

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the **Stonewall Democrats of SW Florida**.

Section 2. Mission Statement

The *Stonewall Democrats of SW Florida* is devoted to advancing equal rights for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The *Stonewall Democrats of SW Florida* supports the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates who support our mission. It draws its strength from a nationwide network of individuals and clubs composed of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Democrats who are working to realize these goals:

- To educate the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community, and people who are supportive of it, about the vast differences that exist between the two major parties on the issues of concern to our community;
- To lead our party to improve its record on issues of importance to our community, and to work for the nomination of Democratic candidates from the local to the national level, including qualified openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender candidates, who will be fully supportive of our fight against bigotry and intolerance;
- To encourage our community to support and vote for Democratic candidates who are committed to defeating homophobia and prejudice; and
- To work with local gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Democratic clubs and individuals to encourage and foster the creation of new clubs.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Any registered Democrat subscribing to the purposes of the chapter, as described in the Mission Statement in Article I and complying with the provisions of these bylaws, and who is current in the payment of dues, may become a member.

Section 2. All members of the Chapter shall be entitled to hold office and participate in decisions and activities provided that they have been a member for at least thirty days.

Section 3. Individuals who are not registered as Democrats may become associates of the chapter. Associates are not eligible to vote in, hold a position with, or represent the chapter.

Section 4. Any member whose actions are judged by the majority of the Executive Board to be prejudicial or detrimental to the chapter may be expelled from the chapter, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at a called meeting of the chapter.

Section 5. Each member shall pay annual dues as set forth by the Board of Directors. Dues shall be renewed on the anniversary of the date the Member joined NSD.

Article III. Officers

Section 1. The elected officers of the chapter shall be President, 2 Co-Vice Presidents, Recording Secretary and Treasurer. Elected officers shall take office on the 8th day of May each year and hold office for one year, or until their successors are elected.

Section 2. The duties of the elected officers shall be as follows:

A. President / 2 Co-Vice Presidents. The President shall set the agenda for and preside over all meetings of the Executive Board and of the membership; appoint directors of the standing committees; appoint such other committees as may be deemed necessary; serve as the official representative of the club in public forums; make decisions for the club on policy when specifically empowered to do so by the Executive Board; advise the membership of pertinent matters affecting the welfare of the Democratic Party and the club; disburse funds of the club within limits set by the Executive Board; and act as Treasurer in the absence or inability of the Treasurer.

B. Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain a record of all meetings of the Executive Board and of the membership; be prepared to read the minutes of the previous meeting at the current meeting of the Executive Board or of the membership; receive and maintain in official club records the reports of elected officers, directors of standing committees and chairs of recognized caucuses; maintain a compendium of standing rules, resolutions and policies adopted by the Executive Board or the membership; handle membership correspondence, including membership renewal billings, and such correspondence as the President or Executive Board may direct; and perform such other duties as the President may direct.

C. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the club; receive and disburse funds of the club; prepare an annual budget of anticipated revenues and expenses; provide addenda to the budget as required; report the financial status of the club to the Executive Board on a regular basis; make an annual report to the membership; prepare and submit all required Political Action Committee reports on a timely basis; and provide all information necessary for periodic audits as may be directed by the Executive Board.

Article III - Elections

Section 1. Officers of the club shall be elected at a membership meeting to be scheduled during the month of April each year and assume office on the 8th day of May following election.

Section 2. Officers may be nominated in one of two ways, by the Nominating Committee or from the floor immediately prior to the voting for each office. The Nominating Committee shall report to the meeting that precedes the election meeting. Members shall be given at least one week's notice of both meetings.

Section 3. In developing its slate of nominees, the Nominating Committee shall make its best effort toward the attainment of a goal of having gender equity in the offices of President and Co-Vice Presidents and gender parity in all of the elected positions.

Section 4. The officers shall be elected individually. The election of officers shall be by secret ballot. To be elected a nominee must receive a majority of the votes cast for that office. If no nominee receives a majority on the first ballot, a runoff shall be held between the two nominees receiving the greatest number of votes. If there is only one nominee for an office, the ballot shall include a choice of no election for that office which shall be included in tabulating the votes cast.

Section 5. Nominees for election as officers of the club must have been dues-paid members for at least 90 days prior to taking office and must have been dues-paid members for at least twelve months out of the two years preceding the election.

Section 6. In the event a position is not filled in the annual election of officers or there is a vacancy because of resignation or removal, with the exception of President, a special election shall be held to fill the position according to the procedures for nominating and electing officers in the annual election. An officer elected in a special election shall take office immediately. When there is a vacancy in the office of President, the position shall be filled by the Executive Vice President and a special election shall be held to elect a new Executive Vice President.

Section 7. To be eligible to vote in any election, members must have been in good standing for at least 90 days prior to the election. For the election of Club officers only, absentee ballots shall be accepted from members who are eligible to vote but unable to attend the meeting at which the election is held. Policies and procedures for absentee balloting shall be prescribed by the Executive Board. For the election of Club officers, absentee ballots shall count toward a quorum.

Article IV - Executive Board

Section 1. The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers, the directors of the standing committees, and the immediate past president. The members of the Executive Board must be members in good standing of the Stonewall Democrats of SW Florida. The 2008 Executive Board is comprised of:

John Hawkins, President
Laura Griffin, Female Vice-President
Steve Sherman, Male Vice President
Lydia Lowell-Sherman, Secretary & Treasurer
David Seaton, Immediate Past President

Article V - Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of the membership shall be held at least four times each year, including a meeting during April for the purpose of electing club officers.

Section 2. A quorum for meetings shall be 10% of the members in good standing at the time of the meeting. Proxies shall not be valid at membership meetings. For the election of Club officers only, absentee ballots shall be accepted from members who are eligible to vote but are unable to attend the meeting at which the election is held. Policies and procedures for absentee balloting shall be prescribed by the Executive Board. For the election of Club officers, absentee ballots count toward a quorum.

Section 3. Notice shall be given to members of all meetings in a timely fashion.

Section 4. Meetings may be closed to non-members at the request of any member and the approval of two-thirds of the members present and voting.

Article VI - Amendments

Section 1. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at a membership meeting after the proposed amendment has been approved by majority vote at the preceding meeting. Two weeks' notice must be provided of each meeting.

❖ *These articles were ratified on April 8th, 2008 by a Quorum of the Membership.*