Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus: Proposed Special Rules for January 29, 2022

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of these rules is to facilitate the running of an endorsement meeting during the Covid-19 Crisis. Every attempt will be made to conform to the existing practices of the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus, while allowing members to participate in the endorsement process in a safe, virtual manner.

2. **Effect:** Once adopted by two-thirds (⅔) majority, these rules have effect only during the January 29, 2022 Endorsement Meeting.

3. **Precedence:** Where in conflict, these rules supersede any other standing rule of the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus. Where not in conflict other standing rules remain in effect. Where these rules, Texas and Federal Law, the Bylaws, and standing rules are silent, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, governs.

4. **Registration:** ***In order to vote members must register by Friday, January 28 at 11:59 PM CST by completing the registration form available on the Caucus website under Events***. In accordance with Bylaw 4.01 "The right to vote on any Caucus business shall be extended only to any person who has been a Member for at least 30 days or since the date of the last regular meeting, whichever is later. A person who renews membership within 365 days of the expiration date of the previous membership shall be eligible to vote immediately upon renewing membership." A membership will be considered to have expired in the previous 365 if it expired on or after January 28, 2022.

5. **Venue:** Upon registering, members will receive a unique Zoom link. The General Membership and Endorsement Meetings on January 29, 2022 of the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus will be held only through Zoom. No in-person venue will be available.

6. **Voting:** Each voting member must participate using a unique device, as each device is associated with a single vote. Multiple members viewing, and attempting to vote, through a single device will be counted as a single vote. Only votes through the Zoom link will be counted towards the vote tally. Verbal votes or votes in chat are not valid votes. Members are encouraged to participate through a computer as difficulties with voting may arise for those using mobile devices or iPads.

7. **Endorsement Meeting Participation Eligibility:** Due to limitations related to Zoom and the dynamics of the Caucus by-laws, only current voting members will be able to participate in the January 29, 2022 Endorsement meeting. Voting members who would like to participate must register by Friday, January 28, 2022. Once registered, the chair or their designee will verify membership status and send an unique link to access the Zoom meeting. Only the individual member who is verified to participate is able to vote via Zoom functions. Current members who are ineligible to vote and the general public are not able to observe the endorsement meeting. New members, in order to be eligible to vote at the meeting, you must have become a member by January 5 at 11:59 PM CST per Article 4 Section 1 of our Bylaws. The chair or their designee will provide candidates seeking the Caucus endorsement who do not have a membership a Zoom link to join the meeting. The chair will permit candidates to speak for

no more than one (1) minute before the body considers the consent agenda. Candidates for races moved to the regular order of business will be granted another one (1) minute to address the membership before debate on their race commences.

8. **Consent Agenda:** The recommendations of the screening committee are presented as a consent agenda. Any voting member may move to remove one (1) item from the consent agenda for separate adoption. Each voting member is restricted to removing no more than one (1) item from the consent agenda. Such a motion does not require a second and is not debatable. Once moved the chair will move the recommendation to the regular order of business. Once the chair observes that no other motions regarding the consent agenda remain the assembly will vote on the remaining recommendations via a single vote. The adoption of the consent agenda requires a majority vote and is not debatable.

9. **Presentation of Screening Committee Recommendations:** Before debate on races moved to the regular order of business the chair will ask the chair of the Screening Committee to offer a report summarizing the committee's rationale in their recommendation. The chair will give the body an opportunity to ask questions of the members of the screening committee in the race before the body. The chair will strictly enforce that this is an opportunity for questions, not debate. Voting members not abiding by this distinction may be muted by the chair or their designee.

10. **Motion to Endorse:** The screening committee's recommendation is considered a motion to endorse a candidate (or in the case of a recommendation of no endorsement, a motion of no endorsement). A motion to endorse another candidate is not in order while the recommendation is under discussion. If the motion to endorse the recommended candidate fails, the chair will open the floor for motions of other endorsements in the same race and debate will proceed as described above. A motion to endorse requires a majority vote.

11. **Debate:** The chair will introduce Items removed from the consent agenda as items on the regular order of business. The body will consider races in ballot order. Members wishing to speak will use Zoom's "Raise Hand" feature and wait to be recognized by the chair. Each member is limited to no more than 2 minutes of debate on each race and may speak only once for each race. Each speaker must state whether they are "For," or "Against" the motion to endorse before speaking further. The chair, or their designee, may mute members exceeding their time, or speaking out of turn. Debate for each item on the regular order of business is restricted to fifteen (15) minutes.

12. **Motion to "Call the Question":** In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order **§**15, a motion to call the question before the body is in order by any member who has been recognized by the chair to speak. Such a motion requires a two-thirds (⅔) majority and is not debatable or amendable. Voting members who have used the "Raise Hand" feature in Zoom to be recognized to speak are considered to have been recognized by the chair to speak, and will be permitted to do so after a motion to call the question has passed.

13. **Extensions of time:** In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order **§**15, if a member exceeds their allotted time to speak a motion to extend time is in order, time to be extended in 1 min increments. Such a

motion requires a two-thirds (⅔) majority and is not debatable, or amendable. The chair may extend time by acclimation.

14. **Extensions of debate:** In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order **§**15, a motion to extend debate time is in order. Extensions of debate will be made in fifteen (15) minute increments. Such a motion requires a two-thirds (⅔) majority and is not debatable, or amendable. The chair may extend debate time by acclimation.

15. **Presence of candidates during debate:** Out of consideration for our members, and in the spirit of the Standing Rules of Endorsement 5.07 the chair will ask candidates for office to identify themselves, and will place them in the waiting room during the time members are debating and voting on their race. We trust candidates will abide by this request. Candidates who are eligible to vote may inform the chair, or their designated agent, of that fact before being placed in the waiting room. The chair will add a single vote in favor of the endorsement of that candidate, or against the endorsement of their opponent, in that case.

16. **No Seconds:** Due to the challenge of recognizing speakers to make seconds in the context of a Zoom meeting, all motions which normally require a second do not. The chair trusts that membership will not abuse this circumstance to offer deleterious motions.

17. **Division Vote:** A motion of Division of the Assembly (Robert's Rules of Order **§**29) is not physically possible in a Zoom meeting and is not in order.

18. **Parliamentary Inquiries:** Parliamentary questions may be posed in the text chat to parliamentarian(s) designated by the chair. However, the chair retains authority to rule on parliamentary questions and any information provided by parliamentarian(s) is solely informational. The chair requests that voting members reserve the chat function for parliamentary inquiries, points of order, and other such matters.