing the number of voting delegates at a specific meeting. Once again, this rule does not change much in the process we currently follow, it simply codifies it into a clear procedure to follow and eliminates conflicting statements in our current rules. One of the things that it does change is to allow any alternate to fill a spot in which there is no available alternate of the same gender as the vacancy. This ensures that we have a full delegation to any given SCC or CD meeting. It also helps keep the delegation full as

delegates and alternates leave a meeting, as people who must leave a meeting may create a situation where there is, for example, no remaining male alternates to fill a male delegate slot when that person has to leave for whatever reason.

Finally, you may notice some strangeness in the wording around the CD1 delegation. The Rules Committee is writing all future rules to account for the possibility that Oregon may gain an additional Congressional District, and that redistricting could split Washington County into two Congressional Districts. This would lead to us needing an additional Congressional District Committee Delegation, so we generalized the language just in case that happens. This was done because we wrote this rule for the bylaws revision we are undertaking, and we wanted to reduce the need for future revisions.

To help explain how this rule will work, let's take an example. This example uses vote totals and gender distribution similar to (but not the same as) our 2018 Organizational Meeting. We used a hypothetical newly elected (or re-elected) female WCDCC Chair, who automatically gets the highest ranking spot on the delegate list. In this example, we are electing 11 Delegates, including the WCDCC Chair, and 11 Alternates. The number of delegate positions is odd, so the maximum number of delegates in each gender category may not exceed 50%, or 5 delegates total.

WCDCC Chair, F - Max Rank

M1 – 81

F1 – 76

M2 – 71

F2 – 64

F3 – 63

M3 – 61

M4 – 59

F4 – 58

F5 – 54

F6 – 52

M5 – 51

M6 – 50

NB1 – 49

F7 – 47

M7 – 45

F8 – 44

NB2 – 44

M8 – 42

F9 – 38

M9 – 23

M10 – 7

In this case, following the instructions in Section 3, first we would order the list of candidates by how many votes each received, as shown above. We would then step through the list to assign a person to each open delegate position. The first candidate, M1, received 81 votes. Since adding a male delegate to the delegate list would not violate Section 2 at this point, they are elected as a delegate. We then proceed down the list, selecting F1 (who doesn't violate section 2). We continue down the list until the delegation is M1, F1, M2, F2, F3, M3, M4, and F4. Upon selecting F4, the total number of Female delegates is 5 (given that the WCDCC Chair, in this example, is female), and thus F5 would not be elected, as electing F5 would put the total number of Female delegates over 50%. The process then continues, skipping F5 (who will become first alternate) and then skips F6 (who will become second alternate) and then elects M5. Once again, the number of Male delegates is 5, hitting the 50% barrier established by Section 2, so M6 would not be selected (they would become third alternate). NB1, who does not have gender representation on the delegation list at this point, would take the 11th delegate spot. The Alternate list would then become F5, F6, M6, F7, M7, F8, NB2, M8, M9, and M10.