



**Bylaws of the**

**Green Party of**

**San Luis Obispo County**

**As amended:**  
**January 5, 2003**

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Green Party of San Luis Obispo County (GPSLO) is both a political party and a grassroots political activist organization. Embracing our responsibility to our community, and in the hope of creating an organization that will participate in making the County of San Luis Obispo a model of a just and sustainable society, we, the members of the GPSLO, establish these bylaws to govern the organization, operations, and functions of the GPSLO.

## **ARTICLE I - PURPOSE**

A. This organization shall be known as the Green Party of San Luis Obispo County.

B. Its purpose is to further the following ten key values through political and social action:

Ecological Wisdom

Nonviolence

Decentralization

Feminism and Gender Equity

Personal & Global Responsibility

Social Justice

Grassroots Democracy

Community-based Economics

Respect for Diversity

Sustainability

C. The GPSLO will conduct business according to these bylaws. In the event of an omission or ambiguity in these bylaws, the GPSLO will look to the bylaws of the Green Party of California (GPCA) for guidance.

## **ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP**

A. Any voter who has registered as a member of the Green Party and who is a resident of San Luis Obispo County also shall be a member of the GPSLO. Non-citizens and others otherwise unable to vote may be regarded as members if they have been actively engaged in the work of the GPSLO.

B. Only active members will vote in official GPSLO functions, should a vote be required according to the Consensus Process described in Article VIII.

C. An active member shall be a person who has attended 3 out of the last 5 General Meetings, including the current General Meeting.

D. The Steering Committee shall maintain the current list of active members.

## **ARTICLE III - FORMATION OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

A. The County Council shall fill the role served by the County Central Committees pursuant to Division 7 of the California Election Code. Other than that mandated by law the County Council shall have no decision making function or authority within the GPSLO structure.

B. Members of the County Council of the GPSLO shall be elected at large for two-year term at each State General Primary Election, and shall take office at noon on the

- C. The number of members to be elected to the County Council shall be seven. The GPSLO may choose to modify the method of selection or size of the Council by modifying these bylaws. The GPSLO must notify the State Coordinating Committee of the Green Party of California (GPCA), which must then in turn notify the Secretary of State by the 135th day preceding the general primary election.
- D. Members of the County Council must be registered members of the Green Party of California, and must live in the County of San Luis Obispo.
- E. In accordance with the key values of the Green party we will strive for a gender balanced and racially diverse County Council.
- F. If, by the time a new County Council is to take office, no one has been elected or qualified to take office, or if the entire Council is vacated during its term, a General Meeting may elect at least one member to the County Council. The State Coordinating Committee must be notified immediately if such an action takes place.
- G. Resignation - A County Council member automatically resigns if she or he:
  - 1. moves out of San Luis Obispo County.
  - 2. is no longer a registered Green.
- H. Recall - The following steps are necessary to recall a County Council member:
  - 1. A written recall petition must be presented to the County Council and Steering Committee concurrently. The petition shall include:
    - a) Endorsements of at least three GPSLO members.
    - b) Specifically how the recall candidate's actions are contrary to the 10 key values or these bylaws.
  - 2. Within seven days on receipt of a recall petition, the Steering Committee shall establish a mediation panel composed of three (3) GPSLO members not part to the dispute.
  - 3. Within fourteen days of its formation, the mediation panel shall meet with all parties of the dispute. If a party is unable to meet within those fourteen days, they may request a time extension from the Steering Committee which may grant such.
  - 4. Within seven days of that/those meeting(s), if no resolution is reached at that meeting, the panel shall recommend a resolution to the parties.
  - 5. If any party is dissatisfied with the recommendation, the Steering Committee shall allot equal times for all positions at the next General meeting. If that meeting results in a consensus (or 80% fallback vote) in favor of recall, the Council member is removed from office.
- I. Vacancies - If a vacancy occurs on the Council, the following procedures shall be followed:
  - 1. The vacancy shall be announced at the next General meeting.
  - 2. Indicated candidates shall be elected per Article IX at the following General Meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV – FORMATION AND DUTIES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

- A.** Decision-making of the GPSLO should be done as much as possible by active members in the General Meetings. In order to stream-line the business of General Meetings, a Steering Committee consisting of five to eight active GPSLO members, as defined in Article II-C, and including the treasurer shall be formed. Steering Committee members shall be elected per Article IX. Candidate openings for the Steering Committee shall be announced at one General Meeting and elected at the next. Steering Committee members shall serve for one year. County Council members are encouraged to serve on the Steering Committee.
- B.** The duties and powers of the Steering Committee are:
1. Draft the agenda for each General Meeting and distribute one week before the meeting. Additions to the agenda will be added only on an emergency basis.
  2. Take and maintain the minutes of General Meetings.
  3. Maintain all records of GPSLO including:
    - a) current membership lists,
    - b) General Meeting minutes,
    - c) current “active members” list (as defined in Article II – C), and have available at General Meetings for possible voting,
    - d) financial records (under supervision of the Treasurer), and
    - e) any other records that may be pertinent.
  4. Set and publish dates for General Meetings, if not set at a General Meeting.
  5. Oversee execution of General Meeting decisions, and decide otherwise General Meeting decisions which cannot wait until the next General Meeting.
  6. Any business not taken care of in General Meetings becomes, by default, the responsibility of the Steering Committee.
  7. See that legal and fiscal responsibilities of the GPSLO are met.
  8. Serve, if necessary, a mediating function.
  9. Make other decisions, without abusing the spirit or letter of these bylaws, which help to carry out the powers and duties of any committee, or the General Meeting, as stated here and elsewhere in these bylaws.
- C.** The Steering Committee shall use the consensus process for decision-making. The Steering Committee may, however, establish its own rules of procedure. All Steering Committee meetings shall be open to any member of the GPSLO, who may participate in discussion and the consensus process; but only members of the Steering Committee may vote, unless the Steering Committee chooses otherwise.
- D.** The Steering Committee may delegate any of its duties and powers to other committees. These committees shall remain responsible to the Steering Committee.
- E.** Resignation - A Steering Committee member automatically resigns if she or he is no longer a GPSLO member.
- F.** Recall - The following steps are necessary to recall a Steering Committee member:
1. A written recall petition must be presented to the Steering Committee. The petition shall include:
    - a) Endorsements of at least three GPSLO members.



2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for fulfilling all the requirements of the Political Reform Act and the FPPC.
3. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate records of all funds of the GPSLO. These records will be made available in a timely fashion to active members for examination, upon request.
4. The Treasurer shall file all required reports with the Treasurer of the GPCA.

## **ARTICLE VI - COUNTY LOCALS**

- A. Consistent with Green Party values supporting decentralization and personal responsibility, individual members may form locals of the GPSLO in the various subregions of the county.
- B. To be duly recognized as an official GPSLO Local, such a group must:
  1. Be approved as a County Local — either by the Steering Committee or at a General Meeting of the GPSLO — after submitting a written request signed by at least five (5) Members describing their intent to form a Local along with clearly defined boundaries of the proposed local.
  2. Record minutes for all official meetings and make available a copy to the Steering Committee on request.
  3. Duly elect a contact person who will facilitate communication between the Local and the county organization.
  4. Conduct Local activities in accordance with the spirit and intent of the Green Party's 10 Key Values.
- C. A GPSLO Local shall not take any public position on countywide or statewide issues contrary to that taken by the GPSLO or the GPCA, without receiving consensus at a General Meeting. A Local shall not assert any authority expressly reserved to the GPSLO in these bylaws or to the GPCA in the state party's bylaws.
- D. In order to remain active, a representative of a County Local shall present a yearly status report at a General Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES**

- A. Much of the work of the members of the GPSLO is organized through Committees. Committees are voluntary associations of GPSLO members carrying out that aspect of the work of the GPSLO to which they are dedicated or interested.
- B. Committees may be established by either the Steering Committee or by a General Meeting. There shall be as a minimum a Budget Committee (which includes the treasurer), an Outreach Committee and a Media Committee. The purpose of the Committee, its duties, responsibilities and delegated powers (if any), should be clearly stated at the time of its formation. The establishing body may name a coordinator for the Committee. An individual shall be designated to serve as a liaison to the Steering Committee.
- C. Decision-making within a Committee shall be by consensus, but Committee members may establish their own rules of procedure, or may use an informal decision making process, according to their specific needs.

- D. The Steering Committee will be responsible for keeping track of which Committees are active, and which are not. Committees will be responsible for keeping a list of ongoing, active members and supplying the Steering Committee with that list, as well as with meeting dates and times.
- E. The Steering Committee has discretion to dissolve or suspend inactive Committees.
- F. Active Committees may be dissolved with the consent of both the Steering Committee and a General Meeting, or a Committee may dissolve itself.
- G. No Committee may make any financial commitment on behalf of GPSLO without the prior consent of a General Meeting or the Steering Committee, unless financial powers have been specifically delegated to it.
- H. No Committee may make any endorsement, or claim to speak on behalf of the GPSLO, without prior approval or delegation by the Steering Committee or a General Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII - CONSENSUS**

- A. All bodies of the GPSLO shall seek consensus in all decision-making.
- B. Any item or resolution presented to a body of the GPSLO that has not chosen another process as provided for under these bylaws, must be passed through the following formal process of consensus:
  - 1. Any item presented to the meeting will be given adequate time, within the judgment of the facilitator and the limits of the agenda, for discussion and consideration. When satisfied that the proposal is sufficiently understood by the membership, the facilitator will ask for, and recognize members to present, concerns. Further discussion and proposals to amend the item may address each concern.
  - 2. When, in the judgment of the facilitator, concerns have been addressed as well as may be, the facilitator shall call for consensus by asking for unresolved concerns. If there are no unresolved concerns, then the proposal has passed; but if unresolved concerns remain, then the facilitator shall ask if the member presenting the concern will stand aside. If the member is willing, then the proposal has passed; and the concern will be recorded verbatim in the minutes of the meeting.
  - 3. If, however, the member is unwilling to stand aside, then the meeting shall proceed to vote on the proposal. The total number of votes for and against the proposal, and the number of abstentions, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting; and at the request of any two members, the vote shall be taken by secret ballot. If the proposal is a policy-making decision, then 80% approval of the members voting is required for the proposal to pass; but if the proposal is a business item, then a 2/3 vote of the members voting will be sufficient to pass the proposal.
    - a) A policy item shall be defined as any proposal that sets official GPSLO policy, makes endorsements of candidates or ballot measures, establishes a process, or amends these bylaws.



- b) If it is unclear as to whether an issue is one of policy or business, the stricter rule shall apply.
- C. Only active members (as defined in Article II- C) may present unresolved concerns or vote on proposals in a General Meeting of the GPSLO.

## **ARTICLE IX- ELECTIONS**

- A. Other than California State General Primary elections for the County Council, all elections for officers of the GPSLO, delegates to the GPCA General Assembly, and any other persons or options which are to be chosen by election by General Meeting, shall be governed by the rules covered in this article.
- B. In elections where more than one candidate or option is to be chosen, a preferential voting system shall be used. The details of the system to be used are set down in the GPCA bylaws.
- C. In elections where only one candidate or option is to be chosen, the alternative vote system detailed in the GPCA bylaws shall be used, unless there are fewer than three candidates, in which case a simple majority vote will be used to elect.
- D. If, in any election, the number of candidates or options is less than or equal to the number to be selected, then the meeting may choose to elect by consensus. If, in this case, there is any objection to electing by consensus, then the election will proceed by secret ballot. All members voting will be permitted to cast ballots for any or all candidates; any candidate not receiving a majority of all votes cast will not be elected.

## **ARTICLE X - DELEGATE SELECTION TO THE GPCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

- A. State delegates must be GPSLO members (as defined in Article II – A).
- B. The number of delegates for San Luis Obispo County is determined according to the rules and Bylaws of the GPCA.
- C. Delegates and alternate delegates to GPCA General Assemblies will be selected at a General Meeting preceding that event. Whenever practical, the designation of such delegates will be set as an agenda item at the preceding General Meeting and information of that agenda item will be distributed to the members.
- D. The delegates shall represent the will of the GPSLO as expressed in a General Meeting held before the GPCA General Assembly, on all issues on the pre-announced agenda of the GPCA General Assembly. If the GPSLO General Meeting does not bind the delegate votes, delegates may exercise their judgement on how best to represent the will of the GPSLO.

## **ARTICLE XI - MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

- A. Reasonable effort shall be made to hold all meetings of the GPSLO in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities.
- B. If requested in advance of the meeting, the Steering Committee shall attempt to provide for childcare during the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS**

- A.** A written petition to amend these bylaws must be endorsed by at least three (3) GPSLO members and presented to the Steering Committee.
- B.** The Steering Committee shall include the petition as an agenda item at the next General Meeting that is practicable.
- C.** At that General Meeting, before general discussions, the petitioners may make a presentation of their proposed amendments; after which, the Steering Committee shall provide their recommendations as to the amendment(s). The facilitator shall then move to open discussions of the amendment(s).
- D.** The proposed amendment(s) shall then be published, along with recommendations of the Steering Committee and other pertinent comments, and scheduled for the next General Meeting to be passed or not by the consensus process (or the 80% fall back vote) as stipulated in Article VIII.