

Georgia Green Party Convention Process

The by-laws (adopted Saturday, May 4, 1996) of the Georgia Green Party provide:

IV. Decision Making

B. Democratic Decision Making Process

The Georgia Green Party and its Coordinating Council, Quick Decision Council, committees and other sub-groupings shall seek consensus on all matters put before them. The Georgia Green Party shall use those rules adopted on December 8, 1995 at the founding meeting of the Georgia Green Party Organizing Committee unless subsequently amended; and its various parts may provide for their own democratic rules of process for reaching decisions when consensus can not be achieved. The judgement of whether an adopted process is in fact democratic shall rest with the membership at an Annual Convention, if the process was challenged and then sustained by a simple majority. The membership is encouraged to utilize the processes outlined in C.T. Butler's [On Conflict and Consensus](#) published by Food Not Bombs Publishing, Room 306-35; 1430 Massachusetts Avenue; Cambridge MA 02138; 617/864-8786.

The founding gathering of the Georgia Green Party Organizing Committee on December 8, 1995 adopted by consensus the following rules on decision making process:

I. Roles serving the meeting

Before beginning discussion on any substantive business, the Georgia Green Party Organizing Committee shall agree on a facilitation team to serve the Committee in the conduct of its business. At a minimum, such a team shall consist of two co-facilitators, a note-taker and a timekeeper. Either co-facilitator or any member of the Committee may call for a public scribe or a vibes-watcher should the need for such roles arise.

The note-taker shall record a list of those people present, whether they are organizational delegates, individual participants, or observers; the adopted agenda; each adopted process proposal; all substantive proposals made to the Committee, any concerns raised, amendments offered, whether those amendments are accepted as friendly, adopted or rejected; all agreements and votes; the time of convening and adjourning; and other information relevant to the business of the Committee.

II. The agenda

Before taking up any substantive business, the Georgia Green Party Organizing Committee shall agree on an agenda, including topics to be discussed, and time limits on each topic. Once adopted, an agenda may be amended by agreement of the

Committee. Proposals failing to achieve agreement before the time allotted for that item lapses, shall be considered blocked, unless they have been assigned to a committee for further development.

III. Decision Making Process

A) The Georgia Green Party Organizing Committee shall strive to reach consensus on questions before the committee. When consensus is reached on a proposal, the agreement shall be read back to the Committee by the note-taker. Any outstanding concerns (raised by members who choose to stand-aside to allow consensus) shall be recorded in the minutes with the record of the decision.

B) Should a Committee member choose not to stand-aside with an outstanding concern, and on the motion of the author of a proposal, the facilitator shall put the question to the Committee as to whether the Committee sees the concern as one blocking agreement. If the concern is seen as a blocking concern by 33% or more of the Committee, the proposal shall be considered blocked. This shall be noted in the minutes along with the vote on the question of whether the concern was considered a blocking concern.

C) When consensus can not be reached, and a majority of the Committee agrees to the author's process motion to put a question to a vote, then the Facilitator shall put the question to a vote and a super-majority of 66% shall be required for passage of substantive proposals.

D) For each agenda item, the facilitators shall propose a process with which to begin discussion. If the process proposal is heard without objection, the proposed process shall govern the discussion. If an objection is voiced, the facilitator shall open the floor to hear only process proposals. The facilitator shall limit such a process discussion to not more than ten minutes and shall limit each speaker to not more than thirty seconds. At the end of such a discussion, each process proposal shall be considered until a proposal passes. The first process proposal to be considered shall be the last substitute motion made, and so on, until the original process motion is considered. If no process proposal achieves agreement, the facilitator shall reopen discussion on the process. On all questions of process, a simple majority shall be needed to adopt a proposed process.

IV. Order of Business

When the committee meets in plenary, it is encouraged to conduct its business in the following order:

- 1) select and affirm a facilitation team
- 2) review and approve a proposed agenda
- 3) conduct its business; deciding first on a process for each item
- 4) evaluate its style of work

5) adjourn

V. Precedence of Motions

When the Committee is meeting, the following precedence shall apply to these motions, such that no discussion on the agenda topic shall be allowed until there is agreement on the process for the discussion; and so that no discussion on the process shall be allowed until all Points of Personal Privilege have been heard. The facilitators are encouraged to rule out-of-order a Point of Personal Privilege which is raised to obstruct deliberations rather than facilitate everyone's full attention to the deliberations.

- 1) Point of Personal Privilege
- 2) Point of Process
- 3) Discussion on the topic

VI. Stacks, time limits, gender balance

At the beginning of discussion on an issue, the facilitator shall, with the assistance of the timekeeper, state the time limits agreed to for an agenda item and suggest a time limit for each speaker. If no objection is raised or if a process motion to amend the proposed time limit is adopted, then each speaker shall be limited to the agreed to time limit. The co-facilitators shall work together to maintain a stack of those members wishing to speak. Members in the stack shall be called upon woman/ man, woman/ man, rotating back and forth so as to maintain gender balance in the discussion. When there are no other women wishing to speak, the facilitator shall close discussion.