

MENDOCINO WOMEN’S POLITICAL COALITION (MWPC)

ARTICLE I: NAME & MISSION STATEMENT

The name of this organization is the Mendocino Women’s Political Coalition (MWPC).

Mendocino Women’s Political Coalition is dedicated to advancing gender equality and MWPC objectives through political and educational activities.

MWPC endorses women and men candidates who actively support and promote the MWPC objectives. We are committed to social action promoting equality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age and abilities.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

- A. To unite women of Mendocino County through social action in a political network to promote cultural diversity and economic opportunity for everyone;
- B. To educate and encourage women to become more aware and involved in the political process;
- C. To garner support for women's issues such as promoting individual rights for family planning;
- D. To encourage family leave and child/elder care policies;
- E. To promote sustainable environmental practices;
- F. To seek qualified candidates who support the objectives of MWPC;
- G. To facilitate candidate training workshops;
- H. To endorse and support pro-MWPC candidates;
- I. To support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

ARTICLE III: Leadership/Sage Circle:

The title, “Sage Circle” reflects the culture and guiding principles of MWPC by using language that is foundational to support the work of MWPC.

- A. The Sage Circle is responsible and accountable for all activities and implementation of the MWPC Objectives.
- B. Elected and Appointed Sage Circle Members:
 - 1. Elected Sages: The positions that require financial and/or recordkeeping have designated titles: Chair, Treasurer, PAC Treasurer, and Secretary.

MWPC – BY-LAWS --- REVISED COPY JULY15, 2019

- Chair: Appoints Sages to the Sage Circle and committees chairs; schedules and conducts general membership and Sage Circle meetings.
 - Secretary: Attends meetings; takes and distributes minutes; maintains correspondence and historical records.
 - Treasurer: Collects and deposits all funds; signs checks, pays bills; disburses funds at the direction of the Sage Circle; keeps accurate records, prepares written monthly financial reports; and ensures a \$50 minimum is maintained in the bank account for carryover.
 - PAC Treasurer: Keeps accurate financial records of PAC account; writes checks for endorsements; submits reports to county and state election offices.
2. Appointed Sages: The purpose of appointed Sages is to have a circle of supporting Sages to perform duties as required and requested by the Chair.
 3. The Chair appoints up to five additional women to the Sage Circle who are clearly named and acknowledged as members of the Sage Circle. The Sage Circle will not exceed a total of nine elected and appointed members.
 4. Supporting Sages:
 - Represent inland and coastal county regions;
 - Assist Chair in the performance of her duties;
 - Plan programs for general membership meetings.
 5. Committees Chairs:

Each Committee Chair, one of the Sage Members, is responsible for one of the following Standing Committees:

 - Publicity: Submits articles to media; coordinates graphic production and other media for promotion of MWPC activities.
 - Membership: Conducts outreach and maintains membership records.
 - Events: i.e. Women’s History Day
 - Political Action Advisory
 - Ad Hoc Committee Chairs are appointed per the needs of MWPC, i.e. by-laws, special events, and nominations/elections.

Each Committee Chair reports at Sage Circle Meetings as needed on the activities and recommendations of each committee.

C. Nominations, Elections, Term of Service:

1. Nominations: Nomination of members in good standing for a least 30 days are eligible to be nominated for all elected offices by the nominating committee. The Nominating Committee Chair presents the ballot at the Annual Meeting.
2. Election: A ballot is mailed or emailed to all members prior to the annual membership meeting. Election results are circulated to all members.
3. Term of Service: The term of service for all elected Sages and committee chairs is two years, beginning September 1st.

D. Resignation and Removal, Vacancies and Newly-Created Positions:

1. Resignation: Elected and appointed Sages submit written resignations to the Sage Circle.
2. Removal:
 - If a Sage Circle member misses three consecutive regular meetings without prior notification, there may be grounds for removal.
 - If the conduct of the Sage Circle member is detrimental to the mission and objectives of MWPC there may be grounds for removal.
3. Vacancies and Newly-Created Sages or Chairs:
The Sage Circle Chair selects a successor as soon as possible.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

- A. MWPC strives to ensure a diverse membership to include adults of any race, creed, national origin, economic status, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, and ability.
- B. MWPC membership status is attained upon payment of dues, unless the Sage Circle declares a waiver of said dues.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS AND VOTING

- A. Regular Meetings:
MWPC has a minimum of three regular meetings/events per year. Notice of time and place for each meeting is given before the date of each meeting. All general meetings are open to the public. One membership meeting is designated for election of officers, i.e. the MWPC Annual Meeting.
- B. Special Meetings:
Special meetings are called by:

MWPC – BY-LAWS --- REVISED COPY JULY15, 2019

1. The Sage Circle;
2. The Chair at the request of the majority of the Sage Circle; or a written request to the Chair by 10% of the membership;
 - Such a request states the purpose of the meeting,
 - Business transacted at this meeting is confined to the purpose(s) stated.

C. Sage Circle Meetings:

Sage Circle meetings are held a minimum of eight times per year. The Chair or any two Sages may also call Sage Circle meetings. All Sage Circle meetings are open to the membership and are posted on the MWPC website.

D. Voting:

Any person in paid status for 30 days is a voting member.

E. Proxies:

There is no voting by proxy.

F. Quorum:

1. Regular and Special Meetings: No action is taken unless 10 members (or 25% of the membership), whichever is less, are present at the meeting.
2. Sage Circle Meetings: No action is taken at any Sage Circle meeting unless 51% of the Sage Circle members are present.

ARTICLE VI: TREASURY

A. General Fund:

The General Fund, the foundational operating account, supports the month-to-month expenses, and is generated from membership dues, and fundraising events. General funds pay for approved expenses of the Sage Circle and membership.

B. Political Action Fund:

The Sage Circle votes to deposit money from the general account to the Political Action Fund. This fund is exclusively used to support endorsed candidates and issues, and is maintained in a separate account.

- C. Reimbursement: the Treasurer reimburses ordinary expenditures as budgeted. The Sage Circle authorizes other expenditures in advance.

ARTICLE VII: POLICIES

A. Environment Policy:

MWPC supports:

- Population policies that give women the right to plan and manage their families while nurturing children in an ecologically balanced world.
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change.
- The recovery and preservation of the ocean ecosystems.
- Protection of watersheds and forest ecosystems.
- Sustainable use and conservation of natural and cultural resources on public lands.
- Dedicated funding for state parks.
- Safeguarding California’s forests through sustained --best practices forestry.
- Preservation of natural habitat diversity, connectivity, and soil conservation measures.

B. Endorsement Policy:

1. Definition

An endorsement is the MWPC statement of support for a candidate, or for or against an issue.

2. Endorsements are made according to MWPC policy.

There are three levels of support available under this Endorsement Policy: MWPC name, monetary contribution to campaign, and volunteer assistance with the campaign, contingent upon the organization’s capacity to do so.

Candidates and initiatives can gain a MWPC endorsement and support through the following process:

Candidates:

All candidates running for an office on which MWPC determines to take a position receive a questionnaire to assess their position on key MWPC issues and the overall viability of their campaign.

Candidates showing an interest in MWPC’s endorsement must return the questionnaire. An Endorsement Committee will screen those candidates.

Screening can be done by:

MWPC – BY-LAWS --- REVISED COPY JULY15, 2019

- Setting individual interviews with each candidate, typically in one evening with approximately 20-minute interview sessions.
- Producing a Candidate Forum or attending a public Candidate Forum.

The Endorsement Committee is comprised of a minimum of three members who have been MWPC members*. The Committee can be standing or ad hoc.

Committee responsibilities include: assuring questionnaires are sent to candidates; reviewing returned questionnaires; contacting candidates for setting a time and place for interviews or assuring attendance at candidate forums; conducting the interviews or facilitating discussion among members at forums; and producing written recommendations on whether or how to endorse and at which level.

If the interview process is done through a public Candidate Forum, the Endorsement Committee will consist of MWPC members who are in good standing for at least 30 days, attend the forum and meet afterwards to determine the recommendation and produce a written document.

Ballot Initiatives:

Endorsement and other support for a ballot initiative is initiated by MWPC or by the campaign's outreach.

The screening process can include Internet research and/or information on the initiative presented by the supporters and opponents through debates, forums, media presentations, etc.

Ballot Initiatives can be approved by other than the mail ballot process, i.e. electronic polling or MWPC Sage Circle action.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

The bylaws of the MWPC are amended at the Annual Membership Meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment(s) is presented to all members prior to the meeting. There must be a quorum present and a 2/3 vote of those present to carry the amendment(s).

**Revised Draft MWPC – BY-LAWS — July 15, 2019 (Katarzyna Rolzinski & Bonnie Tillotson)
Submitted and approved by Sage Circle – September 18, 2019
Submitted and approved by MWPC Membership – September 22, 2019**