

## Democratic Woman's Club of San Diego County - Candidate Endorsement Policy

Approved September 8, 2017

### I GOALS

The principal goal of the San Diego Democratic Woman's Club (SDDWC) in endorsements is to increase the number of qualified Democrats in leadership positions. SDDWC endorses candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to Democratic values and who have demonstrated involvement with, support of, and responsiveness to, Democratic policies and policy aspirations.

### II CRITERIA FOR ENDORSEMENT

1. Only Democratic candidates may be endorsed by the Club.
2. Only one candidate may be endorsed per seat. An endorsement means that the Club recommends a vote for that candidate rather than any other candidate for that seat. It does not necessarily mean that the Club supports all the candidate's positions.
3. Qualifications. In deciding whether to issue an endorsement, SDDWC will consider, among other things, the following factors:
  - a. the extent to which a candidate has demonstrated involvement with, support of and responsiveness to, issues prioritized by the club;
  - b. demonstrated commitment to equal opportunity and equal justice under the law;
  - c. integrity, character and common sense; and
  - d. membership in and demonstrated support of community organizations, including, but not limited to, those related to the advancement of Democratic values.
4. Candidates wishing to be considered for an endorsement or acceptable rating must meet ONE of the following criteria:
  - a. They have completed a candidate questionnaire
  - b. They are declared a friendly incumbent by the Endorsement Committee, with approval of the membership
  - c. They are eligible candidates for state-wide or national office
5. The Club may rate any ballot proposition as "Support," "Oppose," or "No Position."
6. The Club may choose any of the following options for rating candidates who are **not endorsed** by the Club:
  - a. "Acceptable" — Circumstances justifying this rating include, but are not limited to: (i) the candidate does not qualify for an endorsement, however the Club feels the person is supportable, (ii) the candidate has a good record and/or good position statements, however the Club disagrees with the candidate on one or more significant issues, (iii) there is more than one good candidate, and the Club

prefers to rate some or each as acceptable rather than endorse a single candidate.

- b. “Not Recommended” — Circumstances justifying this rating include, but are not limited to, the determination that the candidate has a poor position or record on one or more critical issues.
- c. “No Position”—Circumstances justifying this rating include, but are not limited to the following: (i) not enough information is known about the candidate, (ii) the candidate has demonstrated a lack of responsiveness, (iii) the candidate appears to be between the ratings of “Acceptable” “and “Not Recommended”, (iv) it would not be politically expedient to take a position.

### III PROCEDURES

#### A. PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

1. Candidates seeking an endorsement must comply with the following procedures:
  - a. Inform a member of the Club Endorsement Committee or a SDDWC Officer in writing of her/his intent to request SDDWC’s endorsement. Upon notification of this request, the Endorsement Committee or SDDWC Officer will forward to the candidate these Policies and Procedures and a Candidate Endorsement Questionnaire.
2. Forward the following information to the Endorsement Committee:
  - a. Completed Questionnaire received from the Board.
  - b. Resume and other materials the candidate considers relevant to his/her qualifications;
3. Upon completion of the assessment described above, the Endorsement Committee may, in its discretion, interview candidates and/or invite the candidate to give a five-minute speech to the SDDWC members at a regularly scheduled meeting.

#### B. PROCEDURES FOR VOTING

1. Club endorsements of candidates for public office and club positions on ballot propositions may be determined at any properly noticed club meeting, provided that a quorum is present and that members are notified of the races or ballot measures which are to be considered for endorsement or rating at least 14 days in advance of the meeting.
2. When there is support for more than one qualified candidate in a race, the discussion guidelines will be as follows:
  - a. The group will first decide whether or not to endorse in the race. Up to three members advocating for or against an endorsement shall be recognized by the meeting chair, with each side provided equal opportunity to address the

membership. Discussion may be limited to one or two minutes per speaker. Members shall be instructed that the threshold question for consideration is whether to endorse in a particular race. After the discussion of endorsement, a vote is generally taken, consistent with the bylaws.

- b. Following a decision to endorse, the members may discuss the individual merits of endorsing a particular candidate. Members for and against each candidate shall be recognized by the meeting chair, with each side provided equal opportunity to address the membership. Discussion may be limited to one or two minutes per speaker.
  - c. Discussion will be limited to members in good standing
  - d. Staff of particular campaigns are eligible to participate in endorsement discussions if they are members in good standing but they must identify themselves as staff.
3. A quorum is 10% of the members in good standing at the time of the meeting. To be eligible to vote for endorsement of a candidate or ballot proposition, a member must have attended at least one previous meeting as a member before they can vote. Proxy voting and absentee voting is not permitted. Candidates and their staff members, who are otherwise eligible to vote, are also eligible to vote on all endorsements.
  4. An affirmative vote of at least 60 percent of the club members present and eligible to vote shall be required to endorse a candidate, rate a candidate, or take a position on a ballot proposition
  5. No candidate may be present during debate on their specific endorsement or recommendation.
  6. Voting shall be done by voice vote or by show of hands.
  7. Voting on any endorsement shall be by secret ballot when requested by any member eligible to vote.
  8. The Endorsement Committee shall recommend the selection of races and propositions to be included on the slate for consideration. The selection may be modified by a majority vote of those eligible members present and voting.
  9. These rules may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of those present and voting, provided that a quorum is present. These rules may be amended by a 2/3 vote of those present and voting at any properly called club meeting, provided that a quorum is present, and provided that notice of the proposed amendment was included with the notice of the meeting.

10. Any endorsement or rating given by SDDWC may be withdrawn at any time upon a vote of 60% of the members present and voting at a general meeting at which a quorum is present. This provision shall apply to Friendly Incumbent Endorsements in addition to all other endorsements or ratings.

#### C. PROCEDURES FOR FRIENDLY INCUMBENT ENDORSEMENTS

1. Friendly incumbent endorsements may be considered for all incumbents who have a supportive voting record on appropriate issues, as determined by a unanimous vote of the Endorsement Committee.
2. The friendly incumbent endorsement is intended to reward incumbents for their support and should be completed early so the candidate has a greater opportunity to use the Club's endorsement to discourage challengers.
3. A friendly incumbent endorsement does not require the completion of a questionnaire or attendance at an endorsement meeting.
4. The Endorsement Committee may determine eligibility for a friendly incumbent endorsement for an incumbent who has no voting record by virtue of holding an administrative, executive or other non-legislative office. .
5. Where an incumbent does not receive a friendly incumbent endorsement, the office will be treated as open. All candidates that office (including the incumbent) will then be required to follow the standard endorsement procedure.

#### D. ALLOCATION OF CLUB FUNDS

1. Club fundraising activities may only be conducted for the campaigns of those candidates endorsed by the club and those ballot propositions earning a rating of "Support." The club, by a 60% vote, may designate certain races/issues as "priority campaigns" to indicate that those campaigns should be given priority in terms of fundraising or club-coordinated volunteer efforts.

#### IV CONFIDENTIALITY

SDDWC will hold and treat in strict confidence all documents submitted by the candidate and will limit disclosure to the Endorsement Committee/SDDWC Officers.

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February 2018 - Amended Section B. 1. to provide 14 days notice.