

ENDORSEMENT POLICY – LOCAL NONPARTISAN OFFICES

1. **Purpose:** a system of endorsement that will enable the Republicans of Rockingham County to unite our party apparatus and voting power around a single candidate in every local nonpartisan race and, in so doing, ensure that only men and women who believe in the Virginia Republican Creed—and not Democrats, liberals, or progressives—serve as our elected officials.
2. **General**
 - a. The Endorsement Process shall be applied to the following nonpartisan offices, none of which require or allow the Republican Party to submit a nominated candidate to the Voter Registrar: Soil & Water Conservation District Director, School Board Member, Town Council Member, Town Mayor.
 - b. This process shall be used regardless of the incumbency status of any candidate.
 - c. The Magisterial District Committees shall conduct this endorsement process except for the office of Soil & Water Conservation District Director, which the County Committee shall conduct.
3. **Endorsement Process**
 - a. **Application for Endorsement**
 - i. No earlier than January 1 of the election year and up until April 1, the District Chair shall accept applications from candidates declaring an intent to seek the Republican Endorsement (Appendix A).
 1. The District Chair shall send the list of candidates who have submitted an application to the County Chair, who shall notify all County Committee members of prospective endorsees in each District.
 - ii. If no applications have been received by April 1, or no endorsements have been made by April 30, the District Chair shall remain obligated to conduct this process in full but is released from all time and date restrictions with the exception of the following:
 1. If any applications have been received by April 1, no additional applications shall be accepted during the month of April
 2. If an application is received after April 1, the District Chair must begin execution of this process within 14 days of receipt.
 - iii. A candidate who, having properly filed an application, publicly supports or runs as a candidate in opposition to a Republican Nominee or Republican Endorsed candidate during that election year shall not be qualified for participation in party actions, committees, or nominating processes for a period of four years.
 1. This penalty shall be assessed and recorded by a majority vote of the County Executive Committee during the election year in which an infraction was committed.

b. Vetting Applicants

- i. Beginning no earlier than April 2 of the election year, the District shall vet each candidate by issuing a Candidate Questionnaire (Appendix B) and conducting an in person interview. Each candidate shall submit the Questionnaire in writing to the District Chair prior to their interview.
 - 1. The submitted Questionnaire shall only be made available to the interview panel described below and the County Executive Committee.
- ii. A panel chaired by the District Chair, or their designee, shall conduct an in person interview with each candidate.
 - 1. All residents of the District who are full members in good standing of the Rockingham County Republican Committee shall be invited to sit as members of the panel.

c. Vote to Endorse

- i. The District shall hold a vote to endorse no earlier than April 10 and no later than April 30 of the election year.
- ii. The District Chair shall notify the County Secretary of the date, time, and location of the vote to endorse. No less than seven days in advance of the event, the County Secretary shall issue a notification to all District members in good standing.
- iii. Those eligible to vote shall be all residents of the District who are full members in good standing of the Rockingham County Republican Committee with voting rights as prescribed by the bylaws.
- iv. The vote to endorse shall be conducted via secret ballot of those present.
 - 1. The ballot shall include "*None of these candidates*" as an option.
- v. The candidate who earns a majority of the votes shall receive the Republican Endorsement for the office they are seeking and all the rights, privileges, and benefits thereof.
 - 1. If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, the candidate with the lowest vote total shall be dropped and another vote conducted until one candidate, or *None of these candidates*, receives a majority.
 - 2. Upon a successful majority, the District Chair shall notify the County Chair of the official result.

d. Privileges of Endorsement.

- i. Republican Endorsed candidates – and *only* Republican Endorsed candidates - will have exclusive access to all party support systems. Where there is an endorsed candidate and unendorsed candidates running for the same office, the unendorsed candidates will have no access, direct or indirect, to any party support system, to include financial support. No officer or member of the

District or County Committees will directly or indirectly make available services paid for, provided by, or otherwise organized under the auspices of the Rockingham County Republican Party or any Magisterial District Committee to any unendorsed candidate in an election with an endorsed candidate.

- ii. The Republican Endorsed candidate shall be allowed the opportunity to speak at every District or County event between the endorsement and the election day.
- iii. The County Chair shall draft a press release in the form of a document/flyer/poster and transmit it to the County email distribution list, local newspapers, and local TV and radio stations to announce the endorsement.
- iv. The Republican Endorsed candidate may submit campaign literature to the designated point of contact for approval and posting on the Rockingham County Republican Committee website and social media accounts.
- v. The Republican Endorsed candidate may make materials (e.g. literature, bumper stickers, yard signs, etc.) available for distribution through the Rockingham County Republican Committee Headquarters or other designated locations.

e. Revocation of Endorsement

- i. The power to revoke an endorsement shall rest with a majority vote of the County Executive Committee.
- ii. A properly made and seconded motion to revoke an endorsement may only be made under extreme circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Answers to the Candidate Questionnaire are found to be false, misleading, or dishonest.
 - 2. Any conduct unbecoming of a Republican candidate for office and/or notable public display of questionable character.
 - 3. Any disparaging remarks about other Republican nominees, endorsed candidates, or office holders who are not seeking or holding the office for which the endorsed candidate is running.
 - 4. Endorsing, publicly supporting, or financially contributing to an opposing candidate in any race where there is a Republican Endorsed candidate or Republican Nominee.
 - 5. The Endorsed Candidate provides notification in writing that they are withdrawing from the race

4. Other

- a. All Magisterial District Committees shall use and adhere to this process unless:
 - i. By March 1 of the election year the District Chair requests in writing that the County Committee take responsibility for the endorsement process because there is not a functioning district apparatus capable of executing the process. In that case, each reference to “District, District Committee, District Chair, etc.” in the Endorsement Process shall be substituted with “County, County Committee,

County Chair, etc.”

- b. If a Magisterial District Chair or County Chair is seeking the office that is being considered for endorsement a Vice Chair, or a designee of the Chair with the concurrence of the County Executive Committee if the Vice Chair position is vacant, shall conduct the process.
- c. If multiple at large seats are open in one jurisdiction (e.g. town council) in the same election year, voting members may cast up to as many votes as seats are open. A candidate must receive a majority of the total number of voting members in attendance to earn an endorsement.

APPENDIX A – APPLICATION FOR ENDORSEMENT

DATE OF SUBMISSION: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE AT THIS ADDRESS? _____ MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

I am declaring an intent to seek the Republican Endorsement for the following office and wish to participate in the vetting process by answering a questionnaire and sitting for an in person interview:

OFFICE: _____ ELECTION YEAR: _____

1. I declare that I am a Republican and that I believe in the Virginia Republican Creed, which states:
 - That the free enterprise system is the most productive supplier of human needs and economic justice.
 - That all individuals are entitled to equal rights, justice, and opportunities and should assume their responsibilities as citizens in a free society.
 - That fiscal responsibility and budgetary restraints must be exercised at all levels of government.
 - That the Federal Government must preserve individual liberty by observing Constitutional limitations.
 - That peace is best preserved through a strong national defense.
 - That faith in God, as recognized by our Founding Fathers is essential to the moral fiber of the Nation.

INITIAL: _____

2. I agree to support all Republican Nominees and Republican Endorsed candidates at all levels during this election year.

INITIAL: _____

3. I understand that if I publicly support or run as a candidate in opposition to a Republican Nominee or Republican Endorsed candidate this election year—including the office for which I am seeking an endorsement should I not receive it—I shall not be qualified for participation in party actions, committees, or nominating processes for a period of four years.

INITIAL: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR SUBMISSION:

Visit <https://www.rockinghamcovagop.com/> to find the contact information for the County Chair / your Magisterial District Chair OR request it by contacting rockinghamcountyvarepublicans@gmail.com

APPENDIX B – CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **Reason for Running:** Why are you running for this office?
2. **Priorities if Elected:** What are specific things you would like to accomplish in office if elected?
3. **Philosophy of Governance:** You are requesting endorsement for a position that sets policy, oversees the expenditure of taxpayer dollars, adheres to codified procedures, and coordinates with other government agencies and the public. Can you tell us about your philosophy of governance?
4. **Qualifications:** What professional/occupational/personal experience do you consider relevant to your capability to run for and competently hold the office for which you are requesting an endorsement?

APPENDIX B CONTINUATION SHEET – USE THIS SPACE IF NEEDED

QUESTION _____. _____:

QUESTION _____. _____:

QUESTION _____. _____: