

Democratic Municipal Committee of Somerville Borough
Somerset County, New Jersey
BYLAWS

Adopted 3/16/25

ARTICLE I NAME

These Bylaws shall govern the organization known as the “Democratic Municipal Committee of Somerville Borough,” hereinafter referred to as the “Municipal Committee.”

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of the Municipal Committee shall be to promote the welfare and progress of the official Democratic Party of Somerville Borough and to advance the welfare and progress of the people of Somerville Borough.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

Section 1

The initial membership of the Municipal Committee shall consist of those persons duly elected and certified as Municipal Committee people in the June primary election, including those persons elected by write-in vote who have expressed in writing their intention to serve. Duties and Responsibilities for Municipal Committee members are appended to these bylaws for reference. Vacancies of a committee person may be filled by the Municipal Committee with a majority vote of members present. A resignation of a committee person must be signed in writing or sent electronically to the Municipal Chair.

Section 2

The biennial reorganization meeting shall be held within a week following Primary day when County Committee persons are elected, at a time and place determined by the Municipal Chair or the highest ranking officer of the Municipal Committee at the time of the primary election and communicated in writing to all newly elected committee persons. Until the election of the chair, the meeting shall be conducted by the highest previous officer present who is not a candidate for the chair (hereinafter referred to as presiding chair). Any member of the public, including press, shall be allowed to attend but not participate except as described below. Recording devices are allowed if their use does not interfere with the business of the committee.

The first order of business shall be to be the calling of the roll of initial members as specified in Section 1 above.

The second order of business shall be to enact bylaws. Bylaws need a 2/3 vote of committee members present to go into effect.

The third order of business shall be for the members to elect a Chair as follows. The presiding chair shall call for nominations by name only. After the chair asks for additional nominations and there is no response, a motion to close nominations is in order. The nominees may speak on their own behalf for 3 minutes. The order of speaking shall be by coin toss or alphabetical order if there are more than two nominees. If there are two or fewer nominations the nominees may each select two people to speak, for three minutes each, on their behalf. If there are more than two nominees, then there shall be one speaker for each nominee. The order of speaking shall be the reverse of the order in which the nominees spoke.

When more than two candidates run for any office, if no one candidate receives a majority of the vote then the two persons with the highest vote shall have a run-off. No additional speeches shall precede that vote. Officers, including the chair, need not be elected committee members.

The newly elected Chair shall then conduct the remainder of the meeting, including the election of other officers in the same manner as described above, except that there shall be no additional speakers other than the nominees, and if uncontested, the election may be by acclamation; and any other business that may properly come before the Municipal Committee.

Section 3

In addition to the biennial reorganization meeting, at least five regular meetings shall be held during the year. In years in which a municipal election occurs, endorsements shall be made at the first meeting after the Primary. The Municipal Chair shall schedule the time and place of the meetings. Meetings can be conducted in a virtual manner due to extenuating circumstances. Such determinations will be made by the Municipal Chair.

Any committee person may move to exclude from committee meetings, other than the reorganization meeting, all persons other than elected or designated committee people and ex officio members.

Section 4

Special meetings may be called by the Municipal Chair or upon petition of three Committeepersons, with reasonable written or electronic notice delivered to Committeepersons at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. The notice for a special meeting shall specify the purpose for which the meeting is called.

If a vacancy arises on the Borough Council, a special meeting of the Municipal Committee will be called for a date five days or less before the deadline for submission of nominees to fill the vacancy. Providing that a special meeting has been duly noticed according to section 4, no quorum shall be required.

Section 5

A quorum shall be one half of the duly elected or designated Municipal Committee people. A lesser number may adjourn a meeting to a fixed date and time, that cannot be less than 72 hours from the time of adjournment, with written or electronic notice delivered to absent members. At the adjourned meeting no quorum shall be required. The business at an adjourned meeting shall be limited to the purposes outlined in the notice for the adjourned meeting.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1

The following shall be elected officers of the Municipal Committee and shall constitute the Executive Committee: Municipal Chair; Vice-Chair; Recording Secretary. No more than two members of the Borough Council shall be voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2

The Municipal chair shall preside at all meetings, all committees and their chairs except where otherwise provided herein, shall serve as liaison to elected and appointed Democratic officials and shall generally perform the usual duties of such office as required by law. In the event of a tie vote of the Municipal Committee, the Municipal Chair, if not already a Municipal Committee member, may vote to break the tie.

Section 3

The Vice-Chair shall preside over meetings in the absence of the Chair. They shall assist the Chair in the performance of the duties of the position.

Section 4

In the event of resignation or other vacation of the office of Chair, the Vice-Chair shall within 30 days call a special meeting for election of a new Chair.

Section 5

The Recording Secretary shall take, maintain and report the minutes of meetings of the Municipal Committee.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES

Section 1

Committees may be appointed by the chair as required.

Section 2

a. There shall be a Screening Committee consisting of the following: Municipal Chair, Vice-Chair, and two committee members. However, not more than two members of the Borough Council shall be members of the Screening Committee. In the event that more than two Council members qualify for the Screening Committee by holding positions listed above, the Council members to serve shall be determined by inverse order of the positions listed above.

The Municipal Chair shall be the Chair of the Screening Committee and shall call the meetings thereof when required.

No member of the Screening Committee, nor member of his or her immediate family, shall vote or participate in discussion of endorsement for a position for which they are a candidate.

If any member of the Screening Committee is disqualified from participating in screening for any position because they are a candidate for that position, acting members shall be qualified as follows: members of the Executive Committee shall be replaced by the Recording Secretary in that order. Similarly, if any one person holds two or more offices qualifying them to serve as member of the Screening Committee, they shall represent only the first position named at the beginning of section 2 (a), and shall be replaced for the second position as specified in the paragraph above.

b. The Screening Committee shall recommend to the Municipal Committee endorsement of candidates for Borough Council and Mayor as set forth herein.

c. When the Screening Committee considers candidates to fill a vacancy on the Council between elections, Democratic Council members and the mayor (if applicable) may and are urged to attend meetings of the Screening Committee, with voice but no vote. They, including any who by office would be on the Screening Committee, shall retire before final discussion and endorsement.

Section 3

At the meeting of the full Municipal Committee for the purpose of endorsing candidates, the Municipal Committee shall consider the recommendations of the Screening Committee, as well as any recommendations or nominations presented from the floor.

All candidates shall be considered to be endorsed only after receiving a majority of the votes of the members of the Municipal Committee present and voting at the meeting. In the event of a tie vote the Municipal Chair may break the tie, whether or not they have already voted as a committee person.

ARTICLE VI EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Every currently serving Democratic Borough Council member or former Democrat Mayor, and Democrats holding federal, state, or county elected or party positions who reside in Somerville Borough if not already Municipal Committee members, shall be ex-officio members of the Municipal Committee, with a voice but no vote.

ARTICLE VII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, revised shall govern the conduct of business of the Municipal Committee in all cases where they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws and any special rules of order the Municipal Committee may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended after the original adoption, by a 2/3 vote of those present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the Municipal Committee meeting provided that the proposed amendment has been read at a preceding Municipal Committee meeting and delivered in written or electronic form to all members of the Municipal Committee at least 72 hours prior to the time of amendment consideration.

ARTICLE IX APPLICATION OF BYLAWS

These bylaws shall go in effect with a vote of 2/3 of the committee, and be in effect, unless amended, until the next biennial reorganization meeting. Any positions of the executive committee, or any committees, that were determined before these bylaws went into effect shall retain their positions until the next biennial reorganization meeting.

ARTICLE X SEVERABILITY

If a provision of these bylaws is or becomes illegal, invalid or unenforceable, that shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision of these bylaws.

Democratic Municipal Committee of Somerville Borough
Somerset County, New Jersey
BYLAWS Addendum

SUGGESTED DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES for MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE

To the greatest extent possible:

- Attend Somerville Democratic Committee meetings
- Attend the yearly Somerville Democratic Committee Reorganization meeting
- Attend Somerset County Annual Convention
- Attend the biennial reorganization meeting
- Distribute literature and walk with local, County, State, and Federal candidates during election season
- Gather signatures for ballot
- Phone bank when needed
- Engage in local, County, State, and National Democratic functions
- Should a Committee member accumulate three or more unexcused absences from Committee meetings, the Chair will request a written resignation from the Committee member.