

THE GREEN PARTY OF COLORADO - Procedures and Guidelines

Revised August 22, 2004

I. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of these procedures and guidelines is to provide for consistency and efficiency in the functioning of GPCO within the bylaws. This document supplements the bylaws and adds details, but cannot be in conflict with the bylaws. These guidelines are not binding on local chapters of the GPCO, but could be used as a starting point for a local's process and procedures.

II Modifications

2.1. These procedures can be modified at any GPCO state meeting by a 60% vote.
2.2. The GPCO Council is authorized to modify this document at any time, subject to review at the next GPCO state meeting. A 60% vote is required to overturn a Council modification.

III. Categories Covered by this document

3.1. Diversity

3.1.1. The GPCO will strive for gender and geographic balance in all representation, recruitment and functional offices of the GPCO. This means co-chairs instead of one chairperson, co-conveners, cofacilitators (Note: only one person facilitates at a time, the other supports them, then they exchange roles at some point), etc. In cases where there is only one person needed for a function, the function should be rotated periodically between genders and among geographic regions. Where there are no people of one gender or geographic area available, additional efforts should be made to recruit and train people of the other gender and in other geographic areas.

3.1.2. The GPCO will strive to obtain a mix of people in various identity groups in all representation, recruitment and functional offices of the GPCO.

3.1.3. Where one person has held an office in the GPCO for longer than 2 years, this office should be reviewed at an annual meeting to see if there are any other qualified people to rotate into that office.

3.2. Meeting Process

3.2.1. Meetings will generally use the "Agreement Seeking" process, where proposals are presented and discussed and consensus is sought. Where consensus cannot be reached, a proposal can be tabled for another time or a vote can be taken, where a 60% vote is then required for passage. See Appendix A. for more details on this process.

3.2.2. Co-facilitators are appointed in advance of the next meeting, so that they can work with the Council and other interested parties to develop the agenda and assist with planning the meeting. Where only one facilitator is needed or available, every attempt will be made to use a facilitator of the other gender at the next meeting.

3.2.3. Each meeting will have co-conveners. Their main responsibility will be to function as the focal point for working with the Council in planning the meeting, obtaining a meeting site, coordinating with the Council and the facilitators. Conveners should, if at all possible, rotate between meetings from one gender to the other.

3.2.4. A minimum quorum of representatives from 60% of all locals, with a minimum number of voting participants (registered in the Green Party of Colorado) equal to twice the number of local chapters represented, must be present at any meeting for decisions to be made. Any meeting with less than that number will be advisory to the Council, who can accept recommendations from that advisory meeting and enact or not enact advisory proposals in the interim until the next state meeting, using appropriate Council procedures.

3.2.5. Proposals brought to the agenda of a state meeting must be made by local chapters or a minimum of 5 individuals at large, by the Council, or by any Officer of the GPCO. A written statement of the proposal must be sent to the Council by a representative of the sponsoring local, or by a member at large accompanied by evidence of at least 4 other member's endorsements. The statement and evidence may be done by email or on paper.

3.3. Naming of Locals

3.3.1. Locals are free to name themselves as they choose. It is suggested that the name include the words "Green Party" and the political area covered by that local, for example, "Green Party of Boulder County." It should also be made clear in literature, etc. that the local is affiliated with the Green Party of Colorado.

3.4. Endorsements and Sign-ons

3.4.1. Between state meetings, any proposal for an endorsement or sign-on can be made to the Council. Council representatives will distribute this proposal to their respective local and get local direction on the proposal within one month from the proposal's introduction.

3.4.2. The Council will then discuss and vote for the endorsement or sign-on, with a 60% vote required to pass. The Council can also choose to delay a vote until the next state meeting.

3.4.3. Any endorsement or sign-on requiring the commitment of GPCO resources (money, people, time, etc.) must clearly state the requirements and where the resource will come from.

3.5. Council Process

3.5.1. The Co-chairs will alternate as conveners/facilitators of the Council or a convener/facilitator will be elected by the council.

3.5.2. The Council will operate via email on a listserve or by other electronic means as needed between state meetings, and plan to meet shortly before and after state meetings.

3.5.3. The Council will discuss via email issues raised among its representatives or by any Green Party member who participates. Any councilmember or Committee may submit a proposal to the convener or facilitator for discussion. Appointed state representatives of local chapters will have the ability to make proposals to the State Council directly under the following conditions:

1. That the proposal be made by the representative and two more members of the local chapter, one of those members being an elected or appointed officer of that local chapter.

2. That the proposal be published on the local chapter's listserve as soon as possible.

3. That the state representative making the proposal need not have written confirmation but simply email confirmation from the other two members making the proposal, and that copies of these emails be sent along to the State Council with the proposal.

3.5.4 Proposals for ACTION will be called by the current convener/facilitator, who will announce a week period of Consensus discussion of a proposal. During that week, members may discuss the proposal, express support for the proposal by saying "I agree with this proposal," or may express concerns or blocking concerns by stating their concern, or may offer amendments. Amendments can be proposed by any Council member and either accepted by the proponent if friendly, or voted on separately by the Council, if unfriendly.

If, at the end of the first week, we have reached quorum and have had full support and no proposed amendments or blocking concerns, the proposal will be accepted by consensus and the facilitator will report the results.

If there is no quorum at the end of the first week, or if there are amendments proposed that are not acceptable to the originator of the proposal or any blocking concerns, then the facilitator will initiate a voting process for that proposal by posting an email message to the Council list serve with the word "Vote" in the subject line of the message. The text of the message will include a brief statement of the proposal and will solicit votes from Council reps either Yes or No or Abstain. Any backup material from the proponent, within reasonable limits, will be included in the request for a vote. Council reps will have a week to vote on the proposal. The convener/facilitator will send a Final Update of the vote to the list serve once a quorum is reached on the proposal in question. It is the responsibility of Council reps to make issues known to the respective members of their local chapters and solicit input on how to vote on specific proposals, to the extent that it is possible. Simultaneous votes will be discouraged, although they may occur at the discretion of the convener/facilitator. Suspension of these procedures may occur with issues of urgency, again at the discretion of the convener/facilitator.

3.5.5. If any representative believes the vote does not represent what they sent in, the convener will send their vote message back to them for verification. Errors and corrections will be reported to the convener and the results modified as needed up to one week past the end of the voting.

3.5.6. A minimum quorum of at least one representative from 75% of the locals in the state must participate in any Council action for it to be valid.

3.5.7. Council proposals must be approved by 60% of representatives voting to be adopted. For ballot issues we are endorsing or opposing or stances we are taking on public issues a 75% vote is required.

3.6. Representation of GPCO at Other Organization's Meetings

3.6.1. Members of the GPCO may informally represent the GPCO at other organizations' meetings for the purposes of gathering information and exploring the possibilities for cooperation, without obtaining prior approval by the GPCO.

3.6.2. No one can represent the GPCO at other organizations' meetings for the purpose of making decisions that result in the commitment of GPCO resources or imply GPCO endorsement without prior approval of the GPCO Council or a state meeting of the GPCO.

3.7. The GPCO co-chairs, after conferring together, can make a "good until challenged appointment" of a volunteer for a vacancy to any of the following positions: coalition representative; meeting facilitator or council facilitator; meeting agenda collector; press relations director; representative to a GPUS committee, other than the GPUS-CC; web master; archivist; state phone line minder, or any other nondecision-making position, with the following stipulations:

1. Notice will be given to the online GPCO Council within five days of the appointment, with a resume of the volunteer's qualifications to fill that position;

2. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO Council reports of work in their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;

3. The appointed representative will seek input from the GPCO Council related to their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;

4. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO co-chair at least two weeks notice of their intent to resign their position.

5. If any GPCO Council representative challenges an appointment, the appointment will be withdrawn and submitted to the council for a yes or no vote.

6. An appointee to any of these positions shall have a sunset review of their appointment by the GPCO Council at every odd-year state meeting.

7. A GPCO co-chair can terminate an appointment at any time. Any such termination can be reconsidered by the Council.

3.7.1. The Archivist shall be responsible for maintaining paper copies of the archived historical records of the Green Party of Colorado in coordination with the Secretary.

3.7.1.1. Those records include: current GPCO Bylaws, Procedures & Guidelines, and Platform; minutes of all state meetings and nominating conventions; records of proposals that have been approved by the Council; copies of all reports made to the GPCO; copies of letters sent on behalf of the GPCO; copies of all reports filed with the Secretary of State and other government agencies; and any other documents designated by the Green Party of Colorado.

3.7.1.2. The Archivist shall be responsible for obtaining these documents, which can be compiled from emailed reports filed with the GPCO Council. These archives shall be passed from one Archivist to the next.

3.7.1.3. The Archivist shall make an annual report of their activities to the GPCO Council.

3.8. Determining the GPCO Presidential slate and Apportioning Delegates - The procedure to select a Presidential slate for the GPUS Nominating Convention will be determined by executing in order the steps contained in this section.

3.8.1. Procedure for selecting a Presidential slate.

3.8.1.1. At the State Meeting, nominations for Presidential candidates will be taken from the floor. Only delegates selected by their Locals may place a name in nomination. A nomination does not require a second. Choices like "no candidate", "uncommitted", etc. may also be nominated.

3.8.1.2. All nominations will be displayed.

3.8.1.3. When all nominations are in, the first round of voting will occur.

3.8.1.4. A round of voting is completed by executing the steps of 3.8.1.4 in order.

3.8.1.4.1. The facilitator will take a "sense of the convention" (a non-debatable, straw vote) that will determine if speeches will be allowed at this point. If allowed, each nominator will be permitted to speak on behalf of the nomination, and this will be followed by a period of discussion open only to delegates.

3.8.1.4.2. The facilitator will call for the vote. Delegates will publicly declare their choice.

3.8.1.4.3. The results of the ballot will be visibly posted.

3.8.1.4.4. Any candidate or choice getting less than the "threshold percentage" in votes is eliminated. The threshold is given by the formula "threshold percentage" = (1 / number of delegates allocated by the GPUS to the GPCO) * 100.

3.8.1.4.5. If no candidate or choice gets 60% of the votes cast, and two or less votes have been taken, another round of voting is required.

3.8.1.5. If no candidate or choice gets 60% of the votes cast and no candidate or choice is eliminated in the third and latter rounds of voting, the convention must vote (a non-debatable, procedural vote) after each round to have an additional round of voting.

3.8.1.6. Any subsequent rounds of voting will use the steps in 3.8.1.4.

3.8.1.7. When closure of voting occurs, the final vote results will become the GPCO Presidential slate.

3.8.2. Procedure for apportioning the Presidential slate delegates.

3.8.2.1. The final vote results will be converted to percentages of total votes cast and each of the surviving choices and candidates will have the appropriate percentage assigned to them.

3.8.2.2. The number of delegates assigned to a choice or candidate is given by the formula ND = CAP * DC, where:

ND is the "Number of Delegates assigned to a choice or candidate"

CAP is the "Candidate's assigned percentage", which is derived in 3.8.2.1

DC is the "Number of delegates and proxy votes in attendance at the nominating convention vote"

3.8.2.3. The "ND" will be rounded with any fraction less than .50 reduced to .0, and any fraction equal or greater than .50 increased to 1.0.

3.8.2.4. For all candidates and choices, the number of assigned delegates ("ND") will be totaled.

3.8.2.5. Any unaccounted for delegate will be assigned "uncommitted".

3.8.2.6. If the total number of assigned delegates exceeds the number allocated by the GPUS, each candidates' and choices' "ND" will be truncated with any fraction reduced to .0.

3.8.3. Delegation instructions and the GPUS Nominating Convention

3.8.3.1. When the delegates are chosen, their votes on the floor of the GPUS Nominating Convention will be assigned and bound through the first ballot for the Presidential Candidate of the GPUS with the exception of the uncommitted delegates. Only if a candidate withdraws his or her name from nomination will a delegate be released from binding early.

3.8.3.2. The number of delegates on the floor of the convention should be apportioned per 3.8.2.

3.8.3.3. A delegation coordinator will be chosen by the delegates, and will be responsible for these provisions.

3.8.3.4 On all subsequent ballots after the first, the delegates are released from any binding direction for voting.

3.8.4. The GPCO will support the nominated GPUS Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates. These candidates are placed on the General Election ballot by the GPUS.

3.8.5. The GPCO will select at the State Meeting the required number of Presidential electors for the Electoral College.

Appendix A. The Agreement-seeking Process

Roles:

- * Facilitator, Co-facilitator
 - People who see to it that the meeting goes well.
 - Involved with, but do not control, planning, agenda.
 - Main job is the actual running of the meeting.
 - Serve at the will of the group, can be removed or replaced by 3/4 vote of the group.
 - Generally do not present or argue for proposals, step aside temporarily if necessary to act as a participant.
 - Co-facilitator supports current facilitator as needed.
- * Minutetaker
 - Swaps roles at appropriate times.
 - Keeps a record of all decisions made during the meeting.
 - Prepares and distributes to meeting participants soon after the meeting.
 - May keep track of other information about the meeting as desired.
 - Keeps track of items tabled or to be considered later.
- * Timekeeper
 - Keeps meeting on time - assists in gathering participants after breaks, keeps track of time expired on an agenda item, warns participant when time is almost up, informs facilitator when time expired.
 - May be done by separate person or co-facilitator.
 - Best if not an active participant in the meeting.
- * Agenda Planner
 - Keeps track of agenda items for next meeting or future meetings.
 - Acts as focal point for agenda item gathering for next meeting.
 - Works with Council and Facilitators in preparing agenda for a meeting.

Process:

Process Summary: Introduce a proposal, discuss and amend it, decide to do it or not by testing consensus, voting if necessary.

1. A proposal is presented, sponsored by one or more members. The initial proposal can be sketchy, to see if the group is interested. If group does not support the proposal, it goes no further. If it reaches the discussion stage, the proposal should be complete, with background, details of implementation, resources needed, schedule for implementation, etc. For simple proposals, of course not all of this is needed and it may be possible to do all three stages at one meeting.

1.1. For major proposals, the proposal goes through 3 stages. The first stage is to briefly introduce the proposal and see if there is support to continue, if not, it is dropped or the author(s) go back and redo to meet major objections. Only a few minutes is used at this stage to hear the proposal, get clarifying questions and test for support. At the next stage, people should be given a written version of the proposal and study it and come prepared to the next meeting to discuss it. The second stage is to discuss the proposal in depth, and, if necessary, consider amendments to improve the proposal. "Friendly" amendments can be accepted by the author with no other action needed. "Unfriendly" amendments require a vote of the members to make the change. This process may take some time and multiple meetings for big proposals. When the discussion and amendments are finished, the facilitator then has the group make a decision. For important proposals, it may be best to have the decision made at the next meeting to make sure everyone has time to consider the discussion and changes fully.

2. The decision. When the members are ready, or when out of time, the facilitator restates the proposal as amended, and then asks if there are any BLOCKING concerns. Optionally, the facilitator can ask for all those in favor to show their hands, and then ask for blocks.

2.1. If there are (only voting members or delegates can block or stand-aside), people state their concerns, and then look for amendments or clarifications that would remove the block.

2.2. If there are then no blocks, ask for STAND-ASIDES, and record the names of those who wish to stand-aside. This means that the person doesn't object to other people carrying out the proposal, but won't take part in it. For instance, if it has to do with the planning of a meal with meat, and the person is strict vegetarian. If there are only a few stand-asides or none, the facilitator states that we have consensus, the proposal is agreed upon and we move on. If desired the facilitator can ask agree we have consensus to stand or raise a hand or indicate it in some other way to verify that consensus has been reached. This should not be necessary in a group that is experienced in the agreementseeking process.

2.3. If blocks remain or there are too many stand-asides (more than one or two or 10% of a large group), and the item cannot be sent to committee for further work and later consideration or tabled, we then move to a vote on the issue.

2.4. At the beginning of a meeting, we need to know who the voting members are and what the total number is in order to determine the percentage of votes needed to pass. In larger groups its good to have a voting card to hold up when votes are taken.

2.5. The facilitator asks for those in favor of the proposal to hold up their hands (or cards) and has 2 other non-voting people (when possible) count the votes.

2.6. Same for those opposed

2.7. Same for those that wish to abstain.

2.8. The votes are recorded, and if the vote is at the right threshold (abstentions are not counted), the proposal is passed. For most items, the threshold is about 60%, but for some items it could be 75%.

2.9. The facilitator then announces the vote and whether the proposal passed or failed.

3.0. For some items, the next step is to determine how and when the proposal will be acted on. Who will do what, and how resources will be obtained.