

# **Constitution of *The Wisconsin Grassroots Network***

## **Mission Statement**

The Wisconsin Grassroots Network brings progressive-minded citizens, activists, and organizations together to keep our democracy alive and strong. Working as an all-volunteer organization, we strive to educate, entertain, and energize our allies in the political struggle for a healthy, fair, and equitable society.

## **Founding Practices and Timetable**

During the summer and early fall of 2023, the five-member executive committee shall create a draft constitution and draft mission statement. The Executive Committee shall work on social media platforms, web site, financial management plan, and initial coordination with allied organizations to formally launch The Wisconsin Grassroots Network (WGN) in November 2023.

The Executive Committee shall invite experienced grassroots and organizational leaders from around the state to serve as founding members. These members along with the Executive Committee shall be voting members for the purpose of reviewing and approving the draft constitution and mission statement in October 2023. Founding members shall retain the status of qualified voting member until May 15, 2025. Voting qualifications are outlined in Article III.

Upon approval of a constitution and mission statement, the organization shall select interim officers, create needed subcommittees, and begin its work. It is expected that one of the first activities will be planning for a festival-type event in the spring of 2024, perhaps in association with allied organizations.

## ***Article I***

### ***Duties of offices and terms***

The Executive Committee of Wisconsin Grassroots Network shall consist of at least four offices. These offices shall be **Chair**, **Vice Chair**, **Secretary** and **Treasurer**. All officers shall be elected for a two-year term, starting May 15, 2024. The business address of the organization shall be the address of the presiding Chair.

Duties of the **Chair** shall include, but not be limited to, facilitating meetings, notifying members, developing agendas, appointing committees, and keeping track of projects such as festivals and events. The **Chair** may delegate such tasks to other WGN officers or members. The **Chair** shall be a liaison with other organizations, or

may appoint another member to act as liaison. The **Chair** shall have the authority to set meetings.

Duties of the **Vice Chair** shall include, but not be limited to, facilitating meetings at the behest of the **Chair** or in the **Chair's** absence or during a vacancy of the office of **Chair**. When the **Chair** wishes to make a proposal to WGN, the Chair **will** request that the **Vice Chair** preside over that period of the meeting. The **Vice Chair** shall act as **Chair**, and the **Chair** shall have member status until the business of the proposal is concluded.

Duties of the **Secretary** shall include, but not be limited to, taking minutes, which shall include the names of all those in attendance, writing correspondence and letters of business that meet with approval of the Executive Committee.

Duties of the **Treasurer** shall include, but not be limited to, creating and sharing quarterly reports of WGN's financial status. The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for keeping the credit union account. The **Treasurer** shall make an annual report of inventory of WGN assets. The Treasurer shall be responsible for making restitution, for liabilities and expenditures.

WGN shall not borrow money or incur debt. Any expenditure shall be pre-authorized by the **Chair** or **Treasurer**.

## ***Article II***

### ***Rules for removal and replacement of officers***

In the event of loss of confidence caused by misappropriation, legal or ethical violations, officers may be removed by a quorum vote consisting of a two-thirds majority of present members. All officers must be present for such a vote. There must be at least 20 days advance notice of the meeting. The accused officer shall be given an opportunity to defend him or herself before the vote. If an officer is removed, an emergency election shall be held at the same meeting.

In the event an officer steps down for health or personal reasons which render them unable to fulfill their duties, or if an office is vacant, the Executive Committee shall appoint an officer to complete the term. This applies to all officers except the **Chair**. In the event the **Chair** seat is vacant for health or personal reasons, the **Vice Chair** shall fill the vacancy until the end of the term for the elected office.

***Article III***  
***Rights and obligations of members***

Members rights shall be treated with respect and dignity by all members of WGN.

Any person 18 years of age or older is eligible to hold any WGN office.

In order to be a qualified voting member, a person must shall have participated in two WGN meetings per year and have made a commitment to volunteer in a way that benefits the organization.

All qualified voting members shall have a right to vote in WGN elections. Members shall not be discriminated against based on age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, creed, religion, or nationality.

A quorum shall consist of 30% of qualified voting members including two officers.

***Article IV***  
***Resolving disagreements between members***

If there are disputes between members, a member shall have the option of having their complaint heard and resolved by the Executive Committee.

WGN shall not be held responsible for the actions of individual members or officers.

***Article V***  
***Work of the organization***

**Regular meetings**

Regularly scheduled meetings shall be held at least six times per year. These meetings may be held in-person and/or via Zoom. The agenda for such meetings shall be sent to voting members and other interested parties at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

**Special meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the **Chair** as needed to handle emergency or demanding issues as they arise. These meetings may be held in-person and/or via Zoom.

## **Subcommittees or working groups**

To meet the goals of WGN, the Executive Committee may approve the creation of subcommittees or working groups as needed on any range of topics. Voting members, non-members, and interested parties can serve on these working groups, and these working groups can meet in-person and via Zoom. Regular communication shall occur between these working groups and the Executive Committee. These working groups shall not bind WGN to contracts, agreements, expenditures, or dates of action without the express approval of the Executive Committee.

## **Collaboration with other organizations**

The Executive Committee may authorize WGN to work in collaboration with other organizations. No voting member or other person shall formally commit WGN to multi-organizational events, activities or commitments without the formal approval of the Executive Committee. WGN may enter into a memorandum of understanding with other organizations or entities upon review and approval of the Executive Committee, providing considerations of impact on budget, revenues/costs, liability, resource allocations, scheduling, and legal obligations have been duly considered.

## ***Article VI***

### ***Dissolution or Merger***

Should conditions arise where it could be desirable for WGN to dissolve or fully merge with another organization (meaning losing its separate identity), the following conditions shall be met:

1. At a regular WGN meeting, the question shall be called on moving forward with a request to dissolve or formally merge. If two-thirds of those in attendance support the motion, with a three-fourths majority of the Executive Committee, then a final vote on the question shall be moved to the full membership within sixty days. All members and the Executive Committee shall be notified via e-mail or postal mail of the intended vote on a certain date.
2. Whether dissolution or formal merger, the proposer(s) and/or supporters of the resolution, shall prepare documents in writing that outline the reasons for dissolution or merger. The documents shall include a proposed plan to close any financial accounts, reallocate remaining money and create the plan to transfer or divest any real assets such as printers, computers, AV equipment, etc., and have all such informational documentation ready by the

date which the dissolution or merger is to go into effect. If the vote is to merge, the receiving organization shall provide in writing its intent to receive those assets and aspects of WGN it intends to utilize. These documents shall be made available to members and the Executive Committee two or more weeks before the final vote.

3. The final vote shall be held on the announced date, and it shall take a two-thirds vote of those present to support dissolution or merger. Voting shall be done in-person or via Zoom meeting.

***Article VII***  
***Amending the Constitution***

If the Constitution is to be amended, it shall be amended in accordance with the following process:

1. A qualified voting member shall seek a constitutional change by a motion to add, amend, or delete prescribed words or phrases. Following regular order, the motion shall be seconded and opened for discussion. The exact wording of the proposed change shall be made clear for the final authorization vote. If the vote to move forward with the proposed change passes by a two-thirds vote of those in attendance (in person or via Zoom), the final vote shall be held within 45 days. Via e-mail or postal mail, all qualified voting members shall be notified of the intent to hold a final vote on the proposed change and the exact language provided.
2. The proposed change shall be approved if two-thirds of those in attendance (in-person or Zoom) vote in favor of adoption.

***Article VIII***  
***Date of Effect***

WGN shall operate with an interim executive committee until the 15th of May, 2024.