

Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus PAC
Standing Rules of Endorsement
(As amended by the membership on October 2nd 2024)

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ARTICLE I SCREENING COMMITTEE

1.01 LEADERSHIP: The Screening Committee shall consist of a Chair appointed by the President of The Caucus as Screening Chair, and members who have volunteered to serve on the panels tasked with conducting screening interviews with candidates. If more than one Screening Chair is appointed, the appointees shall serve as Screening Chairs.

1.02 MEMBERSHIP: Screening Committee members will be comprised of volunteers from among The Caucus membership. A member must be in good standing in order to serve on the Screening Committee.

1.03 REMOVAL: The Screening Chair(s), having informed the president, may remove a member of the Screening Committee where that member has acted in a manner contrary to these Standing Rules, including but not limited to where the member:

- a. has breached the requirements of Articles 1.03 and 4.09;
- b. has participated, or sought to participate, in a screening panel in contravention of Article 4.02.

ARTICLE II ELIGIBILITY FOR ENDORSEMENT

2.01 ELIGIBILITY: A candidate shall be eligible for endorsement only if they have completed all of the following:

- a. Filed a Treasurer Appointment with the appropriate filing authority that specifically identifies the office the candidate is seeking.
- b. Properly completed and submitted a candidate questionnaire within the parameters set forth by the Screening Committee.
- c. Appeared in person for a screening interview with a screening panel. In the case of statewide candidates, a candidate may appear by teleconference or video conference.

ARTICLE III SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRES

3.01 GENERAL: For each election cycle, the Screening Chair(s) & President, or Board shall promulgate screening questionnaires to be distributed to candidates. Efforts should be taken to make questionnaires as reasonably specific as possible to the office being sought.

3.02 EVALUATION: Questionnaires shall be written in a manner expected to reasonably evaluate the candidates' qualifications, knowledge of the office sought, electoral viability and support and understanding of LGBTQ+ issues.

3.03 CAMPAIGN FINANCES: Whenever possible, current campaign finance reports should be requested as part of the questionnaire to verify financial viability.

3.04 DEADLINE: Questionnaires are not to be accepted beyond the deadline imposed when they are issued to candidates, and a statement to that effect must appear conspicuously on the first page of the questionnaire. Any exception to the deadline must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board.

3.05 FORMAT: Return of completed questionnaires must be made in a format that will allow the information to be easily converted to a spreadsheet format. Questionnaire responses for all candidates in a particular race shall be compiled into a master spreadsheet that allows for review of multiple candidate responses simultaneously.

ARTICLE IV SCREENING INTERVIEWS

4.01 SCHEDULE: The Screening Chair shall promulgate a schedule of available screening times and assign members of the Committee to serve on screening panels.

4.02 COI: No person who is an employee, contractor or volunteer for any candidate will be permitted to serve on any screening panel for the same office as that being sought by said candidate, nor will any member who has expressed support for or endorsement of any particular candidate during the current election cycle. Support may include, but is not limited to: public statements of support, monetary or in-kind contributions, volunteerism, and posting of yard signs, handbills, bumper stickers or other political materials that would give the appearance of support.

4.03 ASSIGNMENTS: Screener assignments will be made by the Screening Chair or their designee. Screeners will not be permitted to request assignment to the screening of specific candidates or races.

4.04 ATTENDANCE: A member of the screening panel must be present to screen all candidates seeking endorsement in a single race. All candidate screening scores rendered by any screener who fails to do so will be discarded.

4.05 TIME: All candidates in a particular race will be allotted an equal amount of time during which to be interviewed.

4.06 CAMPAIGN STAFF: Candidates will be permitted to be accompanied during the screening interview by no more than one (1) campaign staff member. Campaign staff will not be permitted to participate in the screening, except to directly advise the candidate on campaign matters. Screening panel members will not directly address campaign staff.

4.07 SCORING: At the conclusion of each candidate interview, screeners shall complete a scoring sheet for the candidate that evaluates the candidate's questionnaire responses and overall interview performance. Once all candidates have been screened in a particular race, the screening panel will determine which candidate shall be recommended for endorsement.

4.08 PRESIDENT: The Caucus President may not participate in screening interviews.

4.09 CONFIDENTIALITY: All communications, actions, and deliberations made by the screening committee are to remain confidential.

4.10 EQUALITY: In keeping with the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus PAC's position regarding equality and equal rights; the recommendations of the

committee will be made without regard to the sex, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, familial status, marital status, military status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or pregnancy of candidates.

ARTICLE V ENDORSEMENTS

5.01 OBLIGATION: The Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus PAC shall not be obligated to endorse in any race.

5.02 NOTICE: Endorsements may only be made at regular meeting of The Caucus PAC, or at a special meeting called with a minimum seven (7) days prior notice.

5.03 VOTING: Only members in good standing who have been members for a minimum of thirty (30) days will be authorized to vote for endorsements. Each eligible voter shall be given an approved credential to be displayed upon casting a vote.

5.04 AUTHORITY: The endorsement meeting shall be conducted in a manner consistent with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised and these Standing Rules. In such instances wherein, conflict exists between Robert's Rules and the Standing Rules, the Standing Rules shall prevail.

5.05 RESERVED: Reserved.

5.06 SCREENING RECCOMENDATION: Out of respect and appreciation for the contributions and efforts of the volunteer Screening Committee, upon a vote to endorse in a particular race, a majority vote will be taken to affirm the recommendation of the Screening Committee as the endorsed candidate. Should the recommended candidate fail to be affirmed for endorsement, nominations will be taken from the floor for endorsement and subject to a majority vote. **5.07**

CANDIDATES: Candidates shall not be permitted to be present during discussion and voting in their particular race. In the event a candidate is recommended or otherwise nominated for endorsement and is a member in good standing and eligible to vote, a single vote will be added on their behalf to the tally in their favor.

5.08 MONITOR: Candidates may designate an individual to monitor the counting of votes for endorsements in their race.

5.09 NO ENDORSEMENT: In the event no eligible nominated candidate receives a majority of the votes cast for a particular race, The Caucus will not endorse in that race.

5.10 TIE: The Caucus President shall not cast a vote except to break a tie.

5.11 PUBLIC FORUM: In any such race, The Caucus may host a public forum for the benefit its membership and the general public. For the purpose of this section a vote of “no endorsement” will be considered an endorsement.

5.12 MOTION TO AMEND: A motion to amend a “motion to endorse” which, in effect, changes the individual to be endorsed is out of order. Likewise, a motion to substitute a motion to endorse with a motion to endorse a different candidate is out of order.”

5.13 Discussions of Propositions, Amendments, and Bonds at Endorsement Meeting: Members who would like for the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus to take a position regarding an amendment, a proposition, or a bond please follow the following procedures:

- a. Please prepare a brief that details your rationale for The Caucus to take your proposed position on the amendment/proposition/bond.
- b. Your brief needs to include the amendment/proposition/bond number and/or wording if a number has not been assigned as of yet.
- c. The brief should be BRIEF, no more than 250 words and only on one page.
- d. You may submit multiple proposals, but each proposal must be separate.
- e. You must bring an appropriate number of copies of your brief to be distributed to the membership in order for your position to be considered for endorsement.

If the member satisfies the above procedures, they will be permitted to disseminate the documents AFTER the consideration and endorsement of candidates for elected offices during the Endorsement Meeting. The member will also be permitted to speak to the Caucus membership for two minutes regarding the position. The members will also be expected to take questions on the proposition, amendment, or bond from the membership. A vote on the propositions, amendments, and/or bonds by the Caucus membership will take place once all discussion is complete.

ARTICLE VI OBLIGATIONS OF ENDORSED CANDIDATES

6.01 REQUIREMENTS: Candidates receiving the endorsement of The Caucus PAC must agree to publicly acknowledge the endorsement by listing it in printed campaign literature that substantially promotes endorsements by other community or political organizations and on any web page that lists other organizations’ endorsements.

ARTICLE VII REVOCATION OF ENDORSEMENT

7.01 GENERAL: Any candidate who violates the obligations of endorsed candidates as set forth in Section 6 of these Standing Rules shall be subject to revocation of endorsement by a majority vote of The Caucus.

7.02 OFFICE: If an endorsed candidate files for a place on the ballot for an office different than that for which they were endorsed, the endorsement shall become immediately null and void.

7.03 FALSE INFORMATION: Any candidate found to have knowingly or willingly presented false or intentionally misleading information on the questionnaire or during the screening interview shall be subject to revocation of endorsement by a majority vote of The Caucus.

7.04 RESCINDED ENDORSEMENT: The Caucus reserves the right to endorse a different candidate in any race for which the previous endorsement has been rescinded.

7.05 LOSE OF ENDORSEMENT: After the organization has endorsed a candidate, the organization may not revoke, rescind, annul or otherwise withdraw the endorsement during the course of the election, except in accordance with Articles 7.01 or 7.03, or where the candidate or the candidate's campaign has:

- a. willingly, knowingly or recklessly failed to disclose information that would have been likely to have been a factor in the Screening Committee's or The Caucus's deliberations about whether to endorse the candidate;
- b. willingly, knowingly or recklessly acted in a manner contrary to the terms and conditions on which the candidate agreed to accept The Caucus's endorsement;
- c. made any public statement or taken any action that reflects discriminatory intent against people of any sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or any other immutable quality;
- d. publicly disavowed the endorsement of Caucus; or in the event any of (a) to (c) above apply, the endorsement may be revoked by a majority vote at a meeting of The Caucus PAC. In the event (d) applies The Caucus board may revoke the endorsement by a majority vote."