

**Archuleta County  
Democratic Party  
Plan of Organization  
Rules and By-Laws**

**Adopted March 2005  
Amended January 17, 2011**

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Plan of Organization, Rules and By-Laws**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the Democrats of Archuleta County, do hereby establish and adopt this plan of organization, rules and by-laws in order to elect Democrats to office in Archuleta County, to promote the objectives and goals of the Democratic Party, to provide an effective and representative party organization, to sustain the human and constitutional rights of all citizens, to provide a means that will attract the participation of all citizens in the political process, and to promote individual and political freedom in the framework of a just society.

**THE ARCHULETA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

**A. The Name.** The name of this organization shall be the Archuleta County Democratic Party, hereafter called “Party”.

**B. Members.** Members of the Party shall be all persons properly registered with the Archuleta County Clerk and Recorder as Democrats.

**Part One: Organization**

**I. Central Committee:**

**A. Composition.** All of the precinct co-chairs of the Archuleta County Democratic Party, the officers of the Central Committee, as well as all elected officials holding county, district, or state offices, including United States Senator or United States Congressman, who are members of the Democratic Party and who reside in Archuleta County, shall constitute the membership of the Central Committee.

**B. Term of Office.** The term of office of each member of the Central Committee shall be two years.

**C. Eligibility.** Any member of the Party is eligible to hold an office or position in the Party. No member shall be required to pay an assessment or to make a contribution as a condition of holding a position within the party organization.

**D. Powers and Duties.**

1. The Central Committee shall be the governing body of the Party, and shall be vested with all the power and authority of the party, except that vested in the county assembly. These powers include but are not limited to the power to elect officers, to amend and adopt bylaws, to ratify the actions of all committees whether appointed or elected, and to pass resolutions endorsing policy positions on specific issues.

2. The Central Committee shall set out a meeting schedule for itself at its first meeting after the precinct caucuses. It shall meet a minimum of once a year at the call of the Chair. In odd-numbered years, the biennial organization meeting shall be in addition to the one yearly meeting.
3. Special meetings may be called by the written request of ten percent of the members of the Central Committee. It shall be the duty of the Chair within fifteen days of receipt of such a request to issue a call for a meeting of the Central Committee. The date of the meeting shall be fixed by the Chair not later than 30 days nor less than 10 days from the receipt of the request.
4. The Central Committee shall have ultimate authority to decide all disputes under its jurisdiction.

## **II. Precinct Chairs and Co-chairs.**

- A. Election.** Two persons shall be elected at each biennial precinct caucus to serve as co-chairs for their precinct. All disputes regarding the election of precinct co-chairs shall be resolved by the Credentials Committee of the County Assembly.
- B. Representatives of the Precincts:** As duly elected members of the Central Committee from their precinct, precinct co-chairs are the representatives of the Party members within their precinct, and have the right and privilege of representing their precincts at the meetings of the Central Committee.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities.** Rights and Privileges carry equivalent responsibilities, namely to:
  1. Attend all Central Committee meetings, or designate a proxy
  2. Assist with Party events and activities
  3. Conduct and/or cause to be conducted within the precinct such activities as shall be required by rule or resolution of the State Central Committee, the County Central or Executive Committee, or the duly authorized representatives of said Committees.
  4. Notify registered Democrats in the precinct of the time and place of the Caucus.
  5. Conduct the precinct Caucus, including arranging a location
  6. Support the nominees of the Party. Financial contributions are not required

## **III. Officers.**

- A.** The Central Committee shall, at the organization meeting, elect a Chair, three Vice-Chairs with duties as described below, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Further the Central Committee shall designate one vice-chair as the First Vice-Chair. All officers must be elected by a majority vote of the Central Committee. In the event

that more than two candidates have been nominated and no candidate receives a majority, then the candidate with the least number of votes shall be dropped from the running and another vote shall be taken among the remaining candidates. This process shall be repeated until one candidate receives a majority vote.

**B.** Officers shall exercise the powers and duties as provided for in this document.

**C.** Chair.

1. Shall be the presiding officer of the Central Committee and the Executive Committee and shall be a member of all standing, special and interim committees that may be established.
2. Shall be the spokesperson for the Central Committee or may delegate that function to others, except in the event that the Central Committee or the Executive Committee has passed a resolution on an issue and/or has directed the Chair to state a public position on behalf of the Central Committee, in which event the Chair shall carry out the direction of the Central Committee.
3. Shall run the affairs of the Party between Central and Executive Committee meetings
4. Shall be responsible for the overall coordination of the work of the Vice-Chairs and of the Committees of the Party
5. Spending and Check Writing Authority
  - a. May sign checks for expenditures authorized by the Executive or Central Committee
  - b. Checks over \$500 require approval of two Party officers
6. Appointments
  - a. Shall make appointments to fill vacancies in the Central or Executive Committee as outlined in these rules.
  - b. Shall appoint the chair and members of standing committees as outlined in these rules and may create special or interim committees from time to time which in his or her judgment are needed.
  - c. May delegate the responsibility of appointing members of the various committees to the committee chair.
7. Meetings
  - a. Shall issue the call for all meetings of the Central and Executive Committees to the Secretary for communication to the membership in a timely fashion.

- b. Shall preside over the Central and Executive Committee meetings.
- 8. Shall perform other duties as specified in other sections of these bylaws and in the bylaws of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**D. First Vice-Chair.**

- 1. Shall assist the Chair in carrying out the Chair's responsibilities, including presiding over all meetings of the Central Committee and the Executive Committee in the absence of the Chair.
- 2. Shall assume the duties of the Chair when the chair is unable to perform those duties.
- 3. Shall represent Archuleta County on all Democratic committees of which the Vice-Chair is a member.
- 4. Shall perform other duties as specified in other sections of these bylaws and in the bylaws of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.
- 5. Shall have the responsibilities of one of the positions outlined below.

**E. Vice Chair for Publicity and Outreach.**

- 1. Shall be the Chair of the Publicity and Outreach Committee
- 2. Shall be responsible for Party publicity; for communications with Party members and the community at large concerning party activities; for outreach to and coordination with community organizations, especially those which share a vision compatible with that of the party; and for the maintenance and updating of voter registration lists in the Party database.
- 3. Shall perform other duties as specified in other sections of these bylaws and in the bylaws of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**F. Vice-Chair for Functions.**

- 1. Shall be Chair of the Functions committee
- 2. Shall be responsible for events, such as the annual chili supper; and for state-mandated functions, such as the Caucus and County Assembly.
- 3. Shall perform other duties as specified in other sections of these bylaws and in the bylaws of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**G. Vice-Chair for Candidates and Local Issues.**

1. Shall have the responsibility to monitor county government and other organizations, with particular reference to meetings and forums in which issues important to the party or to Democrats in general are likely to be discussed.
2. Shall liaise with elected officials.
3. Shall work with the Candidate Committee to identify potential candidates for public office.
4. Shall, in coordination with the Central Committee and the Executive Committee, recruit candidates for office.
5. Shall identify county offices which will be on the ballot, critique the performance of the incumbent, make recommendations as to whether the party should field an opponent, and monitor relevant deadlines for declaration for office.

#### **H. Secretary.**

1. Shall keep, maintain and make available the minutes for all meetings and official correspondence of both the Central Committee and the Executive Committee.
2. Shall report the minutes of the previous meeting of the Central and Executive Committee for approval.
3. Shall maintain the minutes of all standing, special and interim committees.
4. Shall be responsible for maintaining a list of the members of all committees and for providing sign in sheets for committee meetings to track attendance.
5. Shall distribute the call for Executive and Central Committee meetings in accordance with Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time and handle communications with Central Committee members.
6. Shall register written proxies of absent members prior to votes.
7. Shall represent Archuleta County on all Democratic committees of which the Secretary is a member.

#### **I. Treasurer.**

1. Shall have custody of all party funds and shall maintain complete and accurate records of all financial transactions.
2. Shall maintain all funds in accounts at a federally insured institution selected by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
3. Shall prepare and file all financial reports required by law.

4. Shall balance all accounts of the Party and make written reports of the status of the accounts, including receipts and disbursements, to the Executive and Central Committees at each of their meetings.
  5. Shall pay all bills of the Party promptly upon receipt unless the funds to pay the bills are unavailable or the bills exceed the specific budget limits imposed by the Executive Committee. The treasurer has the same spending/check writing authority as the Chair.
  6. Shall allow inspection of the financial books and records of the party by any member of the Executive or Central Committee upon 48 hours advance written notice.
  7. Shall, together with the Development committee, prepare a suggested 2 year budget based upon past income and spending. This suggested budget, along with a report of the status of all Party accounts, shall be provided to the Chair at the conclusion of the Organizational meeting for consideration and approval of the Executive Committee.
  8. The Treasurer or the Treasurer's designee shall serve as the chair of the Development Committee.
  9. Report to and cooperate with the Audit Committee.
- J. Order of Succession:** In the event of the resignation, absence, or disability of any officer, the responsibility for carrying out the functions of the party shall devolve upon the officers in the order listed above, until such time as the vacancy is filled as provided for elsewhere in these rules.

#### **IV. Executive Committee.**

##### **A. Composition:**

1. **Elected members:** The officers of the Central Committee shall hold the identical offices in the Executive Committee. The Party Central Committee shall, at its biennial organization meeting, select two precinct co-chairs to act as precinct captains. As a goal these two people should be from different precincts. In addition, at the discretion of the Central Committee, up to three additional members can be added to the Executive Committee – such members to be nominated and selected, or the position designated to be recruited for – at the Organizational Meeting.
2. **Appointed Members.** The Central Committee Chair shall appoint one additional member of the Executive Committee, who shall be a young Democrat, not over the age of 30. If the Chair so desires, the chair of any standing, special or interim committee shall be a member of the Executive committee subject to a majority vote of the Executive Committee

**3. Elected Public Officials.** All elected Democratic public officials who are members of the Central Committee shall be members of the Executive Committee.

**4. Terms of Office.** The term of office for members of the Executive Committee shall be two years.

**5. Precinct Captains**

**a.** Shall each represent half of the precincts within the county (i.e. currently four) at the meetings of the Executive Committee. Should there be an odd number of precincts, the precincts shall be divided so that the number of Party members represented by each Captain shall be approximately equal.

**b.** Shall help facilitate the involvement of precinct co-chairs in Party activities by coordinating communication between the Executive Committee and the precinct co-chairs; by coordinating phone banking or other outreach efforts for Party functions and in support of campaigns; by taking a lead in coordinating the activities of precinct co-chairs at party events (greeting attendees and getting to know the residents of their precincts etc.) and generally supporting the co-chairs in their activities.

**B. Powers and Duties.** When the Central Committee is not in session, the Executive Committee shall speak for and act on behalf of the Central Committee.

**1.** The Executive Committee shall provide oversight and governance in matters pertaining to party activities, including fundraising, events, communications, outreach, and candidate recruitment.

**a.** The Executive Committee can vote on Party issue policy positions and other party business either in person at regular scheduled meetings, or by email votes if between scheduled meetings. A 2/3 vote of the full Executive Committee is required for an issue position resolution to pass. Votes on issue position resolutions shall be communicated to the Central Committee a minimum of 10 days prior to the Executive Committee vote.

**2. Organization and Campaigns.** The Executive Committee shall be responsible for assisting the precinct committee people in the organization of the party throughout the precincts in the county, for encouraging and assisting in the registration of voters in the Democratic Party, for assisting the local party in all matters pertaining to campaigns, including national, state and local elections.



3. The Executive committee shall meet monthly unless the Executive Committee by majority vote agrees not to meet in any particular month.
4. Shall act as the Rules Committee for the Party, unless the Chair acts to appoint a committee within 30 days of the organizational meeting.

## **V. Standing Committees.**

- A. These rules contemplate the establishment of standing committees, to assist in carrying out ongoing Party business. While it is anticipated that these standing committees will be staffed in part by members of the Central Committee, committee membership shall be open to any interested Democrat who wishes to participate.
- B. Three of these committees will each be chaired by a Vice-Chair or their designee, for the purpose of assisting the Vice-Chair in carrying out the functions of their office, including assistance in the formulation of policies and programs, and their implementation. Each Vice-Chair, in cooperation with the Chair, shall within 90 days of the organizational meeting propose for appointment by the Executive Committee the membership of their committee.

### **C. Audit Committee**

1. **Composition:** The committee shall consist of at least three members appointed by the chair within 45 days of the organizational meeting.
2. **Duties:** This committee shall perform a review of the Treasurer's accounts for the previous two-year term within 90 days of its appointment, and shall submit the review for approval by the Executive Committee. The Committee shall also advise the Executive committee regarding the financial policies of the Party.

### **D. Development Committee.**

1. **Composition:** The committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer or their designee who shall, in cooperation with the Chair, within 90 days of the organizational meeting propose for appointment by the Executive Committee the membership of this committee.
2. **Duties:** This committee shall prepare a suggested budget for each two year cycle. It shall develop a fundraising plan and supervise the execution of the plan and all fundraising needed to meet the revenue projections contained in the budget. All of this will be done in cooperation with the Treasurer.

### **E. Rules Committee**

1. **Composition:** As noted in these bylaws in the section "Executive Committee: Powers and Duties"

2. **Duties:** Are as outlined in the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**F. Vacancy Committee**

1. **Composition:** The Vacancy Committee for elected offices shall be as designated in these bylaws under “Vacancies”. The Vacancy committee for candidates for office shall be designated by the County Assembly.
2. **Duties:** Are as outlined in the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**VI. Removals:**

**A. Removal for Absence.**

1. Any member of the Central Committee who fails to attend three successive meetings of the committee, after having been given due notice of the time and place of such meeting, may be dropped from membership at the discretion of the committee acting by majority vote.

**B. Grounds for Removal of Executive Committee Members.**

1. Members of the Executive Committee, other than officers, may be removed by the committee as a whole for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Aiding and supporting another political party.
  - b. Aiding and supporting a candidate opposing a nominee of the party.
  - c. Conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude.
  - d. Publicly representing oneself as a spokesperson or representative of the committee without the authority of the committee.
  - e. Using one's position or authority as a member of the committee to publicly criticize a party office holder without the consent of the committee.
  - f. Failure to attend three successive meetings of the committee, after having been given due notice of the time and place of such meeting.
2. Officer members of the Executive Committee may be removed in accordance with the following procedures:
  - a. At least 1/3 of the members of the Executive Committee or 1/2 of the members of the Central Committee must sign and submit a written petition containing a statement of charges to the highest ranking officer of the Central Committee who is not named in the petition.

- b. The officer receiving the charges shall send them, certified mail, to the charged officer, advising of the right to request a hearing before the Central Committee. The charged officer must request a hearing within 10 days of the mailing of the charges. The request for hearing shall be in writing and addressed to the officer forwarding the charges.
- c. If a request for hearing is made, a hearing shall be held by the Central Committee within 30 days of its receipt.
- d. At the hearing, the charged officer shall be afforded an opportunity to respond to the charges. A 2/3 vote of those present shall be necessary to remove the officer. Proxies shall not be allowed either to establish a quorum for the meeting or on the vote for removal.

## **VII. Vacancies:**

- A. **Vacancies.** A vacancy shall exist when any incumbent resigns, dies, moves from the county, or is removed pursuant to the procedures described in these rules.
  - 1. Central Committee. A vacancy on the Central Committee shall be filled within 30 days of its occurrence by the remaining members of the Central Committee. By resolution of the committee, the Chair may be authorized to fill vacancies on an interim basis, subject to confirmation by the committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - 2. Chair. A vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the Central Committee within 30 days of the occurrence of the vacancy. The First Vice-Chair shall call a special meeting of the Committee for the purpose of filling the vacancy.
  - 3. Other Officers. A vacancy for any other officers on the Central Committee shall be filled by the Executive Committee on an interim basis, subject to confirmation by the Central Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - 4. Executive Committee. Vacancies in the Executive Committee not covered in the preceding paragraphs shall be filled by the Executive Committee at its next meeting.
  - 5. Elected Offices. The Central Committee shall serve as the vacancy committee for Archuleta County elected offices.

## **Part Two: Meetings**

### **I. General Procedures:**

- A. **Call and Agenda:** Notice of the time and place for all meetings of the Party shall be provided to each member of the committee that is meeting, or for Conventions and Assemblies, to each delegate and alternate. This notice shall be sent in

accordance with the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time. Agendas are required for all meetings and should be included as a part of the call.

**B. Votes:**

1. Multiple offices shall not entitle a person to more than one vote.
2. Proxies are allowed as provided for in these rules or in the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.
3. **Definition of Majority:** Unless otherwise specified, when these rules call for a majority vote, a majority shall be 50% +1 of the eligible votes cast. Unless otherwise specified, when these rules call for a two-thirds vote, two thirds shall be 66% of the eligible votes cast.
4. Voting on Party business may take place via email or other electronic polling system as long as the votes of members can be identified as coming from that member – no secret ballots are permitted. Success of the motion considered will be based upon percentage of the full membership of the Committee polled. Email votes shall be recorded in the full minutes of the next regular meeting of the Committee polled, with a consent vote to ratify the votes for inclusion in the minutes.

**B. Conduct of Meeting:** All meetings of the Party shall be conducted according to the bylaws of the Archuleta County Democratic party or the Colorado Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time. Any procedure which is not prescribed in or governed by these rules, shall be governed by the current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order”

**II. Organizational Meeting.**

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February of odd numbered years, the Central Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair to reorganize. The Chair shall give at least 10 days notice of the time and place of the meeting to all members of the committee. This notice shall be sent in accordance with the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time. The Chair shall preside until the election of a new chair, who shall then preside over the remainder of the meeting. At this meeting there shall be elected other officers identified above as well as any additional members of the Executive Committee as provided for in these rules. Any Democratic elector of Archuleta County shall be eligible for these offices. The Central Committee shall, as a goal, seek to balance the gender of the Chair and first Vice-Chair and will seek to ensure that all groups within the community are represented to the extent possible in the leadership of the party. Newly elected officers shall become voting members of the Party Central Committee at the time of their election.

**III. Quorum.**

- A. Central Committee. A quorum shall be 2/5 of the membership.
- B. Executive Committee. A quorum shall be a majority of the membership.
- C. Committees. A quorum shall be 1/3 of the membership.

### **Part Three: General Procedures**

#### **I. Delegates to Out of County Committees, Assemblies and Conventions.**

Delegates to out of county committees, assemblies and conventions shall be determined in accordance with the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

#### **II. Controversies and Complaints**

All complaints regarding non-compliance with these Rules, Colorado Democratic Party Rules or with State and Federal Law, and requiring action of the Party, shall be submitted in writing to the Chair. If the party complaining submits signatures of ten percent of the members of the Central Committee within a period of 15 days after the action alleged to be in non-compliance with the rules occurred, a special meeting of the Central Committee shall be called to consider the complaint. The Chair may appoint a committee to meet prior to the Central Committee meeting and submit a report for acceptance.

#### **III. Dissolution**

In the event the Party should be disbanded, any remaining funds in the Party treasury shall be donated to the Colorado Democratic Party.

### **Part Four: County Party Bylaws**

#### **I. Supremacy of State Democratic Party Rules**

- A. These bylaws shall be construed to be consistent with the Rules of the Colorado Democratic Party, but in the event that such construction cannot harmonize conflicting rules, the State Party rules shall prevail over these rules in the area of conflict.
- B. In the event that these bylaws fail to address any issue addressed by the State Party Rules, the county adopts the State Party Rules in that instance

#### **II. Conflicts regarding interpretation of Bylaws**

All conflicts regarding interpretation of these bylaws shall be handled as stated in Part I, Article I, Section D, number 4

#### **III. Publication of the Rules**

A copy of these rules shall be made available at no charge to anyone requesting one. These rules shall also be available in PDF via the Party website, should one exist.

#### **IV. Amendments to the Rules**

Amendments shall be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in the rules of the Colorado State Democratic Party, as those rules exist from time to time.

**V. Terms Defined.** As used herein, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them in this paragraph.

- A.** Rules. "Rules" refers to the Plan of Organization, Rules and By-Laws of the Archuleta County Democratic Party.
- B.** Central Committee. "Central Committee" refers to the Archuleta County Democratic Party Central Committee.
- C.** Party. "Party" or "party" refers to the Archuleta County Democratic Party.
- D.** Executive Committee. "Executive Committee" refers to the Archuleta County Democratic Party Executive Committee.

#### **VI. Ratification of the Bylaws**

These bylaws shall take full force and effect immediately upon ratification by the Central Committee by a majority vote.

#### **VII. Certification of the Bylaws.**

Upon ratification, the Chair shall sign these bylaws as the bylaws of the Archuleta County Democratic Party and the Secretary shall attest the signature of the Chair. These bylaws will remain valid forever unless amended or repealed by the Central Committee.

January 17, 2011

Signed by Bob Nash

Chair of the Archuleta County Democratic Party

Signed by Emily Franklin – acting Secretary for the 1/17/11 Central Committee Meeting

Signature Attested by: Secretary of the Archuleta County Democratic Party