

Justin Raffa, chair of the Elections Committee, Chris Tracy, chair of the 8th LD, and I, chair of the Benton County Dems have been working on updating and fine-tuning the goals and procedures for the Election Committee. It's a long piece but paragraphs 9-11 are the core of our work. We will be discussing this review at the next general meeting. Hopefully, there will be a vote on a final draft at the October meeting. Please come to the September meeting with a familiarity of this work.

Richard Reuther

The BCDCC has as one of its main goals the election of Democratic candidates for partisan offices in Benton County, in line with the mission of the Washington State Democratic Party. The Elections Committee seeks, develops, and recommends action on candidates who request recognition and support from the BCDCC by way of a documented mechanism for vetting candidates. All Committee recommendations are submitted to BCDCC for official action. Requests may also originate from the floor at a BCDCC monthly meeting by any voting member. A simple majority vote is required.

The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the BCDCC Chair after the reorganization meeting or when the position is vacant. The Chair of the Committee will appoint a minimum of four (4) additional Committee members to serve each year. The BCDCC Chair serves as an Ex Officio member of the Committee.

Regular meetings of the Committee will commence shortly after Filling Week each year so that review of Policies and Procedures are clear and mutually understood by the members of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee will determine the method of reviewing and recommending action on the candidate's request in consultation with members of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee or two or more members of the Committee may request a meeting of the Committee at any time.

Candidates requesting recognition and support from the BCDCC are required to meet with the Elections Committee and answer questions the Committee has predetermined for that election cycle. The Committee shall make every effort to contact Democratic candidates who have filed for office and urge them to schedule a meeting in a timely manner so that action by the BCDCC can be taken at the appropriate monthly meeting.

A majority affirmative vote by the members of the Committee is required for a recommendation to certify or endorse. A candidate can be certified and/or endorsed by the BCDCC even if another candidate for the same position has been certified and/or endorsed by the BCDCC.

Understanding that candidates for partisan office in Washington state may declare a political party preference without any official backing of said party, the Committee may authorize certification of a candidate who requests recognition by the BCDCC, especially if that candidate is an unknown entity to the BCDCC membership. The candidate must hold a meeting with the Committee to certify the candidate as a Democrat. Certification does not mean the candidate has been endorsed by the BCDCC. More than one candidate for an office may be certified. Certification may take place prior to the Primary Election.

Endorsement is granted to a candidate who requests official support from the BCDCC. They must hold a meeting with the Committee who will determine if the candidate is considered to be a strong Democrat with a proven record demonstrating Democratic principles and values and is a viable candidate for the office sought. A recommendation of the Committee is then shared with the BCDCC for their consideration who will take final action on the matter. More than one candidate for an office may be endorsed. Endorsement may take place prior to the Primary Election.

A candidate may request reconsideration of a request for certification or endorsement after supplying additional pertinent information following the initial meeting with the Committee.

BCDCC has long held the position of not making endorsements of candidates running for nonpartisan offices. The Committee may however determine that an exception to this position is warranted, especially if a candidate expresses a desire for endorsement.

Understanding the landscape of politics in Eastern Washington and in particular that of Benton County, in the event that no Democratic party candidates have filed for a particular race in the county, the Committee will research all declared candidates to determine which most closely aligns with Democratic principles and values. This may include holding Committee meetings with candidates of other political parties. The Committee may not make a recommendation to the BCDCC to endorse a candidate who is not a Democrat.

Any candidate who is not a Democratic party affiliate has the option of requesting time during a BCDCC monthly membership meeting to address the body and answer questions. The BCDCC Chair will ultimately decide whether or not to grant such a request.

The endorsement of the BCDCC holds integrity and value. While this endorsement may only be granted to Democrats, an endorsement is not automatic or guaranteed for Democratic party candidates, even if they are the sole declared Democratic candidate in a race. All candidates must undergo the Committee's process and ultimately win an endorsement by vote of the BCDCC.