



The Constitution of the Green Party of Manitoba

(As adopted November 11, 1998 and revised on November 20, 2010, November 26, 2017, November 30, 2019, and November 28, 2020.)

Constitution of the Party

Article 1. An association called “The Green Party of Manitoba” is hereby constituted. The association is referred to herein as “the Party” and its members as “(the) Manitoba Greens”. This Constitution prescribes the rights and responsibilities and governs the activities of the Party, its officers, its defined units, and its members.

Object of the Party

Article 2. The Object of the Party shall be to encourage the development of a sustainable and ecologically sound society as envisioned by the Common Values of the Manitoba Greens. The Party may undertake any activities which promote the attainment of this Objective. A main objective of the Party shall be to promote Green policies and values through participation in the electoral process.

Common Values of the Manitoba Greens

Article 3. Manitoba Greens Believe:

- *Interdependence of society, economy, and environment*
 - (1) Society, the economy and the environment are fundamentally and inextricably interdependent. Policies addressing one can only be effective if they address all three spheres at the same time. In an ecological society, policies are sustainable, which means they are capable of being maintained indefinitely into the future.
- *Society*
 - (2) Our society is sustainable only if it is democratic, egalitarian, compassionate, cooperative, and peaceful, both within itself and in relation to other societies. In a sustainable society, people are

secure in regard to their health care and personal safety. Social development in a sustainable society respects and values diversity within society, including physical, ethnic, sexual, cultural, political, and religious.

- *Economy*

(3) Our economy is sustainable only if it is able to maintain full employment without harming the environment. Jobs in a sustainable economy are sufficiently productive to meet society's needs and are meaningful enough to satisfy its members' human needs. People are not exploited or economically insecure in a sustainable economy. Small economic enterprises dominate a sustainable economy. Such an economy serves the people and not vice versa.

- *Environment*

(4) Our environment is sustainable only if human activity does not harm natural ecosystems. The environment of this finite planet cannot sustain infinite material growth nor absorb infinite pollution. In a sustainable environment, society lives in harmony with nature, is guided by ecological insights, limits its consumption, and acknowledges its finiteness.

- *Democracy*

(5) In an ecological society, democracy is grassroots and local. People are empowered to participate directly in society's political institutions rather than only through elected representatives. They participate in economic decisions directly as owners of local businesses and farms, as tradespeople and professionals, and as members of cooperatives, credit unions and trade unions. They participate in environmental policy directly through local community responsibility for natural resources. In all three spheres, local grassroots control ensures institutions stay truly democratic

Manitoba Greens also support in principle the values expressed in the Global Greens Charter, the Ten Principles for a Sustainable Society, and Fritjof Capra's Ecological Principles, as appended to this Constitution.

The Common Values of Manitoba Greens, the Global Greens Charter, the Ten Principles for a Sustainable Society, and Capra's Ecological Principles will all be used as guidelines in developing policies and electoral platforms.

Rules of Procedure

Article 4. The following Rules of Procedure shall apply:

(1) **INTRODUCTION**

(a) These are the procedures for use at Green Party of Manitoba meetings (conventions, annual general meetings, council meetings, committee meetings, workshops, etc.).

(2) **DEFINITIONS**

(a) **Green Party of Manitoba:** Also referred to as the GPM in this document.

(b) **Chair:** Also known as the facilitator or moderator, leads meetings and recognizes the speakers. See also (5) *FACILITATION*.

(c) **Co-chair:** Appointed (as needed) to assist the chair and maintain the speaker's list or substitute for the chair if the chair needs to step down temporarily. See also (5) *FACILITATION* and (6) *SPEAKERS' LIST*.

(d) **Recorder:** When the GPM Secretary is not present, the recorder records the minutes of any GPM meeting. See also (9) *MINUTES*.

(e) **Timekeeper:** A person who keeps track of the time spent on each area of discussion so that the meeting may meet its time commitments. See also (10) *TIMEKEEPING*.

(f) **Voting card(s):** At a Convention, Annual General Meeting or other large gathering a set of coloured voting cards, may be used to indicate voting members' votes: a green card indicates that the motion is understood and agreed to; a yellow card indicates that more clarification or information is needed before the motion can be agreed to or rejected; a red card indicates that the motion is understood and objected to; a blue card indicates a request for a point of order; a black card indicates abstention.

(g) **Session:** Different parts of the same meeting as determined by the agenda.

(h) **Concurrent Session:** Agenda time where more than one sub-meeting, workshop, presentation, or combination thereof, is simultaneously taking place, at different locations.

(i) **Plenary:** The meeting of the whole group with no other concurrent sessions of the group taking place.

(j) **Point of Order:** A way of signaling for clarification, language translation, procedural suggestion, or additional information. See also (6) *POINTS OF ORDER*.

(k) **Poll:** A way to determine how a motion is being received by those present by holding a trial, non-binding vote.

(l) **Motion:** A proposed course of action, documented by the recorder, for the consideration of all present.

(m) **Amendment (or Friendly Amendment):** A modification or addition to the motion proposed by a member at the meeting. The main motion's speakers' list may be suspended, and a separate speakers' list may start in order to moderate discussion on the amendment.

(n) **Deciding Vote:** The acceptance or rejection of a motion, by the voting members present, either by show of hands (at smaller meetings) or by voting cards (at Conventions or other larger meetings). See (3) *PROCEDURE*.

(3) **PROCEDURE**

(a) **Presentation:** The chair will present or ask for the presentation of a motion, resolution, proposal, or issue to be considered.

(b) **Silence:** The chair will then ask for a moment of silence during which everyone will be asked to note any questions they have concerning the resolution, proposal, or issue just presented.

(c) **Questions and Clarifications:** To facilitate efficiency and group understanding, the chair will ask if anyone requires clarification concerning the motion, resolution, proposal, or issue just presented. If so, the presenter will then speak to these. The chair will ask everyone to listen and to strike off their own questions as they hear their questions answered. The resolution or proposal may not be amended at this time.

(d) **Discussion/Amendments:** The chair opens the floor to discussion and/or amendments, sets or confirms a time limit, and monitors the meeting for possible solutions and/or agreement. Where it is not obvious that a majority of members present either agree or do not agree with a proposed amendment, the chair will poll the meeting for clarification.

(e) **Testing for Agreement:** If a decision is to be made and if there appears to be general agreement with a motion or motion as amended, or there is no further discussion, the chair will ask the recorder to read back the motion or item proposed and test for agreement by asking if anyone is strongly opposed to the motion. Agreement should not be interpreted to mean unanimity, only that all members can accept the particular motion.

(f) **Noting Objections:** If any member has a strong objection to the motion, they may signify verbally and/or by raising their red voting card when the test for agreement is made. In doing so, the person objecting should be prepared to state the reason for the objection including the basic GPM value that is at issue.

(g) **For Informal Settings:** In smaller meetings, where there is objection to the proposed agreement:

(I) One at a time, the chair will have the meeting briefly hear from each member who objected to the motion.

(II) For each objection, the chair shall ask for discussion or amendments to address the objecting members' concerns. If there is agreement on any amendments, those amendments will be added to the motion currently under consideration.

(III) When all objections have been heard, the chair shall re-test for agreement.

(h) If agreement cannot be reached, the chair will poll the meeting to determine if:

(I) the motion should be tabled (and therefore be off the agenda for the rest of this meeting),

(II) the motion should be returned to its sponsors for more work (where an improved version may be reintroduced at the meeting if there is time or reintroduced at a subsequent meeting),

(III) the meeting shall proceed to a deciding vote on the motion.

(i) Voting Cards: If a deciding vote on a motion is to occur, a vote by show of hands (at smaller meetings) or voting cards (at Conventions, Annual General Meetings, or special meetings called of the general membership), will be conducted. The various categories of votes (see also (2) *DEFINITIONS*, (f) *Voting Cards*) will be counted separately and recorded in the minutes. A motion passes if more than 60% of the voting members present vote in favour of the motion. Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted if more than 75% of the votes cast are in favour.

(4) **VOTING RIGHTS**

(a) Only members who have been members of the Party for the previous 30 days before a meeting shall be eligible to vote or count in quorum. Any member eligible to vote may make, withdraw, or move to amend any motion. In the case of any dispute over a member's eligibility to vote, the members at the General Meeting may decide for that meeting only.

(b) Any person who does not meet the criteria of a "member" above, cannot vote or otherwise prevent agreement from being expressed toward a motion.

(c) The chair and co-chair cannot prevent agreement and cannot vote except in the event of a tie.

(5) **FACILITATION**

(a) Every meeting will have a chair and, as needed, a co-chair.

(b) The chair is primarily responsible for:

(I) Interpreting these rules of order.

(II) Managing the meeting in a way that is consistent with these rules of order and responsive to the members in attendance.

(c) The co-chair is primarily responsible for:

(I) Assisting the chair in managing the meeting.

(II) Keeping the speakers' list.

(d) The chair(s) are responsible for keeping the meeting focused on one issue at a time and may recommend to the meeting the division of items for specific discussion or decision.

(e) The chair(s) may recommend to the meeting the appointment of "helpers" to help either the chair or co-chair in maintaining the speakers list, displaying the wording of proposals before the meeting, maintaining the agenda, allotted times, priorities, etc., thus freeing up either the chair or co-chair to focus more on other aspects of conducting the meeting.

(f) Any person may request the chair to test for agreement. The chair will poll the meeting if it is not obvious that the meeting is ready for the test for agreement.

(g) The chairs may not prevent agreement or vote.

(h) If any one of the two chairs wishes to participate actively in a discussion, object to a proposed agreement, or temporarily leave the meeting, the chair or co-chair must give up facilitation to the other chair who then may select from the meeting a stand-in co-chair for the duration of the discussion at hand. Any "step asides" of facilitation will be in effect until the matter under discussion is resolved. Following this, the original chair may regain their facilitation duties.

(6) SPEAKERS' LIST

(a) Anyone may be placed on the speakers' list by signaling their intention to the chair, co-chair, or appointee maintaining the speakers' list. The meeting may decide to put non-members onto the speaker's list.

(b) The main motion's speakers' list may be suspended, and a separate speakers' list may start in order to moderate discussion on an amendment. When the amendment is either carried or cancelled, the amendment's speakers' list is also cancelled and the next person on the main motion's speakers' list is granted leave to speak.

(c) The chair or co-chair has the responsibility to maintain a balance of perspectives.

(d) The chair(s) may recommend to the meeting to "close the speakers' list" and hear from only those already on the speakers' list in order to meet allotted time commitments or to proceed quicker if it is felt agreement is at hand.

(e) The speakers' list is cleared if the motion is agreed to, tabled, returned to its sponsors for more work, passed or rejected by a vote, or the agenda item ends.

(7) POINTS OF ORDER

(a) Any member of the meeting may signal the chair on a:

(I) ***Point of Clarification:*** if a procedure is not understood or a violation of these rules is believed to have taken place. In doing so, the section of these rules at issue must be identified at the outset. The chair may call for contrary views or rule on the point.

(II) ***Point of Order:*** a procedural suggestion that will aid or improve the facilitation of the discussion at hand.

(III) ***Point of Information*** (the facilitator or recorder may also request it):

- (i) when there is some item of information that is necessary for the discussion; or
- (ii) when there is an item in discussion which must be accurately recorded in the minutes.

(IV) ***Point of Translation:*** when the meeting is being conducted in more than one language and translation is needed.

(8) CHALLENGING THE FACILITATION OR CONDUCT OF OTHERS

(a) A member of the meeting, other than the chair, may challenge the facilitation or challenge the conduct of another person in the meeting if it is felt that:

- (I) the chair has not made a fair and accurate ruling.
- (II) a person is misrepresenting the rules for preventing a decision.
- (III) a person is being obstructionist; or
- (IV) some other serious violation has taken place.

(b) Upon any such challenge listed in *step (a)*, and for the duration of the challenge, the meeting closes to any further business. If it is the facilitation that is being challenged, the chair must immediately give up facilitation of the meeting to the co-chair, who in turn may ask for the appointment of a temporary co-chair.

(9) MINUTES

(a) When the GPM Secretary is not present, each meeting will have at least one person designated as a recorder to record the minutes of the meeting. For large, teleconference, or upon request of the members present at a meeting, electronic recording of the meeting will take place. The meeting minutes shall include (at a minimum):

- (I) The title and purpose of the meeting.
- (II) The date, time, and place the meeting is convened and adjourned.
- (III) The names of all persons in attendance.
- (IV) The membership/voting status for all persons in attendance at Conventions and Annual General Meetings.
- (V) The names of the chair(s), recorder(s), and timekeeper(s).
- (VI) Agenda items or discussion topic headings, the approved wording of any motions, and the context or rationale for a particular decision; and
- (VII) Relevant attachments.

(b) The recorder shall ensure that completed minutes are forwarded to the party or meeting secretary for formatting, filing and distribution. The party or meeting secretary shall ensure that completed minutes are received from the recorders of each session.

(c) The recorder shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent that their voting or membership status allows.

(10) TIMEKEEPING

- (a) Each meeting will have a person designated as the timekeeper to keep track of time spent on agenda items.
- (b) The timekeeper can notify the chair when: allotted time is close to running out; or allotted time has run out.
- (c) The timekeeper shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent to which their voting or membership status allows.

(11) PROCEDURAL ITEMS NOT COVERED BY THESE RULES

- (a) The chair has the authority and responsibility to address procedural items that might arise that are not already covered by these Rules of Procedure.

Recognised Units of the Party

Article 5. The following are recognized units of the Party:

- (1) Individual Members
- (2) General Meetings
- (3) Executive Council
- (4) Constituency Associations
- (5) Caucuses
- (6) Committees

Membership

Article 6. Any resident of Manitoba at least 14 years of age who:

- (1) subscribes to the Object of the Party and the Common Values of the Manitoba Greens.
- (2) abides by (accepts) the terms of this Constitution.
- (3) pays the annual membership fee; and
- (4) is not and does not become a member of another provincial political party may become a member of the Party.

Membership in Good Standing

Article 7. In this Constitution “member” means only a member in good standing. A member is not in good standing if they has not paid the current annual membership fee or has not paid any other debt owed to the Party, either of which is due more than 30 days, and shall remain not in good standing so long as the debt remains unpaid.

General Meetings

Article 8. The general meeting shall be the highest decision-making forum of the Party. Resolutions of a general meeting shall be binding upon all units of the Party including the Executive Council, its officers, and the Shadow Cabinet. A general meeting by resolution may:

- (1) determine any matter permitted by this Constitution, including the Party's internal and political policies.
- (2) overrule any resolution of any unit of the Party, including that of a previous general meeting and including electoral platforms which are inconsistent with the Party's political policies.
- (3) endorse candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba as candidates of the Party.
- (4) approve Policy and Platform documents submitted by a member in good standing or the Policy and Platform Committee.
- (5) approve the budget presented by the Treasurer.
- (6) elect council members.
- (7) appoint an appeal committee if required to deal with membership issues.
- (8) appoint standing and special committees.

Timing of General Meetings

Article 9. The Party shall hold at least one general meeting every calendar year, ordinarily in November, to be designated the Annual Convention. General meetings shall be called: by resolution of the Executive Council; or by a petition submitted to the president at least 21 days before the proposed meeting and signed by at least 25% of the membership in good standing, or in the alternate 10% of the members in good-standing residing within the Perimeter Highway and 10% of the members in good-standing residing outside the Perimeter Highway. The president shall send out notice of a general meeting at least 15 days before the general meeting and shall include a draft agenda. Anyone may attend a general meeting. All members in good standing are entitled to vote on any matter decided at a general meeting.

Biennial Convention

Article 10. The Executive Council shall designate one general meeting every second calendar year as a Biennial Convention. All rules pertaining to general meetings shall apply to annual conventions except as expressly amended by this Constitution. Biennial conventions will deal with the election of officers, constitutional amendments, administrative directives, and policy resolutions of an emergent nature.

Executive Council

Article 11. The Executive Council shall be comprised of the Leader, elected officers of the Party, and appointed members at large. It is empowered to conduct all normal business of the party, subject to review at the Biennial Convention. Its decisions shall be effective unless rescinded or amended by a general meeting. The Council by resolution may:

- (1) determine any matter permitted by this Constitution, including the ratification of the Party's electoral platforms recommended by the Policy and Platform committee.
- (2) overrule any resolution of any unit of the Party, which is inconsistent with the Party's political policies, excluding any resolution of a general meeting.
- (3) rescind or amend administrative policies and/or the by-laws of the Party subject to ratification at the next general meeting; and
- (4) endorse candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba as candidates of the Party.

Selection of Executive Council

Article 12. Except where appointment is authorized in this Constitution or the Party By-laws, the Leader and Officers of the Party are to be elected at a general meeting. The Leader and officers of the Party will be elected at a Biennial Convention for a concurrent two-year term, unless a leadership contest is demanded by the membership as provided in Article 14 of this Constitution or the resignation of the Leader and/or Officers of the Party necessitates the need for an election to be held during a general meeting.

Party Leader

Article 13. The party leader shall be elected to serve as the main spokesperson for the Party on political matters. They shall not hold another office in the Green Party of Manitoba while serving as party leader.

Right to Demand Leadership Contest

Article 14. The members shall have the right to demand a leadership contest. This is to be done by written request of 25% of the members in good standing, or in the alternate 10% of the members in good-standing residing within the Perimeter Highway and 10% of the members in good standing residing outside the Perimeter Highway. Such contests shall be declared by the Financial Officer at the earliest convenient time, with the election to occur not later than six months from the date such request is received by Council.

Elected Officers

Article 15. The Party shall elect the following officers to Executive Council, but any vacancies may be filled by Council appointment until the next General Meeting.

- (1) A President
- (2) A Treasurer
- (3) A Secretary
- (4) A Membership Development Coordinator
- (5) An Elections Planning Coordinator
- (6) A Youth Representative
- (7) A Northern Manitoba Representative
- (8) A South-Eastern Manitoba Representative
- (9) A South-Western Manitoba Representative
- (10) A Winnipeg Representative

Appointed Members at Large

Article 16. Additionally, Executive Council is enabled, at its own discretion, to appoint as many as six additional members-at-large during the period between Biennial Conventions, such additional positions ending with the term of each council. If a member-at-large position becomes vacant, the position may be filled by Council appointment until the next General Meeting.

Council to Appoint Financial Officer

Article 17. The Financial Officer of the Green Party of Manitoba shall be appointed by Executive Council and shall be responsible for ensuring that all legal requirements under the Elections Act and Elections Finances Act are fulfilled.

Forming a Constituency Association

Article 18. Five or more members residing in a provincial electoral constituency may form a constituency association. All members of the Party resident in a constituency must receive ten days' notice of a formation meeting. Once a constituency association has been formed, all Party members residing in that constituency shall be deemed to be members, and their contact information shall be provided to the constituency association. It is the responsibility of the constituency association executive to make reasonable efforts to advise all members of meetings and any events organized by the constituency association. Constituency associations shall be formed under the rules established by Elections Manitoba and shall carry out all activities in accordance with this Constitution, The Elections Act of Manitoba, the

Elections Finances Act of Manitoba, and any other applicable legislation. Constituency Associations shall use a uniform accounting system (to be provided by the Party Treasurer and Financial Officer [FO]) to ensure compliance with The Elections Finances Act requirements and consistent standards for audit purposes. Constituency Associations shall use credit union services where available for their banking needs.

Creation of a Caucus, Chairs, and Meetings, and Members

Article 19. To create a caucus, the following must be submitted in writing to Executive Council: a caucus name, a brief outline of its goals and operations, and the names and signatures of at least three members in good standing. If these conditions are met, and Executive Council deems the caucus' goals as consistent with the aims of the Party, the Executive Council shall approve of the caucus as soon as possible.

Committees

Article 20. A general meeting or the Executive Council may establish committees for any purpose consistent with the Objectives of the Party.

Bylaws

Article 21. This Constitution authorizes the creation of Party Bylaws, which shall be binding on all members, including Executive Council. Bylaws may be ratified, created, amended, or rescinded by a vote of more than 60% at a general meeting. Bylaws may be created, amended or rescinded by more than a 60% vote of the executive council, but such amendments must be ratified by a vote of more than 60% of the membership at the next general meeting and Executive Council must notify the membership of bylaw changes before they take effect. In the event that an executive council amendment fails to receive ratification at the next general meeting, the bylaw will be of no force or effect following the general meeting; however this will not affect the applicability of the bylaw change in the interim between enactment through notification to the membership and failure to ratify at the following general meeting.

Amendments to this Constitution

Article 22. This Constitution may only be amended by a general meeting. Proposed Constitutional amendments must be circulated to the membership with the notice of a general meeting, by email where possible or by post where required. A Constitutional amendment shall require more than a 75% majority vote to pass.

Interpretation

Article 23. In this Constitution and the Party bylaws unless otherwise required by the context, all words in either gender shall be deemed to include both the feminine and the masculine, and all singular words shall be deemed to also include the plural and vice versa.

Document Upkeep

Article 24. After each General Meeting at which this Constitution or the Bylaws are amended, Executive Council, or designate thereof, shall ensure the publication of the amended Constitution and Bylaws on the party website, and/or through other means as necessary, and at that time may:

- (1) Renumber the provisions of this Constitution or the Bylaws to accommodate the changes that have been made,
- (2) Correct references between provisions which are no longer accurate,
- (3) Correct cross-references between provisions that are no longer accurate,
- (4) Correct typographical errors,
- (5) Correct spelling errors,
- (6) Correct grammatical errors,
- (7) Replace gender biased language with gender neutral language,
- (8) Make any other obvious corrections as needed provided they do not change the meaning or substance of any provision.