Constitution of the Franklin County Democratic Party

PREAMBLE

We, members of the Franklin County Democratic Central and Executive Committees, in order to organize and perpetuate a representative, effective, and responsible party organization at all levels in Franklin County, Ohio, affiliate with and advance the interest of the Democratic Party for the State of Ohio and nationally, sustain and advance the principles of democracy, and uphold human and civil rights and constitutional government, do establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I. NAME, MEMBERSHIP, AND ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the **Franklin County Democratic Party (FCDP)**.

Section 2. Membership

Membership in this party shall be open to all residents of Franklin County in the State of Ohio who support the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, and the constitution and principles (e.g., the Platform of the Ohio Democratic Party and the Democratic National Committee) of FCDP (e.g. the Platform of the Ohio Democratic Party and the Democratic National Committee). No person may be a member or may vote on any motion, resolution, nomination, or election at any caucus, convention, meeting, or conference of FCDP, who does not meet the aforesaid qualifications or who is a member of any other political party at the time.

Section 3. Qualifications for Party Office

Any person who meets the membership requirements of Article 1, Section 2, shall be qualified for election to party office. There shall be no minimum age requirement for party office save where prescribed by law.

Section 4. Challenging of Qualifications

In the event that any person's qualifications as a member of FCDP or eligibility for party office must be determined, the same challenge procedure shall be followed to determine their qualifications as provided by the election laws of Ohio.

ARTICLE II. CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

Section 1. Constitution and Laws

Nothing herein shall conflict with the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, the laws of the State of Ohio, the Ohio Democratic Party Constitution, or the Constitution and bylaws of the Democratic National Committee. Any matter which conflicts with any of the aforesaid shall be of no force and effect. All constitutional provisions and laws of the United States and the State of Ohio are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part hereof. Each clause of this Constitution shall be considered separately and the illegality or unenforceability of any one clause shall not affect any other clause.

Article III. CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Controlling Committee

The controlling committee of FCDP shall be the County Central Committee consisting of such membership as shall be elected according to laws of the State of Ohio. The County Central Committee shall elect a County Executive Committee which shall have such powers as are granted it by the County Central Committee, as are granted by this Constitution, and as are provided by law.

Section 2. Reorganizational Meeting of Committee

Members-elect of the County Central Committee shall meet no earlier than six, nor later than 15 days, following the certification of the results of the primary election by the Franklin County Board of Elections at a suitable place and time in Columbus, Ohio, to be designated by the retiring chair of the Executive Committee. Notice of such meeting, giving the place and time, shall be sent to each member-elect by the retiring secretary of the Executive Committee by mail. A copy of the notice shall be posted in the Office of the Board of Elections at least five days prior to any such meeting. The meeting shall be called to order by the retiring chair or secretary of the Executive Committee, or if such officers are absent, then by a member of the Committee designated by the two Democratic members of the Franklin County Board of Elections. If the retiring chair of the Executive Committee does not issue the call within the time required by law and by this document, any five members may do so.

Section 3. Election of Central Committee Officers

The Committee shall proceed to organize by election of a chair and vice chair of different gender self-identifications, as well as a treasurer, secretary, and other such officers as the committee may desire.

Section 4. Election of Executive Committee

The County Central Committee shall then elect themselves to the County Executive Committee. The Central Committee by a 2/3 vote may remove the appointed members of the Executive Committee at a meeting called for the expressed purpose of doing so.

Section 5. Transfer of Power

The County Central Committee shall confer upon the County Executive Committee all power and authority of the County Central Committee, except what it is required to perform under the Ohio Revised Code. The County Executive Committee shall be authorized to act for the County Central Committee in all things pertaining to the welfare, business, operation, and organization of FCDP during the period of its existence, which shall continue until its successor has been duly elected and qualified. Any vacancies which may occur in the County Executive Committee or in the County Central Committee shall be filled by a majority vote of the County Executive Committee.

Section 6. Election of Executive Committee Chair

The County Executive Committee shall be called to meet immediately upon its election and shall proceed to elect its chair. The chair shall automatically become a member of the County Executive Committee upon election.

Section 7. At-Large Appointments

The chair of the County Executive Committee may then, or anytime thereafter, recommend to the County Executive Committee a total additional number of one less than the elected members. These recommendations shall be approved by a majority vote of the County Executive Committee. Said County Executive Committee may or may not approve. The recommendations of the chair must be broadly representative of all of the various elements of the party. The appointments should strive for gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial equity. Such said number of appointed persons must be both recommended and approved for membership on the County Executive Committee.

Section 8. Election of Vice-Chair(s), Secretary, and Treasurer

The County Executive Committee shall elect up to four vice chairs, in order of succession, as it deems necessary, and the secretary and treasurer of said committee. The first vice chair must be of different gender identity than the chair. One half of the vice chairs shall be of different gender identity(ies) in succession to the chair.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. Duties of Chair

The chair's duties shall be those of chief executive officer and shall be subject to the direction of and responsible to the County Executive Committee. The chair shall appoint the assistant secretary, the assistant treasurer, and other personnel as necessary. Salaries of such appointees shall be set by the chair and they shall serve at the pleasure of the chair.

Section 2. Duties of Vice Chair(s)

The vice chairs, in order of succession, shall act as the chair in case of the death, resignation, incapacity, removal, or absence of the chair, and shall in such event have the same powers, duties, and responsibilities as the chair until such time as the County Executive Committee shall properly elect a new chair.

Section 3. Duties of Secretary

The secretary shall be in charge of all the official documents of the County Executive Committee and of preparations of the necessary notices, minutes, and other documents. The secretary shall preserve such files as well as record and open them for examination at convenient and appropriate times at the request of any citizen who requests them, under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by said Executive Committee.

Section 4. Duties of Treasurer

The treasurer shall have the custody of the funds of the party and shall render up-to-date financial reports for each meeting of the County Executive Committee. The treasurer shall be accountable for all receipts and expenditures of the party. The treasurer and any other party officer or employee responsible for the handling of party funds shall be under sufficient bond, for the amount to be determined by the County Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V. STATE, COUNTY, POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS, AND DEMOCRATIC CLUBS' COOPERATION.

Section 1. Cooperation and Consultation

The chair of the Franklin County Democratic Executive Committee shall consult and cooperate with the various Ward Committee members and all officers of all Democratic Clubs of the Ohio Democratic Party and those within Franklin County within their duly chartered areas of jurisdiction.

Section 2. Club Cooperation with County Party

A Democratic Club is defined as an affinity group of the County Party. Democratic Clubs must be chartered with the County Party by submitting their constitution and/or bylaws to the Executive Committee for approval. The Central Committee Members of the wards and the

leadership of the various chartered Democratic Clubs shall consult with and cooperate with the County Democratic Executive Committee and its chair on all matters relating to the business of FCDP in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Required Meetings

The County Central Committee shall meet after the election as required by law and this Constitution. The County Executive Committee shall meet immediately upon its election by the County Central Committee. The County Executive Committee shall meet at least four times per year and may be called to meet by the chair or by a minimum of one-third of the members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Notifications of Meetings

All meeting notices, other than that of the original reorganization meeting, shall be sent out via electronic mail to all members at least seven days in advance, specifying time and place. If a member wishes to receive their notice via U.S. mail, the member must opt in to receive a mailed notice.

Section 3. Minutes of Meetings

Minutes shall be taken of all meetings of the County Central Committee and the County Executive Committee and shall be maintained by the secretary and posted on the FCDP website.

Section 4. Quorum

Forty percent of the membership of said Committees shall constitute a quorum for conducting any business to come before the meeting.

Section 5. Meeting Attendance

Members missing three meetings in one calendar year may be removed and replaced by the chair, with approval of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII. ENDORSEMENTS

Section 1. Pre-Primary Endorsements

At any time, the Franklin County Executive Committee may make pre-primary endorsements for any local or district office. The County Executive Executive Committee shall be called for a

meeting before the primary election, and must carefully consider in each race the endorsement of one or more persons. The County Executive Committee may endorse one or more of said candidates upon the affirmative vote of sixty percent of the members of the committee present and voting on such questions. The questions to be submitted to the committee shall be whether each such candidate shall be endorsed by FCDP. Any candidate receiving sixty percent of the vote shall be considered to be endorsed and a public announcement of said endorsement shall be issued forthwith. FCDP shall then support such endorsed candidates to the best of its ability. An endorsement may be withdrawn at any properly organized meeting of the County Executive Committee at any time for good cause by a sixty percent of its members of the committee present and voting on the withdrawal of the endorsement.

Section 2. Endorsements in Non-Partisan Elections (Boards of Education, Township Offices, etc.)

At any time after the petitions have been deemed satisfactory for ballot placement by the governing authority, the Executive Committee may make endorsements for any local or district office.

Section 3.

The committee shall not endorse more candidates than are eligible to hold such office. *(i.e. If there are two township trustee seats up for election, the body shall not endorse more than two candidates for those positions.)*

ARTICLE VIII. PARTY UNITY

Section 1. Party Unity

All members of the party, candidates for office, party officers, party committees, and organizations, and elected Democratic officials shall support the principles and constitution of FCDP and endorsed Democratic nominees for office.

Any officer or member of the Executive Committee may be removed by a majority vote for nonfeasance, malfeasance, and/or misfeasance or for violating the constitution or supporting non Democrats in partisan races or unendorsed candidates over endorsed Democrats in non-partisan races. Any member may bring to the body a charge against an Executive Committee member.

Those under consideration for removal shall be notified of the pending action of the respective body and shall be given time at the next meeting of the respective body to address the committee prior to a vote.

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ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Audit Committee

The vice chair(s), secretary, treasurer, and an independent qualified outside expert chosen by the County Executive Committee, and approved by majority vote of the County Central Committee, shall serve as the audit committee of the County Executive Committee, and of the general operations of FCDP as they are conducted by the chair. They shall also advise the chair on budgetary matters. Audit results shall be made available to County Central Committee members upon request, no more than ten business days within receipt of such request.

Section 2. Racial Equity Committee

The purpose of this committee shall be to advise party leadership, and the governing committees thereof, on a bold, progressive political and policy agenda to support issues and candidates of importance to Black, brown, and other communities of color in our country. The bylaws of the committee shall further establish its mission, goals, and operations.

Section 3. Ad-Hoc Committees

The chair may create ad-hoc committees to meet the needs of the body, so long as they are diverse and inclusive.

ARTICLE X. OATH OF OFFICE

Section 1. Oath of Office

All officers and members of the County Central Committee and the County Executive Committee shall be required to take an oath or affirmation of office to support the Constitution of the United States of America, Constitution of the State of Ohio, the constitution, bylaws and principles of the Ohio Democratic Party, and in particular the constitution of FCDP.

ARTICLE XI. ROBERT'S RULES

Section 1. Robert’s Rules

All matters regarding the conduct of the affairs of the Franklin County Central and Executive Committees not governed by this constitution, or by the convention rules, or by the laws of the same Ohio, shall be governed by the then current edition of Robert's Rules of order.

ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENT

Section 1.

This constitution may be amended by a majority of the County Executive Committee of FCDP at any meeting called for the purpose. Amendments proposed under this section must be submitted in writing and copies thereof sent to each member or the said committee with the notice of the meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. PREVIOUS CONSTITUTIONS AND BYLAWS

Section 1.

This constitution supersedes any and all other previous constitutions of FCDP and shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted in Columbus, Ohio, this 15 day of September 2022 by the Franklin County Democratic Executive Committee duly assembled for this purpose.

Chair, Franklin County Democratic Executive Committee
Date Accepted: September 15, 2022