

## **Caucus Process Step by Step** **For a Presidential Year**

March 6, 2012

### **1. Check-In and determine eligibility**

The first person to arrive for a precinct should get their caucus packet from the Site Coordinator, which includes all the forms. The voter list is provided and includes the names of all individuals registered as Democrats in the precinct as of the registration cut-off date. Names appear in alphabetical order, and each attendee should sign their name in the space to next to their printed name.

#### **What to do if attendee is not on the list:**

- A. Make sure they are in the right precinct by verifying their address is in the precinct. Precinct maps will be in each precinct packet and a map of the district will be with the Site Coordinator.
- B. If the information they give suggests they live in that precinct but their name is not on the check-in list, have the person fill out an affidavit (included in packet) and also add their name to the check-in list at the end in the blank spots provided. The person will be allowed to fully participate **BUT NEEDS TO BE MADE AWARE that if elected as a delegate, they will be unseated if it is later determined they were not properly eligible to be in that precinct's caucus.** (Affiliated since 1/6/12, registered in pct since 2/6/12).
- C. People who are not able to attend their caucus can submit, in writing that they wish to be considered as a delegate and which candidate(s) they are supporting. These people are not signed in as present. Their letter should be in the precinct packet, or can be delivered to the caucus. If there is no candidate preference stated in writing then their preference will be recorded as Uncommitted if they are elected as a delegate. They do not have a vote, even if their preference is in writing. They may be considered as a delegate or alternate if the body chooses to consider them.

### **2. Read the rules**

It is required that the rules be read aloud. In most locations it will be most expedient if the Site Coordinator reads the rules once for all of the precincts. If so, the Site Coordinator should start the meeting at 7:00 pm. If circumstances do not allow for the Site Coordinator to start the meeting and read the rules, then it will be the job of the Caucus Chair to do this once he or she is elected. There will be a page in the caucus packets that must be read aloud. More detailed rules will be provided in writing, but do not need to be read aloud.

### **3. Elect a Caucus Chair and Caucus Secretary**

Once the precincts are in their individual locations, the current Precinct Committee Person (PCP), if one is present, should start the meeting and immediately determine if anyone wishes to chair the meeting. If more than one person wishes to be Chair, the members of the caucus will vote for the Chair. A person is then elected to be Secretary by the same process. It is greatly desired by the Party that the person with the best penmanship be elected as the Secretary. These roles do not continue beyond the end of the Caucus. A secret ballot may be held if any member of the caucus requests one. The names of the Chair and Secretary, as well as all positions that are filled, will be recorded on the "Caucus Report Form" which will be in the caucus packet. The caucus Chair and Secretary must stay until all business of the caucus is finished and complete the recording paperwork.

#### **4. Pass the Buck Bag**

Your Caucus Packet will include an envelope to be used to gather donations from your precinct. Pass it around and read the following Buck Bag “ask”:

“The Democratic Party of Denver is tasked with organizing and funding important grass roots activities including tonight’s caucus and the upcoming county assembly/convention. We also pay monthly rent and utilities, copying costs, expenses for the rental of facilities to hold caucus and assembly, costs for printing GOTV flyers, not to mention expenses for phones and computers that help us keep you informed. The Democratic Party of Denver is funded solely on donations from YOU. We do not receive money from the national or state Democratic parties. Please donate tonight to the Denver Democrats.

"Please put your contribution in the envelope, and write your name and the amount for campaign finance reporting purposes on the outside. Thank you in advance from the Denver Democrats."

Per party rules, in presidential election years, money donated at the precinct caucuses will be distributed as follows:

- (a) 20% goes to OUR district.
- (b) 20% goes to the County Party.
- (c) The remainder goes into a fund to help Denver’s delegates get to North Carolina for the National Convention.

So please be as generous as you can and remember to put your name and donation amount on the envelope.

#### **5. Take any desired straw polls**

Straw Polls are **UNOFFICIAL UNRECORDED** informational polls on contested races, such as a State House or Senate race. Straw polls are done by a show of hands only and cannot be recorded anywhere because it is an unofficial vote.

#### **6. Take the Preference Poll for United States President**

- A. **Take a straw poll first.** Read off each Presidential candidate’s name and have people raise their hand if they support that candidate. This vote is not recorded, and it is an open vote to allow all those present to gauge the level of support for their candidate. Remember that Uncommitted is treated as a candidate.
- B. **Take a recorded vote.** Repeat the procedure, this time write down the number of people who vote for each candidate Caucus Math Worksheet for Convention. Attendees are free to change their vote between the straw poll to the recorded vote, however no one may vote for more than one candidate in a single round of voting. A secret ballot will be used if requested by anyone. There is scrap paper available for ballots if needed.
- C. **Caucus Math Worksheet for Convention.** Follow the directions on the form. The Math Worksheet will give you the number of delegates (and alternates) to elect for each candidate who makes threshold.

**7. Report the Results of the Presidential Preference Poll**

Complete the reporting form and deliver it to the Site Coordinator.

**8. Take the Preference Poll for House District**

- A. **Take a straw poll first.** Read off each House District candidate's name and have people raise their hand if they support that candidate. This vote is not recorded, and it is an open vote to allow all those present to gauge the level of support for their candidate. Remember that Uncommitted is treated as a candidate.
- B. **Take a recorded vote.** Repeat the procedure but this time write down the number of people who vote for each candidate on the Caucus Math Worksheet for Assembly. Attendees are free to change their vote between the straw poll to the recorded vote, however no one may vote for more than one candidate in a single round of voting. A secret ballot will be used if requested by anyone. There is scrap paper available for ballots if needed.
- C. **Caucus Math Worksheet Assembly.** Follow the directions on that form. The Math Worksheet will give you the number of delegates (and alternates) to elect for each candidate who makes threshold.

**9. Elect Delegates and Alternates to the County Assembly**

Elect your Assembly delegates and Alternates based on the House District Representative Preference Poll. The total number of delegates and alternates that a precinct may elect for these will be printed on the front of the caucus packet and on the math worksheet. For every delegate elected, an alternate may also be elected. The County Assembly/Convention will be held on March 31 at Evie Garret Dennis School, at Green Valley Ranch Blvd and Telluride. Assembly delegates **MUST BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE ASSEMBLY**. No proxies are allowed. Please remind Delegates and Alternates that this meeting frequently lasts all day that that they will be voting multiple times during the day to nominate candidates to the General Assembly as well as selecting delegates to the State Assembly and the Congressional District Assembly.

**Delegates and Alternates to the County Assembly:**

- i. Using the Caucus Math Step by Step instructions, apportion the number of delegates and alternates allotted to each candidate based on the House District Representative Preference Poll. For every delegate slot there will be an alternate slot.
- ii. Divide the precinct into groups of supporters for each candidate including "uncommitted" (which is treated as a candidate) if "uncommitted" met the threshold (again refer to the Caucus Math Worksheet if this is unclear). Each group will elect from among its members the appropriate number of delegates and alternates. Caucus attendees whose candidate did not achieve threshold may join any other group.

**Delegate Selection Procedure:**

- a. If more people wish to be a delegate to the County Assembly than the number of delegates and alternates apportioned for a given candidate, a system of choosing by lot or an election may be used to determine who will be delegates and who will be alternates. It is up to the body to decide if they want to elect their delegates or choose them by lot.
- b. Caucus attendees who were not selected by the previous procedure are free to ask to be considered as a delegate or alternate for another candidate by that candidate's group of

supporters. It will be up to that group whether to elect them as a delegate, alternate, or not at all.

**VERY IMPORTANT: On the Caucus Report Form, the secretary must record the following information for everyone elected as a delegate or alternate: name, email or phone, and which candidate they are a delegate for (or Uncommitted) – if you have time to look up their VAN ID from the sign in sheet it will greatly assist in post caucus data entry!**

#### **10. Elect Delegates and Alternates to the County Convention**

Elect your Convention delegates and Alternates based on the Presidential Preference Poll. The total number of delegates and alternates that a precinct may elect for these will be printed on the front of the caucus packet and on the math worksheet. For every delegate elected, an alternate may also be elected. The County Assembly/Convention will be held on March 31 at Evie Garret Dennis School. County Convention delegates **MUST BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE CONVENTION**. No proxies are allowed. Please remind Delegates and Alternates that this meeting frequently lasts all day. Convention Delegates may be the same people elected to the County Assembly, but that is not required.

**Any person wishing to become a delegate to the National Convention must be PRESENT and MUST BE ELECTED AS A DELEGATE to the County Convention. There is also an application which must be submitted no later than 5 pm on March 15 to the Colorado Democratic Party.**

#### **Delegates and Alternates to the County Convention.**

- i. Using the Caucus Math Step by Step instructions, apportion the number of delegates and alternates allotted to each candidate based on the Presidential Poll. For every delegate slot there will be an alternate slot.
- ii. Divide the precinct into groups of supporters for each Presidential candidate including “uncommitted” (which is treated as a candidate) if “uncommitted” met the threshold (again refer to the Caucus Math Worksheet if this is unclear). Each group will elect from among its members the appropriate number of delegates and alternates. Caucus attendees whose candidate did not achieve threshold may join any other group.

#### **Delegate Selection Procedure:**

- a. If more people wish to be a delegate to the County Convention than the number of delegates and alternates apportioned for a given candidate, a system of choosing by lot or an election may be used to determine who will be delegates and who will be alternates. It is up to the body to decide if they want to elect their delegates or choose them by lot.
- b. Caucus attendees who were not selected by the previous procedure are free to ask to be considered as a delegate or alternate for another Presidential candidate by that candidate’s group of supporters. It will be up to that group whether to elect them as a delegate, alternate, or not at all.

**VERY IMPORTANT: On the Caucus Report Form, the secretary must record the following information for everyone elected as a delegate or alternate: name, email or phone, and which Presidential candidate they are a delegate for (or Uncommitted) – if you have time to look up their VAN ID from the sign in sheet it will greatly assist in post caucus data entry!**

### **11. Elect Two Precinct Committee People**

The Chair will solicit the names of anyone who wishes to be elected as Precinct Committee People. The Duties of a Committee Person are:

1. attending all meetings of the Central Committee, unless properly excused, by subdistrict officers,
2. supporting the nominees of the Party,
3. recruiting Party workers in the precincts and directing their Party activities within the precinct,
4. distribution, and/or supervising the distribution of Party literature within the precinct,
5. conducting and/or causing to be conducted all drives and canvasses required by the Central and Executive Committees, within the precinct,
6. notifying all Democrats living in their precinct of the time, place and date of the precinct caucus, and
7. attending all meetings of the subdistrict.

Those in attendance will vote for two people. If more than two people express interest, the top two vote-getters will be elected. A person does not have to be present to be elected, but the Party desires to have people elected who will make the time commitment the position requires. Any tie votes will be determined by lot.

The Secretary will record the names, phone numbers, and emails of those who are elected on the Caucus Report Form.

### **12. Election Judges**

Election Judge forms will be in your packet, please have anyone who wishes to be an Election Judge complete a form and return it to the packet.

Election Judges are the people who work at the polling places on Election Day. They are paid a stipend for this work and will receive training. They must be able to commit to the entire day on Election Day from early in the morning until well into the evening as well as a few hours for training.

### **13. Resolutions**

Resolutions are ideas that, if successful throughout the process, will eventually be incorporated into the Party Platform. Each resolution, or set of resolutions, must receive a majority (50%+1 vote) of the votes being cast to be considered for inclusion in the County Platform.

Attached are platform planks that have been drafted by the Platform Committee of the Democratic Party of Denver through discussions with the House Districts. This document was developed to be used as a guide for the March 6, 2012 caucuses.

Each caucus can adopt this guide in its entirety or may add or change the content. If your caucus wishes to take a vote on each plank, there is space provided for that. If your caucus wishes to accept or reject a group of planks, please put that information in the comment section of the first plank in that section. There is space at the end to add comments or new planks.

This document, with its changes, will be handed into Democratic headquarters on caucus night, and changes citywide will constitute the final document to be presented to the Denver Democratic assembly for adoption and transmittal to the state party.

#### **14. Adjourn the Caucus**

The Chair should officially adjourn the Caucus and the Secretary will record the time of adjournment. The materials that **MUST** be in the Caucus packet before it is turned into the Site Coordinator are:

1. The Sign-In sheets.
  2. The Caucus Report Form. (Please double check it is filled out completely)
  3. The Caucus Math page
  4. Any resolutions that were passed. (Those that failed should be discarded)
  5. Sealed Buck Bag
- All forms to be returned are on white paper!

Please be a considerate guest!! Please help the end-of-night clean up by throwing away all trash. Any unwanted campaign literature, empty water bottles, etc., should be placed in recycle bins if available, and in trash cans if not.