

Violations of Procedures and Guidelines, and Other Departures from Normal Procedure [Submitted by Committee to Restore Green Values, August 18, 2017]

October - December 2016

Co-chair ignored volunteers when the positions of facilitator and treasurer fell vacant.

In October 2016, within one hour of Sean Friend's announcement that Tom Hall had resigned as treasurer, Robert Lee Worthey (one of our Green candidates in the November 2016 election) posted asking where to submit nominations for volunteers to take on the job. There was no response from Sean Friend or other officers. Co-Chair Bill Bartlett was being recalled, so under By-law 5.8 the Council probably should have been asked to appoint a treasurer. But there was no move to do that. In December 2016 Judy Harrington posted asking if any progress had been made to fill the vacancy, and Harry Hempy nominated himself. Again there was no effort to accept nominations. Ms. Merida posted that she and Dave Bell might decide to share the treasurer duties. That appears to be what occurred.

In November 2016, Brittany Hoover resigned as facilitator and Harry Hempy volunteered for the job the next day. Co-chair took over as facilitator instead. There is no specific by-law or guideline requiring that volunteers be considered for vacancies. However, Procedures and Guidelines 3.7 notes that "The GPCO co-chairs, after conferring together, can make a "good until challenged appointment" of a volunteer for a vacancy to any of the following positions: coalition representative; meeting facilitator or council facilitator; meeting agenda collector; press relations director; representative to a GPUS committee, other than the GPUS-CC; web master; archivist; state phone line minder, or any other nondecision-making position".

By-law 5.8 If a Green Party of Colorado officer's position is vacated in between official state meetings, the Council or both co-chairs in agreement may make a temporary appointment in the manner as specified in the Procedures and Guidelines until the next state meeting under consultation with each local.

Procedures and Guidelines 3.7 The GPCO co-chairs, after conferring together, can make a "good until challenged appointment" of a volunteer for a vacancy to any of the following positions: coalition representative; meeting facilitator or council facilitator; meeting agenda collector; press relations director; representative to a GPUS committee, other than the GPUS-CC; web master; archivist; state phone line minder, or any other nondecision-making position, with the following stipulations:

1. Notice will be given to the online GPCO Council within five days of the appointment, with a resume of the volunteer's qualifications to fill that position;
2. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO Council reports of work in their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;
3. The appointed representative will seek input from the GPCO Council related to their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;

4. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO co-chair at least two weeks notice of their intent to resign their position.
5. If any GPCO Council representative challenges an appointment, the appointment will be withdrawn and submitted to the council for a yes or no vote.

November 2016 and March 2017

Co-chair ignored challenges to her self-appointment as forum facilitator. This is a violation of Procedures and Guidelines 3.7, which requires that a challenged appointment be withdrawn and put to a vote.

After Brittany Hoover resigned as facilitator on November 18, 2016, Sean Friend announced on November 20, 2016, that Co-chair Andrea Merida had taken over as facilitator. On November 21, Harry Hempy objected. The self-appointment was not withdrawn. On November 21 and 22, 2016, Michael Haughey objected. The self-appointment was not withdrawn. On March 14, 2017, Judy Harrington challenged the self-appointment. It was not withdrawn. Co-chair replied that the proper procedure for challenging an appointment was to submit a proposal. That is incorrect. According to Procedures and Guidelines 3.7 sub-item 5, the appointment should be withdrawn and put to a vote of the council. (Submitting a proposal would have been ineffective anyway, because Ms. Merida was refusing to put up proposals with which she disagreed.)

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1. Notice will be given to the online GPCO Council within five days of the appointment, with a resume of the volunteer’s qualifications to fill that position;
2. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO Council reports of work in their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;
3. The appointed representative will seek input from the GPCO Council related to their position at least every two months or at intervals specified in a description of their position;
4. The appointed representative will provide to the GPCO co-chair at least two weeks notice of their intent to resign their position.
5. If any GPCO Council representative challenges an appointment, the appointment will be withdrawn and submitted to the council for a yes or no vote.

January - February 2017

Co-chair claimed that her nominal two-year term had to run for 24 months. Since the 2015 annual meeting had been in August, this meant that the 2017 annual meeting could not be held until August. A proposal was submitted containing the following explanation of historical precedent regarding the length of officer terms.

Historically, terms of GPCO officers have run from annual meeting to annual meeting. This amendment simply codifies past practice, going back at least to 2007. An explicit reference to the co-chair term in the minutes from the state meeting in 2007 can be found at <http://coloradogreenparty.org/about/history/gpco-2007-state-meeting-minutes/>.

The meeting was held June 23-24, 2007, in Carbondale, Colorado. On Saturday, June 23, after a decision to change the co-chair terms from two years (which they were at that time) to one year, the following is found in the meeting minutes.

[quote from the meeting minutes]

“11:15 a.m. Election of new state officers and national delegates and selection of webmaster and e-list manager Tom Kelly of the Arapahoe Greens and Dave Chandler of the Adams-Jefferson Greens volunteered to become co-chairs for the 07-08 term. Agreement seeking resulted in a consensus for Kelly and Chandler as state co-chairs for approximately one year, beginning June 23 and until the next annual state meeting. Dan Sage of the Arapahoe Greens volunteered to continue as state treasurer for the 07-09 term. Agreement seeking resulted in a consensus for Sage as treasurer for approximately two years, beginning June 23 and until the annual state meeting of 2009. Eric Fried of the Poudre Valley Greens volunteered to become state secretary for the 07-09 term. Agreement seeking resulted in a consensus for Fried as secretary for approximately two years, beginning June 23 and until the annual state meeting of 2009.”

This is an explicit description of a one-year term being approximately one year from the date of the election to the date of the following year's meeting. It is also an explicit description of a two-year term being approximately two years from the date of the election to the date of the meeting two years hence. Although the co-chair terms were reduced from two years to one year, the other offices continued with two-year terms, so both the one-year term and the two-year term are described in the minutes. The description of the term length is repeated for each office, so it does not seem to be a typo.

The 2008 meeting was held on May 3, so the nominal one-year term from the 2007 meeting (June 23) to the 2008 meeting (May 3) was approximately ten and a half months. The 2009 meeting was held in July by teleconference, no specific date available on the history page, so the nominal two-year term from the 2007 meeting (June 23) to the 2009 meeting (sometime in July) was several weeks longer than two years.

Co-chair Merida rejected this historical precedent and went to some lengths, partly described in the next entry, to delay and obstruct the proposal. The e-mail exchanges related to this proposal were submitted to the Accreditation Committee.

February - March 2017

Co-chair invented additional requirements before allowing proposals to be posted on the forum for agreement seeking between annual meetings. Specifically, she first refused to accept proposals from “any councilmember” as given in the Procedures and Guidelines and insisted that a representative and two additional members of a local chapter must sponsor a proposal. After a proposal meeting this requirement was submitted, she claimed that only local chapters could sponsor proposals, not the three chapter members she had insisted upon just weeks before. After a proposal meeting the local chapter requirement was submitted, she required that the local chapter vote to sponsor the proposal at a regular chapter meeting. This is a violation of Procedures and Guidelines 3.5.3, which specifies the requirements that must be met.

Procedures and Guidelines 3.5.3 The Council will discuss via email issues raised among its representatives or by any Green Party member who participates. Any councilmember or Committee may submit a proposal to the convener or facilitator for discussion. Appointed state representatives of local chapters will have the ability to make proposals to the State Council directly under the following conditions:

1. That the proposal be made by the representative and two more members of the local chapter, one of those members being an elected or appointed officer of that local chapter.
2. That the proposal be published on the local chapter’s listserv as soon as possible.
3. That the state representative making the proposal need not have written confirmation but simply email confirmation from the other two members making the proposal, and that copies of these emails be sent along to the State Council with the proposal.

February - July 2017

Co-chair stifled discussion of proposals on the forum, insisting that representatives vote yes or no. This is a violation of Procedures and Guidelines 3.5.4. For example, during agreement seeking on the first proposal of 2017, to recognize a new chapter, she posted “Michael, please keep your commentary to AGREE or DISAGREE” and “The content of the [the chapter’s] bylaws is not up for discussion”.

Procedures and Guidelines 3.5.4 Proposals for ACTION will be called by the current convener/facilitator, who will announce a week period of Consensus discussion of a proposal. During that week, members may discuss the proposal, express support for the proposal by saying “I agree with this proposal,” or may express concerns or blocking concerns by stating their concern, or may offer amendments.

August 2017

Co-chair refused to allow certain proposals sponsored by at six individuals at large to be added to the agenda of the state meeting. This is a violation of Procedures and Guidelines 3.2.5.

Procedures and Guidelines 3.2.5 Proposals brought to the agenda of a state meeting must be made by local chapters or **a minimum of 5 individuals at large**, by the Council, or by any Officer of the GPCO. A written statement of the proposal must be sent to the Council by a representative of the sponsoring local, or by a member at large accompanied by evidence of at least 4 other member's endorsements. The statement and evidence may be done by email or on paper.

August 2017

Co-chair added or allowed someone else to add two alternate delegate positions on the election ballot without announcing them to the membership in advance, and put or allowed someone else to put her name as a candidate for these unannounced positions. Only two candidates, Andrea Merida and Karyna Lemus, ran for these two positions, ensuring that both of them would be elected. Restore Green Values would have nominated candidates for these openings if the openings had been announced.