



MORRIS COUNTY REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE
2023 COUNTY CONVENTION RULES
MARCH 4, 2023

1. **Purpose.** This meeting of the Morris County Republican Committee (“MCRC”) is called for the purpose of the nomination and endorsement of candidates for election to the offices of New Jersey State Senate (21st, 24th, 25th and 26th Legislative Districts), New Jersey State Assembly (21st, 24th, 25th and 26th Districts), Morris County Clerk, and Morris County Commissioner by award of the MCRC slogan.
2. **Controlling Authority.** The conduct of the Convention will be governed by Article V of the Constitution & By-Laws of the Morris County Republican Committee (“By-Laws”) and the rules as set forth herein.
3. **Convention Chair.** The County Chair shall serve as the Convention Chair and may, in her discretion, appoint any persons and establish any Convention committees as she may deem necessary for the orderly operation and function of the Convention.
4. **Notice.** Proper notice of the Convention will be provided in accordance with the By-Laws of the Morris County Republican Committee.
5. **Qualification of Candidates.** Each person seeking the Convention’s endorsement and award of the slogan by the MCRC is required to have submitted a letter of intent, along with the requisite endorsements from voting members to the County Chair by not later than 22 days prior to the Convention, as specified in the notice of the Convention issued by the Chair. Endorsements from voting members must be submitted in the form prescribed by the County Chair, who shall transmit such form to the voting members no earlier than December 1 of the year preceding the Convention. A separate letter of intent and endorsement is required for each prospective candidate. No joint, group and/or other collective letters of intent or endorsement shall be accepted. Pursuant to Section V, Subsection I, of the By-Laws “[a] Member may only endorse one candidate for each office, except where there is more than one seat available for a specific elected office (e.g., New Jersey General Assembly and County Commissioner), in which case a member may endorse as many candidates as there are seats available.” Notwithstanding the foregoing, any voting member whose endorsement is submitted to the County Chair after the member’s endorsed candidate(s) has received the requisite number of Member Endorsements shall be entitled to endorse different candidate(s) for the same office.
 - a. The requirements for Member Endorsements are as follows:
 - i. **Open Seat.** When running as a candidate for any open seat in which there is no Republican incumbent, the candidate must obtain and submit Member Endorsements from ten (10) voting members of the County Committee with the letter of intent. No more than half of the County Committee Member

Endorsements required when running for an open seat can be from one municipality, except where a State or Federal District contains only one Morris County municipality and/or has fewer than fifty (50) Morris County Committee seats. For purposes of the 2023 MCRC Convention, only the two (2) State Assembly seats in 24th Legislative District shall be considered an “Open Seat”.

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ii. **County Office. (Morris County Commissioner and Morris County Clerk)** When running as a candidate for a County Office, either as a challenger or incumbent, the candidate must obtain and submit Member Endorsements from ten percent (10%) of the voting members of the County Committee with the letter of intent. No more than half of the County Committee Member Endorsements required when running for a County seat as an incumbent can be from one (1) municipality. No more than one-third of the County Committee Member Endorsements required when challenging an incumbent who holds a County seat can be from one (1) municipality.

iii. **State Legislative Office (Senate/Assembly).** When running as a candidate for the New Jersey State Legislature, either as a challenger or incumbent, the candidate must obtain and submit Member Endorsements from twenty percent (20%) of the voting members of the County Committee with the letter of intent. No more than half of the County Committee Member Endorsements required can be from one (1) municipality. In the event a State Legislative District includes fewer than fifty (50) Morris County Committee seats, then Member Endorsement of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of voting members of the district’s County Committee must be provided with the letter of intent.

b. Any person that fails to submit a letter of intent with the requisite Member Endorsements within the specified deadline, as specified in the notice issued by the Chair, shall not be eligible for the Convention’s endorsement as a candidate for office or awarded the slogan by the MCRC. No write-ins, nor nominations from the floor, shall be permitted for nomination or endorsement of any candidate for office by the MCRC.

c. Any candidate who wishes to withdraw a candidacy must notify the Chair in advance of the day of the Convention.

6. **Qualification of Voters.** In order to be eligible to vote at the Convention, Members must refer to Section V, Subsection B of the MCRC By-Laws which provides: All persons voting at the Convention must be registered Republicans, duly elected or appointed Members of the MCRC and certified by their respective Municipal Chairs by 12:00 p.m. on the twenty-second day preceding the Convention. The “Official Republican County Committee List” (the “Clerk’s List”) made and maintained by the Morris County Clerk’s Office, as it exists as of the aforementioned date, shall be final and determinative as to the Membership of the Committee for purposes of the Convention. Both prospective candidates for the Convention’s endorsement and Members of the County Committee **are strongly encouraged** to thoroughly review the Clerk’s List and resolve any potential discrepancies

with the same directly with the Morris County Clerk's Office prior to the time of the certification by the Municipal Chair. All credential disputes shall be submitted, in writing, to the MCRC Counsel and/or such other persons as may be designated by the Chair no later than five (5) days from the date of the Convention.

7. **Registration for Convention.** All Members must be qualified and registered to vote at the Convention. **Members** must register in-person at the Convention. **Registration for in-person shall open at 9:00 a.m. and shall close at 10:00 a.m.** All Members shall be required to present a valid government issued photo identification to register. If there is a question regarding the Members eligibility to vote, the MCRC Counsel may provide them with a provisional ballot as set for in Paragraph 8 below.

8. **Observers and Eligibility Determinations.** Each candidate may appointment one (1) Observer to be present at the registration table during the registration process at the time of the Convention, review any registrations of persons that registered for absentee or in-person voting, attend the ballot drawing held in advance of the Convention in accordance with Paragraph 9 of these Rules and inspect the vote counts in accordance with Paragraph 14 of these Rules. Any and all disputes on the part of, or on the behalf of, candidates with respect to registration, qualification, credentials or eligibility of voters shall be immediately brought to the attention of the MCRC Counsel, who, to the extent possible and practical, shall endeavor to render a decision as to such dispute in accordance with Paragraph 6 and prior to the commencement of voting. In the event there are any disputes, questions or other issues that arise with respect to qualification, credentials or eligibility of any voter that Counsel determines cannot be resolved prior to the Convention, or registration issues that cannot be resolved at the time of the Convention, a provisional ballot will be issued to the person, who will be permitted to cast a vote and, provided it has the potential to affect the result, a determination on the outstanding matter will be made at a later date. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, MCRC Counsel may, in his discretion, elect to halt the commencement of in-person voting pending withdrawal, resolution or consensus of the candidates as to any challenges or disputes.

9. **Balloting.** Whenever there shall be a contest for the Convention's endorsement of any candidate for office (i.e., more candidates than available seats), ballot position shall be determined by random drawing in advance of the Convention. Candidates shall be listed individually on the ballot. No bracketing or grouping shall be permitted. Prior to the Convention date, the Chair shall schedule a meeting with the candidates to conduct the ballot drawing for contested races. Each candidate in a contested race may designate one (1) Observer to attend the ballot drawing on their behalf as a witness. The ballot position for all uncontested races (i.e., where the candidate is running unopposed), shall be determined by the County Chair. **A Candidate Meeting will be held at no less than seven (7) days prior to the Convention, in the Chair's discretion, at the Morris County Republican Committee Headquarters with Candidates and designated Observers to review the Convention Rules with the Candidates, discuss any questions or concerns**

as to the Rules and procedures for the Convention and conduct the ballot drawing for the contested races.

10. **Nominations.** Each duly qualified candidate seeking the Convention's endorsement and award of the MCRC slogan must be nominated at the time of the Convention by a person of their choosing. Each nomination must also be seconded by a person other than the person that made the nomination. All nominations and seconds must be made by a Member of the MCRC residing in the candidate's area of representation. All candidates shall notify the County Chair of the names selected to make the nomination at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the Convention.
 - a. **Nomination Speeches Uncontested Office.** No nomination speech shall be permitted for an uncontested office and all uncontested candidates will be approved by acclamation.
 - b. **Nomination Speeches Contested Office.** For all contested offices, the person making the nomination shall be entitled to make a nomination speech, which shall be limited to one (1) minute.
 - c. **Seconds.** All seconds shall be by affirmation and no speech shall be allowed.
 - d. **Candidate Speeches.** After all nominations for each office are made, the Chair will invite each candidate for a contested office to come forward and address the Convention. Each such candidate shall be afforded up to three (3) minutes to address the Convention, provided that a candidate must be nominated and seconded in order to be entitled to address the Convention.

11. **Conduct of Voting.**
 - a. **General.**
 - i. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the certified voters shall constitute a quorum to conduct the business of the Convention.
 - ii. There shall be no proxy voting.
 - iii. There shall be no absentee voting, except that the Chair may, in her sole discretion, authorize a person, upon advance written request, to vote by absentee ballot for reasons related to illness, disability, religion, death or loss of a loved one or documented preplanned travel.
 - iv. No person shall be permitted to cast more than one (1) ballot, even if that person is entitled to vote in more than one (1) capacity.
 - v. For candidates for Congressional, State Assembly and State Senate offices, votes shall be cast by only those Members within their respective State

legislative district. Thus, in those places in which a portion of the municipality is included in a certain congressional/legislative district, only those Members that reside in the represented district shall be permitted to cast a vote for that office. Subject to the one (1) vote limitation provided above under iv of this subparagraph, the County Chair and Vice Chair shall each be entitled to cast one (1) at large vote for the candidate in each legislative district in accordance with Section V, Subsection F, Paragraph 4 and Section V, Section H, of the By-Laws as well as for County offices, if applicable, in accordance with Section V, Subsection E, Paragraph 3 of the By-Laws.

- vi. Except as may be necessitated or rendered unavoidable by the manner or circumstances of absentee or provisional voting or as otherwise authorized by the person by whom the vote was cast, the voting in contested races shall be by secret ballot and the secrecy of the votes shall be maintained. Notwithstanding that information about the votes or contents of completed ballots may be incidentally revealed to MCRC Counsel and/or other persons assisting with the voting process in the course of performance of their official duties, all such persons shall remain duty bound to preserve the confidentiality of the information entrusted to them, except as may otherwise be required by law or authorized by the voter.

b. Voting.

- i. Voting will take place at the voting machines and/or electronically. Balloting position will be determined in advance of the Convention pursuant to Paragraph 9 of these Rules.
- ii. To vote, all elected or appointed Members must present a valid government issued photo identification.
- iii. Voting will commence upon completion of the nomination process for in-person voting and confirmation of approval from MCRC Counsel and close on the casting of the last ballot or upon final call by the Chair.

c. Absentee Ballot Voting.

- i. Any absentee ballots authorized must be received no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the opening of the Convention; provided, however, that this rule may be relaxed in the sole discretion of the Chair.

d. Vote by Acclamation.

- i. Notwithstanding any provision in these Rules to the contrary, the use of voting or election by acclamation shall be used for any vote or election in which candidacy is unopposed or an issue to be decided is uncontested.

12. **Standard of Conduct.**

- a. This Convention is being held for an important purpose, to decide who the MCRC will endorse for the Republican nomination for New Jersey State Senate (21st, 24th, 25th and 26th Legislative Districts – one (1) Senator in each district), New Jersey State Assembly (21st, 24th, 25th and 26th Districts – two (2) Assembly Members in each District), Morris County Clerk and one (1) Commissioner on the Board of County Commissioners for the County of Morris. Everyone participating in this Convention in any manner will be held to the highest standard of conduct. Discipline for violation of these rules or applicable law will be at the sole discretion of the Chair.
- b. The Chair shall appoint a Sergeant of Arms to enforce decorum and the rules of the Convention as authorized pursuant to Section V, Subsection J of the MCRC By-Laws.

13. **Legal Counsel.** Each candidate may designate one (1) legal representative. Such legal representative shall be licensed to practice law in the State of New Jersey. Each candidate must identify his or her legal representative to the Convention Chair prior to the Call to Order. A candidate may not serve as his or her own legal representative.

14. **Counting of Votes.** The votes will be tabulated and reported by the Chair with the assistance of the MCRC Counsel, and such other persons as they may designate to assist in this process, which will include tabulations of the voting machines. All such duly designated Observers shall be permitted to inspect the voting machines after totals are announced.

15. **Authorization of the Use of Slogan.**

- a. **Multiple Seat Candidate Offices.** (All New Jersey State Assembly Offices for purposes of the 2023 MCRC Convention). For all multiple seat candidate offices, the candidate or candidates receiving a plurality of votes at the Convention shall be awarded the use of the official slogan (“Regular Republican Organization”) of the MCRC. For offices in which two (2) or more candidates shall be selected, such as State Assembly or County Commissioner in certain election cycles, the top two (2), in the case of State Assembly, or three (3) candidates, in the case of County Commissioner, receiving the greatest number of votes shall be awarded the use of the official slogan.
- b. **Single Seat Candidate Offices.** (All New Jersey State Senate, Morris County Commissioner and Morris County Clerk offices for purposes of the 2023 MCRC Convention). For all single seat candidate offices, the candidate must receive a majority vote (50% + 1) at the Convention to be awarded the use of the official slogan (“Regular Republican Organization”) of the MCRC. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, there shall be a second ballot between the two (2) candidates receiving the greatest number of votes on the first ballot.
- c. **Confirmation of Acceptance.** Within seven (7) days of the Convention, candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall notify the Chair of the intent to accept the

use of the official slogan. If any candidate declines to accept the official slogan, the slogan shall be awarded to the next highest vote getter. In the event no convention candidate accepts the slogan, the Chair, in her discretion, shall have the right to select a candidate.

16. **Appeals.** Any party challenging or aggrieved by any process or decision relative to qualification, selection, nomination, credentialing, endorsement, registration, eligibility or voting as it pertains to any candidate or voter or prospective voter may first appeal, in writing no later than forty-eight hours from the close of the Convention, to the elected Officers of the Committee, which shall investigate and rule, by majority vote, on any such appeal. Following the decision of the Committee Officers, any party in interest may appeal the decision to, and request a hearing thereon by, the MCRC Executive Board by service of a written request on the MCRC Chair and Counsel within twenty-four (24) hours of issuance of the decision of the Committee Officers. Said appeal shall be limited to the issues and record presented to the Committee Officers and shall contain a general statement of the specific decision from which the party is appealing and reasonably describe the basis upon which such decision is being contested. Upon receipt of such appeal, the Chair or the Chair's designee shall fix a time and place for such a hearing, which shall be no later than five (5) days from the date of receipt of the request, unless otherwise agreed. At the time of the hearing, the parties may be represented by counsel and shall be afforded full opportunity to be heard, challenge the basis of any facts, findings and/or reasons relied upon in support of the decision on appeal, present such evidence and testimony as appealing party may deem appropriate and otherwise show cause as to why the action, circumstances or decision by which the appealing party is aggrieved should not stand. Upon conclusion of such hearing and such closed or open session deliberation as the Chair, in consultation with Counsel, may determine to be appropriate, the MCRC Executive Board shall render a decision by majority vote within twenty-four (24) hours. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, MCRC Counsel and/or any other attorney representing the Committee Officers, Executive Board or County Committee in connection with an appeal shall be recused from voting on the matter under appeal.
17. **Candidate Material.** No Candidate-branded merchandise, palm cards and other handouts for distribution will be allowed at the Convention or the Convention premises.
18. **Media.** The County Chair shall, in her sole and absolute discretion, be responsible for determining the manner and process for publicizing and promotion of the Convention to the media. The County Chair shall appoint such persons or committees as she deems necessary to assist with any media related matters.
19. **Admission to the Convention.**
 - a. In addition to the Members of the Committee, Executive Committee and the appointed and elected Officers of the MCRC and any other persons expressly authorized pursuant to any provision of these Rules or the By-Laws, the candidates qualifying to seek the Convention's endorsement and award of the MCRC slogan by vote at the Convention shall be entitled to attend the Convention.

- b. Subject to the Convention Rules, By-Laws or the authorization and consent of the Chair, Officers and/or MCRC Counsel, the following persons may also be permitted to attend the Convention:
 - i. the designated legal, observe(s) and other campaign representatives of the candidates;
 - ii. all elected Republican Federal, State, County and Municipal serving any portion of Morris County or in the State of New Jersey and any invited guests or other persons authorized by the Chair shall be entitled to attend the Convention;
 - iii. persons serving by appointment on MCRC Committees or holding the titles or positions in those organizations referenced in the MCRC By-Laws and their members, including, but not limited to the New Jersey State Republican Committee, National Republican Committee, Morris County Women's Republican Club, Morris County Young Republicans, Morris County Teenage Republicans;
 - iv. any invited guests of the Chair or of the MCRC or of any such persons authorized by the Chair; and
 - v. any authorized member of the media pursuant to Paragraph 18 of these Rules.

20. **Relaxation.** These rules may be relaxed in the sole discretion of the Chair for good cause shown in the spirit of New Jersey election laws, the By-Laws and Constitution of the Morris County Republican Committee, and in the best tradition of this organization.

21. **Rules of Order.**

- a. The conduct and procedure of the Convention held by the MCRC shall be in accordance with these Rules and the By-Laws. In the event these Rules or the By-Laws are silent as to procedure and or conduct, Roberts Rules of Order may be used to resolve a dispute or conflict of any point not provided under these Rules or the By-Laws. Otherwise, any rules or parliamentary procedures for the conduct of the Convention provided under these Rules and the By-Laws will control. In no event shall Robert's Rules of Order be construed to circumvent the interpretative authority of the Chair, MCRC Counsel and/or the Rules Committee.
- b. These Rules are adopted subject to, and intended to be consistent with, any applicable By-Law. In the event of a conflict or inconsistency between any provision of these Rules and any applicable By-Law, such conflict shall be resolved in favor of the By-

Laws, except as otherwise required by law, and the provisions of these Rules shall be construed to be consistent with the same.

22. **Partial Invalidity.** If any provision, word and or any other part of these Rules shall be adjudged unenforceable in any way, the remaining aspects of these Rules shall survive as if the unenforceable provision was originally not included in these Rules and the remaining aspects of these Rules shall be read logically to further the purposes expressed herein until such time as these Rules may be amended.
23. **Candidate Pledge.** All candidates seeking the Convention's endorsement and award of the MCRC slogan must sign and deliver the following pledge to the Chair no later than the date of the Candidate Meeting:

I promise to abide by the foregoing Rules of the MCRC Convention.

[Candidate Name]

Dated: