

GREEN PARTY OF VIRGINIA
STATE PARTY MEETING AGENDA
West End Library, Richmond
May 11, 2019 - 10:30 AM-4:00 PM

NOTE TO LC MEMBERS: PLEASE PREPARE WRITTEN REPORTS AND SEND THEM TO THE BUSINESS LIST AT LEAST A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING.

The focus of this business meeting is the November elections. We are continuing to seek candidates for local and statehouse races. We will consider a proposal for the procedures of the Platform Committee. We will also consider a minor bylaws amendment, and some proposals for the GPUS.

(For purposes of calculating quorum, currently active locals represented at at least one of the previous two scheduled business meetings were Arlington, Blue Ridge, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, Hampton Roads, Lynchburg, New River Valley, Richmond, and Shenandoah Valley.)

Agenda

LOCATION: West End Library in Richmond, VA, at 5420 Patterson Avenue, doors open at 10am, meeting start 10:30am. For those joining remotely, the call/login details to be provided a few days before the meeting. Participants will need access to a computer and the internet in order to cast votes. Non-voting members may fully participate by phone. Please email bsidneysmith@gmail.com no later than 9pm Friday, May 10, 2019. Call-in information will be sent to those who RSVP.

INTRODUCTION (10 min)

Choose facilitator, note taker, timekeeper, vibes watcher. (Note for our new members: Anyone can be take on any one of these roles for a business meeting. If you would like to volunteer to take one of these roles you are free to do so, or someone may nominate you to do so. In the event two or more people are interested in serving in the same role, a co-chair will poll the members present regarding their preference. Facilitators should be familiar with both consensus practice and parliamentary norms, and possessed of both patience and self-confidence.)

Ratify agenda

Approve minutes of last meeting

OFFICIAL REPORTS (3 min each - total 30 min): (Detailed reports should be submitted in writing to the business list-serve, and highlights only briefly summarized at the meeting.)

Co-Chairs' report
Treasurer's report
Webmaster's report
Secretary's Report
GPUS Representative & Committee Chair reports

OLD BUSINESS

Confirmation of Interim decisions by the Leadership Council: (10 min)

1. Wisconsin proposal (cosponsorship).
2. Appointment of Declan Mathis to Green Pages.

Review of candidates and campaigns for the November election, and races suitable for recruiting candidates. (30 min)

Proposal to Amend the GPVA Bylaws, Article 13: Platform Committee procedures. (30 min)

Review of proposal to establish the Political Response Team. (Not to be voted on--review only) (20 min)

BREAK FOR LUNCH 90 MINUTES

NEW BUSINESS

Proposal to Amend the GPVA Bylaws, Section 14, Officers. (10 min)

Proposal to sponsor, and to seek cosponsors for, a Code of Conduct proposal to the GPUS National Committee. (15 min)

Proposal to sponsor, and to seek cosponsors for, an Ethics Committee proposal to the GPUS National Committee. (15 min)

Presentation and discussion moderated by Co-Chair Tina Rockett on Civil Resistance and the 3.5% Rule. (45 min)

ADJOURN

(Padding in the schedule: 60 minutes.)

APPENDIX: TEXTS OF PROPOSALS

Proposal to Amend the GPVA Bylaws, Article 13: GPVA Platform and Platform Committee procedures

BACKGROUND: The GPVA Platform has not been properly updated in several years. This is evidence, at least, that the currently prescribed procedures are not effective at facilitating the updating of our platform. The Committee-Committee reviewed procedures from the GPUS platform committee as well as our old procedures, and sought input from several other members. The result is a completely new set of procedures which is intended to make our platform at once more accessible to the membership, more relevant to the public, more useful to our candidates, and more amenable to appropriate and timely updates.

PROPOSAL: Rename the current Article 13 of the GPVA Bylaws to "Platform and Platform Committee", and replace the current text with the following:

13.1 Structure and Organization of the Platform

13.1.1 The GPVA Platform shall be organized by the Four Pillars, with general headings under the most appropriate Pillar, and specific planks organized by subheadings under each heading.

13.1.2 Each plank shall be titled by its subheading. Below the title/subheading, each plank shall have a Short Statement, typically one or two sentences, concisely summarizing the plank.

13.1.3 Each plank shall have an Executive Summary, which may be a bulleted or numbered list, providing concise statements of each point within the plank.

13.1.4 Each plank shall have a Detailed Discussion, providing all appropriate rationales for the plank.

13.1.5 Each plank shall have a list of Resources following the detailed discussion. The resources, either documentary or electronic, should be such as support the rationales for the plank.

13.1.6 The platform shall be published on the GPVA website, formatted to facilitate both browsing of the plank statements and, by means of expanding sections, the summary, discussion, and references. The General Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the web page current.

13.2 Structure of the Platform Committee

13.2.1 The GPVA General Secretary shall be the convener of the Platform Committee.

13.2.2 Any GPVA member in good standing who is endorsed by their local may become a member of the Platform Committee.

13.2.3 The Platform Committee shall have two co-chairs, who shall be elected by and from among the committee membership for a term of one-year. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full-term appointments as co-chair.

13.3 Platform Committee procedures

13.3.1 At the beginning of autumn, the Platform Committee will establish a procedure for review by the committee of the current platform, for the purpose of identifying those planks that may need revision, and to determine if new planks are needed.

13.3.2 One week following the first Tuesday in November, the Platform Committee will issue a call to the general membership for platform proposals. This call will be accompanied by a form, or a link to a form, for the use of members to facilitate preparation of proposals in the correct format, in accordance with 13.4.

13.3.3 The Platform Committee will work with those making proposals to help them with preparation of a properly formatted proposal, and with editing for clarity, unity, etc.

13.3.4 The Platform Committee may request that submitters work together to combine proposals that are similar or competing.

13.3.5 Platform proposals may be submitted to the Platform Committee at any time. The Platform Committee shall endeavor to process each proposal in a timely manner.

13.3.6 Once the Platform Committee has determined, either by consensus or by majority vote, that a proposal meets the criteria of Para. 13.4, the proposal shall be forwarded to the GPVA co-chairs to be placed on the business agenda of a regular or interim business meeting. Adoption of a platform proposal is a major decision under the bylaws.

13.3.7 The Platform Committee may, on its own authority, make minor housekeeping changes to the Platform. These include correction of typos, grammatical errors, correction of dates or other neutral factual information, and so on. Such changes shall be detailed in the Platform Committee's report to the next business meeting, and are subject to approval by the membership.

13.3.8 It is the responsibility of the Platform Committee co-chairs to ensure that these procedures and all business of the committee are accomplished in a timely manner.

13.4 Platform Proposal Requirements.

13.4.1 Platform proposals must be submitted using the paper or online form specified by the Platform Committee in its most recent call for proposals.

13.4.2 Platform proposals must be limited to a single plank, or, if a revision of existing planks, must be limited to a changes corresponding to a single issue. Proposals affecting more than one narrowly construed issue should be split into separate proposals. The Platform Committee shall determine in each instance whether a proposal is too broad, and notify the proposing members of the requirement to split the proposal.

13.4.3 Proposals must have the formal endorsement of two locals, or be endorsed in writing by at least five GPVA members in good standing.

13.4.4 Proposals must be grammatical and well organized, use neutral, factual language, and must be specific. The Platform Committee will assist members making a proposal in meeting this requirement.

13.4.5 Proposals for minor, housekeeping edits to existing planks should be made informally to the Platform Committee, who will handle the edits in accordance with Para. 13.3.7.

13.4.6 Proposals may not duplicate existing planks in whole or in part, and may not contradict existing planks unless the proposal is specifically to amend the existing plank in such a way that the amended plank will not itself stand in contradiction to any other part of the platform.

13.4.7 A proposal to delete a plank without replacement should be made directly to the membership through the GPVA co-chairs, and not to the Platform Committee.

13.4.8 Any proposal meeting these requirements shall be accepted by the Platform Committee, and processed in accordance with Para 13.3.

Proposal to Amend the GPVA Bylaws, Section 14, Officers:

BACKGROUND: Two years ago the GPVA bylaws were amended to increase democratic representation at GPVA business meetings by requiring that major decisions be voted on by local representatives and elected state officers, rather than solely by "members present" at the meeting. This ensured that members could have input to decisions through their local representative without the onus of having to attend the meeting in person in order to have an equitable voice in major party decisions. However, the language of Section 14 was not properly updated to reflect this change. This proposal is a house-keeping proposal to bring the old language into consonance with the rest of the bylaws.

PROPOSAL:

Update Para. 14.1.4 to read in its entirety: Election of officers will take place by Ranked Choice Voting, and is considered a major decision under Section 10, "Meetings and Decision Making."

Update Para. 14.1.5 to read in its entirety: Unscheduled officer vacancies may be filled by a Ranked Choice Vote of the Leadership Council at a regular GPVA business meeting or in an interim meeting. Announcement of the vacancy and a request for nominations must be made at least 28 days prior to the regular or interim meeting at which an election will take place. Elections conducted by an interim meeting of the Leadership Council will be subject to ratification at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the GPVA for which quorum has been established, by a simple majority vote of the Leadership Council members present.

Update Para. 14.1.6 to read in its entirety: An officer may be recalled for dereliction, malfeasance, conduct in violation of the Four Pillars and 10 Key Values, or any conduct likely to cause harm to the

Green Party of Virginia. A recall vote will be held whenever more than 50% of the locals announce, through their local representative, that a recall vote is needed. An officer will be considered recalled, effective immediately, when more than 2/3rds of the local representatives of all currently active locals vote in favor of recall at any regular meeting of the GPVA, or at an interim meeting called for the purpose of recall.

PROPOSAL (GPUS): Code of Conduct

Amend the GPUS Bylaws, Article VII, "Ethical Behavior", adding the following sub-paragraph:

1. Code of Conduct

A. Inlusiveness. The Green Party welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds and identities. No person shall be discriminated against, deliberately made to feel unwelcome, or disparaged on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, social and economic class, educational level, color, immigration status, sex, age, size, family status, religion, or mental or physical ability.

B. Interpersonal behavior. The success of the Green Party depends on the enthusiasm, talents, cooperation, and hard work of each of its members. Because the things we say and do, and the decisions we make, affect us all, we are each obliged to treat every other member with respect, due deference, generosity, and consideration. Disparagement, exaggerated accusations, deliberate mischaracterizations, and deceptive framing are inconsistent with Green ethics. Expressing unproven assumptions (or suspicions) that a colleague's intentions are malevolent, or failing to give the benefit of the doubt, is counterproductive. When frustrations occur and tempers flare, we are obliged to step back and wait for passions to cool before re-engaging. The following are unacceptable: Threats of violence; discriminatory jokes or language; sharing sexually explicit or violent material via electronic devices or other means; personal insults, especially those using bigoted terms (racist, sexist, etc.); unwelcome sexual attention; vilification or backbiting; bullying, either individually or in cooperation with others, including excessive or unfair criticism, public insults, deliberate exclusion or ignoring, doxing or other public or private exposure to damage a reputation, and cyber-bullying; or advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above.

C. Collegiality. Every member is an ambassador for the Green Party to the broader polity, and to the world. Members should refrain from publicly airing internal disagreements, and from publicly disparaging or denigrating the party or any of its members. Criticism of the party, where justified, should be constructive, and offered with the aim of improving the party and supporting its membership. Deliberately publishing polarizing or divisive commentary, or publicly condemning party members, damages the public standing of the party and imperils its mission, and is unacceptable.

D. Professionalism. As Greens we place our trust in one another. To succeed, we must have both transparency and confidentiality. Leaders, committee members, delegates, and others in positions of responsibility should exemplify the highest standards of honesty and integrity. The following are unacceptable: betrayal of confidences entrusted in accordance with bylaws, policies, rules, or agreed procedures; offering or accepting bribes, whether monetary or for other consideration; theft, larceny, extortion, blackmail, or any felony the commission of which involves the Green Party, its property, data, or members, except in the conduct of principled strategic acts of non-violent civil disobedience;

acting or conspiring to subvert the procedures of any committee or the conduct of any internal election; misrepresentation of one's own or another's political commitments; infiltration on behalf of any outside interest; or maintenance of a conflict of interest without full disclosure.

BACKGROUND: The GPUS Bylaws, in Article VII, Ethical Standards, obliquely address ethical behavior on the part of Greens, but is largely written for state parties and is mostly about representation and structure. As a national political organization, especially one based on a deep commitment to ethical governance, we need a code of conduct for members to serve as a template for constructive behavior, and against which to measure complaints regarding conduct.

PROPOSAL (GPUS): Establish a GPUS Ethics Committee

PURPOSE:

To institute a committee and process for the just disposition of ethics violations by members of the Green Party of the United States, its delegates, officers, staff, committees, or official groups.

I. BACKGROUND:

In any organization of sufficient size, it will sometimes happen that a member of the organization, or a group of members possibly acting in an official capacity, will act in a way that violates the ethical standards of the organization. Such violations may be such as to incur either a civil or criminal legal response, but individual and/or official actions may also violate ethical standards without being legally actionable. In either case, the organization must have a process for identifying such behaviors and incidents, or reviewing allegations of them, and arriving at a disposition of the matter that is just to the parties concerned and shields the organization from liability or other further harm.

The GPUS presently has two committees with limited authority to procedurally address charges of wrongdoing made against its members. The Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) "is charged with providing mediation and arbitration services for intra-party disputes." The DRC can seek to ascertain facts, contact parties, and seek resolution. However, the process is voluntary; if one or more parties to the dispute chooses not to participate, there is no process and no resolution. The Accreditation Committee (AC) "reviews and makes recommendations on requests to remove state parties or caucuses from accredited status." The AC has no authority to review allegations of violations by an individual or by any committee or other organizational group in the national party.

The lack of a formal procedure for addressing individual and internal institutional violations of GPUS ethical standards is a serious deficiency that must be addressed.

II. DEFINITIONS:

II.1. "Member" in this document refers to any person identified as a member or formal associate of the Green Party of the United States, either by membership in a constituent state party or caucus, or by assignment to a recognized committee, or by written or verbal contract.

II.2. "Violation" refers to any action, including by speech, writing, voluntary association, or physical behavior, that violates the ethical standards or Code of Conduct set forth in the bylaws of the GPUS.

II.3. "Legal action" refers to any process undertaken by individuals or by officials of any governmental jurisdiction in accordance with applicable civil and criminal codes.

II.4. "Evidence" refers to any of the following: documents that can be independently verified, physical evidence that can be objectively examined, first-hand testimony that is credible and offered in good faith, or the recorded findings of a court of law.

III. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

III.1 The GPUS Ethics Committee (EC) shall consist of 9 members, with no more than 2 members of any state party at any given time. Members of the Steering Committee may not simultaneously serve on the Ethics Committee.

III.2 Members shall be elected by the National Committee for three-year terms, using Approval Voting, with three members elected each year. No member may serve more than two full terms consecutively.

III.3 There will be three co-chairs chosen internally from among the elected EC members, by approval voting, to serve one-year terms. Co-Chair appointments should promote gender and racial diversity. Consecutive co-chair terms are permitted.

III.4 Committee terms and co-chair terms shall be dated from January 1st. Special elections and/or appointments will be used in the event of an unscheduled vacancy. Interim appointments shall be made only until the next scheduled election.

III.5 The current Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) will be reestablished as a subcommittee of the Ethics Committee, with the current DRC Administration (sub)Committee replaced by the Ethics Committee, and the Mediator and Arbitrator Pool staffed by volunteers vetted and supervised by the EC.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES:

IV.1. The EC shall consider two types of complaints: those made against one or more individual members for their individual actions, and those made against committees or other official GPUS groups for procedural, systemic, or systematic violations.

IV.2. Investigatory Phase.

IV.2.a. Complaints may be made by any GPUS member to any EC member. EC Members must recuse themselves from consideration of, or any procedural activity with respect to, any complaint regarding themselves or their state party, or with respect to which they have any other evident conflict of interest.

IV.2.b. When a complaint is received, it will be immediately forwarded to the EC co-chairs. If at least two co-chairs find the complaint actionable, they shall forward the complaint to the remaining members of the EC. If at least two additional members concur that the complaint is actionable, the complaint shall be processed according to the procedures set out in sub-paragraphs IV.2.d-j below.

IV.2.c. If the complaint is not deemed actionable, the complainant will be notified, and the complaint filed and kept for a period of at least three years. Complaints that are not actionable may nonetheless be referred to the Dispute Resolution Subcommittee (DRS) for mediation provided that (1) the

complainant is interested in Dispute Resolution, and (2) in the opinion of at least 2 co-chairs or 4 EC members, mediation could be of value.

IV.2.d. Actionable complaints shall be assigned to a three-member Investigative Subcommittee (IS) of the EC, by consensus or by an approval vote of the EC members.

IV.2.e. The IS will create a confidential folder (i.e. "case file") of files to include the original complaint and any and all evidence and other materials subsequently obtained or created regarding the complaint.

IV.2.f. The IS will establish a list of persons to be contacted, queried, and or interviewed with respect to the complaint, and will make a detailed record of all such communications. The identity of the complainant will be kept confidential if the complainant requests. The individual(s) named in the complaint will be asked to provide a statement, and/or an interview with them may be requested, but all such responses are voluntary and may not be compelled. The IS will seek to obtain any and all evidence and other relevant information regarding the complaint, for the purpose of drawing up a Findings Document. The Findings Document will summarize the complaint, the facts obtained, and any conclusions that may be reasonably inferred from the facts.

IV.2.g. When the Findings Document is complete, it will be forwarded to the EC co-chairs, who will first determine whether to seek legal counsel. Legal counsel must be sought in any case where the findings indicate a violation of the law, or are such as to open the GPUS to liability for civil action. This includes but is not limited to cases of discrimination in employment, sexual or physical assault, misappropriation of funds or property, acts of larceny, vandalism, or any other violations of the law. If the co-chairs determine that legal advise should be sought, they will immediately notify the Steering Committee in a confidential communication.

IV.2.h. Whether legal counsel is sought or not, the co-chairs will then distribute the Findings Document to the full EC membership, who will also at this point be given access to the full case file. After a period not to exceed one week, the EC members shall vote for one of the following Findings: (1) a Finding that there has been an Ethics Violation, or (2) a Finding of no Ethics Violation. The vote shall be by open ballot, and recorded.

IV.2.i. If a simple majority of voting members fails to vote for a Finding of at least one Ethics Violation, the case file will be closed, and the complainant notified of the EC members decision. Closed case files are to be kept for a minimum of three years. At this point too the matter can be referred to the DRS, according to the procedure of Para. IV.2.c.

IV.2.j. If a simple majority of voting members votes for a Finding of an Ethics Violation, then the matter proceeds to the Recommendations Phase.

IV.3. Recommendation Phase.

IV.3.a. Once a Finding of one or more Ethics Violations has been made by the full EC, the case file is assigned to a new three-member Recommendation Subcommittee (RS) of the EC appointed by consensus or by approval voting from among the 6 members who were not on the Investigative Subcommittee for the case.

IV.3.b. The RS will evaluate the Findings Document and determine which specific types of violations identified in the GPUS Code of Conduct were committed, by whom they were committed, how many

times each type of violation was committed, and for each violation whether the violation could be characterized as (1) a minor violation or (2) a significant violation, and whether either mitigating factors or aggravating factors were present. This analysis will be recorded in tabular form.

IV.3.c. For violations by one or more individuals, the RS will formulate a Recommendation for Sanctions for each such individual, to include one or more from among the following:

1. Recommendation of formal censure.
2. Recommendation of placement on moderated status on specified GPUS list-serves for a designated period, or permanently.
3. Recommendation of removal from (all or specified) GPUS list-serves for a designated period, or permanently.
2. Recommendation of removal from (all or specified) GPUS committee assignments for a designated period, or permanently.
5. Recommendation of revocation of delegate status (including alternate) to the GPUS NC for a designated period, or permanently.
3. Recommendation of disallowing attendance at (all or specified) GPUS events for a designated period, or permanently.

IV.3.d. For violations by a committee or other organizational element of the GPUS, the RS will formulate a Recommendation for Reconciliation to include one or more of the following:

1. Recommendation of a specific change in membership, such as replacement or removal of named individuals.
2. Recommendation of a specific change in leadership, such as by new internal elections or other appropriate means.
3. Recommendation of a change in rules, procedures, or bylaws to address and prevent future violations.
4. Recommendation of removal of a committee or other organizational element from the GPUS structure.

The Recommendation for Sanctions and/or Reconciliation will include a rationale based on the Findings Document, attendant circumstances, and the potential for continuing or repeated violations.

IV.3.e. The completed Recommendation will be sent to the entire EC, which will discuss the Recommendation and attempt to reach consensus about it, possibly including friendly amendments. If consensus cannot be reached, then the Recommendation as presented by the RS will be voted on. The vote will be by open ballot, and recorded.

IV.3.f. If no Recommendation is agreed to either by consensus or by a simple majority vote, then the case file will be closed, the complainant notified, and the Recommendation, Findings Document, and case file kept for a period of at least three years.

IV.3.g. If a Recommendation is agreed to either by consensus or by vote, then the Recommendation, Findings Document, and case file will be forwarded to the Steering Committee, who will schedule the Recommendation as a formal proposal for the National Committee, with a normal discussion and voting period.

V.4. Reopening Complaints

V.4.a. A complaint that was closed within the preceding three years may be reopened if:

1. New evidence is presented to the EC which, in the opinion of at least two of the co-chairs or four of the EC members, warrants reevaluation of the complaint.

2. A complaint is made against the same individual(s) or GPUS organizational element (e.g., committee) for a similar but otherwise entirely new violation which is itself deemed actionable in accordance with Para. IV.

V.4.b. A complaint will not be reopened on the basis of a new complaint of violation if the alleged new violation is not similar to or related to the closed complaint.

V.5.c. A complaint that has been reopened for one of the reasons above will be processed anew in accordance with Section IV of this document.

V.5.d. A reopened complaint may be considered on its own, or combined with a new complaint if appropriate.