

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
NATIONAL WOMEN'S LIBERAL COMMISSION**

**As amended at the NWLC Biennial Meeting January 2014**

## 1. Role and Purpose of the National Women's Liberal Commission

**1.01** The name of this organization shall be the National Women's Liberal Commission ("NWLC").

**1.02** This is the Constitution of the NWLC. These bylaws shall be the operating rules of the NWLC except where there is a difference in interpretation between these bylaws and the Liberal Party of Canada ("LPC") constitution. Then the provisions of the latter shall govern the NWLC.

**1.03** The purpose of the NWLC to ensure equal participation of women and men at all levels of the Liberal Party (the "Party"), to represent and promote the interests of women within the Party and to encourage the active participation of women at all levels of Party activities.

**1.04** The NWLC shall:

a. *within LPC:*

- i. encourage the participation of women of all ages in the political process;
- ii. seek, encourage and support women to run for office within the Liberal Party of Canada;
- iii. promote both the nomination and the election of women of the Liberal Party of Canada to Parliament;
- iv. assess and report on the status of affirmative action and the equality provisions of the constitution of the Liberal Party of Canada;
- v. assist with the establishment of Women's Clubs;
- vi. develop, determine, promote, communicate and disseminate Liberal Party of Canada policy;
- vii. provide assistance and leadership to provincial and territorial women's Liberal associations / commissions;
- viii. to provide a forum for members of NWLC to have their say and influence the policies and platform of LPC and to encourage involvement in the policy development process of the Party; and
- ix. to raise money to support the purposes and activities of the NWLC and the Judy LaMarsh Fund.

b. *within the nation*

- i. advance the principle of gender equality; and
- ii. advance the interests and well-being of women of all ages across Canada.

**1.05** Internationally, the NWLC should:

- a. disseminate LPC policy;
- b. communicate the purpose of the NWLC, as well as its constitution, structure, its past achievements, present work and future goals; and
- c. support women and women's organizations with the goal of advancing the principle of equality for women of all ages in society in general.

## **2. Membership**

**2.01** The NWLC is open to women who

- a. are members of LPC; and
- b. are not members of another federal political party in Canada.

## **3. Judy LaMarsh Fund**

**3.01** The NWLC is responsible to prepare fundraising plans for the Judy LaMarsh Fund in consultation with the Chief Revenue Officer and manage and supervise the management of the implementation of those plans.

**3.02** The Judy LaMarsh Fund mandate is, but is not limited to, the creation of financial support of nominated women LPC candidates as per Appendix 2.

## **4. National Executive and Table Officers**

**4.01** The National Executive of the NWLC shall consist of the following members:

- a. president;
- b. six vice-presidents, one from each of the following regions:
  - i. British Columbia / Yukon;
  - ii. Alberta / Northwest Territories / Nunavut;

- iii. Saskatchewan / Manitoba;
  - iv. Ontario;
  - v. Quebec; and
  - vi. Atlantic;
- c. presidents, or their designates, of each provincial and territorial women's association / commission. In the event that a province or territory does not have a women's association / commission, a woman representative may be designated from that province or territory by the table officers in consultation with the provincial or territorial association;
- d. past president of the NWLC;

such other members (non-voting) as may be appointed thereto by the National Executive of the NWLC;

- e. the Women's Commission representative of the Young Liberals of Canada;
- f. the Women's Commission representative of the Aboriginal Peoples' Commission;
- g. the Women's Commission representative of the Senior Liberals Commission;
- h. the Judy LaMarsh Fund Chair;
- i. a representative from Federal Women's Liberal Caucus; and
- j. the staff support of the NWLC.

**4.02** The table officers will serve as an administrative body to conduct the business of the Commission on a day to day basis. The table officers of the NWLC shall consist of the following members:

- a. president;
- b. immediate past-president;
- c. the six vice-presidents; and
- d. the staff support of the NWLC (non-voting).

**4.03** Vacancies

- a. In the event that a vacancy occurs in the presidency of the NWLC, a meeting of the table officers of the NWLC will be called by the NWLC manager or, in her/his absence, by the LPC president or his / her designate, to elect the NWLC president from among the table officers.
- b. In the event that a vacancy occurs among the vice-presidents, a replacement may be elected by the provincial / territorial women's association(s) / commission(s) of the region from which the vice president came.
- c. If a provincial / territorial women's commission does not exist, a replacement shall be designated by the NWLC table officers in consultation with the provincial / territorial federal Liberal association.
- d. Any vacancy relating to the NWLC president or the table officers shall be filled within two months of the date of the vacancy.

**4.04** Executive members are not expected to hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms, but may by choice or if circumstances require it. This provision does not apply to presidents of provincial/ territorial women's associations or presidents of clubs as per Article 4.01c.

**4.05** A term shall be that time between LPC biennial conventions.

**4.06** Within two (2) months of a biennial meeting of the NWLC, the president will appoint from the vice presidents in consultation with the other table officers:

- a. Finance Committee chair;
- b. Communications Committee chair;
- c. Organization Committee chair;
- d. Policy Committee chair; and
- e. Constitutional Committee chair

**4.07** Within two (2) months of a biennial meeting of the NWLC, the president will appoint, from the executive or from the NWLC membership:

- a. Judy LaMarsh Fund Chair or Vice-Chairs

## **5. Standing Committees**

**5.01** Within two (2) months of a biennial meeting of the NWLC, the executive will strike the following standing committees:

- a. Finance;

- b. Policy;
- c. Organization;
- d. Communications;
- e. Constitution; and
- f. Judy LaMarsh Fund

Where necessary and practical, members for the above committees will be appointed from among the Executive. However, committee chairs may appoint additional members from among NWLC membership.

- 5.02** The President may establish other committees as she may determine to be appropriate from time to time and may appoint the chair and members of such committee and determine its duties at any meeting.
- 5.03** The President may at any time dissolve any ad hoc committee.
- 5.04** The President shall be an ex officio voting member of all committees.
- 5.05** Except as otherwise provided, the President may appoint NWLC members to any committee and following such appointment and subject to any contrary determination of the President, such person shall be entitled to vote at meetings of such committees.
- 5.06** The Chair of a committee may at any time convene a meeting of such committee.
- 5.07** Minutes shall be kept of all committee meetings and any decisions or recommendations shall be presented to the Executive for discussion and/or approval when approved by the applicable committee.
- 5.08** A report shall be made by the chair of each committee at each meeting of the Executive.
- 5.09** Business arising at any committee meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes cast. In the case of equality of votes, the chair of the committee shall break the tie.
- 5.10** A quorum for any committee meeting shall be a majority of the members of the committee entitled to vote.

## **6. Responsibilities of NWLC Executive Officers**

- 6.01** President

The duties of the president or, where applicable, her designate, shall include the following:

- a. chair all meetings of the national executive of the NWLC;
- b. chair all NWLC biennial meetings;
- c. be the official representative of the NWLC to the national executive of the Liberal Party of Canada;
- d. have overall responsibility for the activities of the NWLC;
- e. in consultation with the Executive, name persons to represent the NWLC on any committee of the Liberal Party of Canada;
- f. in consultation with the Executive, ensure that the NWLC has met all of its requirements to LPC pursuant to section 41 of the LPC Constitution; and
- g. represent the NWLC and the Party at chosen international events / organizations / conferences.

#### **6.02** Vice-presidents

The duties of the vice presidents shall include the following:

- a. promote communication among women Liberals in their regions;
- b. develop and coordinate activities and programmes in the regions they serve;
- c. promote an awareness of political issues, Liberal principles and policies among Canadian women;
- d. represent the interests of women Liberals on the national executive of the Liberal Party of Canada; and
- e. sit ex officio on the executive board of the province / territory where one exists and receive notification and minutes of all meetings.

#### **6.03** Provincial / territorial presidents or designates

The duties of the provincial / territorial presidents or designates shall include the following:

- a. promote communication among women Liberals in their province / territory;

- b. encourage the participation of women at all levels of the Liberal Party;
- c. develop and coordinate the activities and programmes of the NWLC in their province / territory including the formation of and communication with women's clubs;
- d. promote an awareness of political issues, Liberal principles and policies among Canadian women; and
- e. represent the women Liberals of their province / territory on the national executive of the NWLC.

#### **6.04** Committee chairs

##### a. Finance Committee chair

The duties of the Finance Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the Finance committee;
- ii. develop and report on the NWLC budget;
- iii. develop and coordinate fundraising projects on behalf of the NWLC and/or in conjunction with the Judy LaMarsh Fund committee; and
- iv. receive regular reports of the Judy LaMarsh fund.

##### b. Communications chair

The duties of the Communications Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the communications committee;
- ii. assist with all communications such as publications, social media and the website of the NWLC;
- iii. establish communication links with NWLC member organizations as well as with the Party structure and other women organizations; and
- iv. coordinate, in conjunction with the Party staff, translation.

##### c. Organization Committee chair

The duties of the Organization Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the organization committee;
- ii. provide organizational information and advice to the provincial and territorial women's associations/commissions and/or clubs;
- iii. prepare organizational materials for conventions, meetings and elections; and
- iv. develop strategies for recruitment of members, involvement and participation of the NWLC within the Liberal Party of Canada.

d. Policy Committee chair

The duties of the Policy Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the policy committee;
- ii. develop policy on behalf of the NWLC;
- iii. provide follow-up on policy and resolutions passed at NWLC biennial meetings and at NWLC executive meetings; and
- iv. represent the NWLC on the Liberal Party of Canada National Policy and Election Platform (NPEP) Committee; and
- v. develop and coordinate a prioritization process for policy proposals for and of the the NWLC Executive.

e. Constitutional Committee chair

The duties if the Constitutional Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the constitutional committee;
- ii. review the NWLC Constitution and propose amendments when necessary; and
- iii. present proposed amendments of the NWLC constitution and amendments to the LPC constitution as per the requirements of the NWLC and LPC constitutions.

f. Judy LaMarsh Fund Committee chair

The duties of the Judy LaMarsh Fund Committee chair shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Chair the Judy LaMarsh Fund committee;
- ii. develop and coordinate fundraising projects on behalf of the Judy LaMarsh Fund and/or in conjunction with the NWLC finance committee; and
- iii. work with the NWLC membership across the country to fundraise on behalf of the Judy LaMarsh Fund

## **7. Meetings of the NWLC Executive**

**7.01** The national executive of the NWLC shall meet at least twice per year. The meeting shall be called by the President or alternatively by two thirds of the Executive. These meetings shall be called by the president or by two thirds of the table officers. The meetings shall be chaired by the president or, in her absence, another table officer chosen by the table officers. Reports of these meetings shall be distributed to the national executive of the NWLC.

**7.02** The table officers cannot hold a meeting without a quorum of four (4) voting members.

## **8. NWLC Biennial Meetings**

**8.01** Biennial meetings of all women delegates and alternates will be held at every convention as provided in the Liberal Party of Canada Constitution.

**8.02** Business transacted at the Biennial Meeting shall be determined by the Executive and shall include and not be limited to:

- a. approval of the minutes of the previous annual meeting;
- b. report of each Executive member;
- c. the NWLC strategic, organizational and fundraising plan as presented at the most recent Council of Presidents meeting; and
- d. new business.

**8.03** Elections will be held at the LPC biennial convention for the President of the NWLC and for the six Vice-Presidents.

**8.04** All women delegates in attendance at the LPC biennial convention are eligible to vote for a Vice President from the Region they represent.

**8.05** The nomination of candidates for the vice-presidents from British Columbia / Yukon; Alberta / Northwest Territories / Nunavut; Saskatchewan / Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario or Atlantic regional representative may be decided on a

rotating basis in consultation with the provincial / territorial women's commissions in each of those regions.

#### **8.06**

- a. All women delegates present at the LPC biennial convention are eligible to vote for one of NWLC presidential candidates.
- b. All women delegates present at the LPC biennial convention are eligible to vote for one of the vice-presidential candidates running from their region. No delegate is eligible to vote for a vice-presidential candidate from outside that delegate's region.

### **9. Clubs**

**9.01** A club is formed when a group of at least 10 women Liberals hold a founding meeting, elect an executive and adopt a constitution / bylaws.

**9.02** A Club's constitution / bylaws must be consistent with the LPC and NWLC Constitutions in that the constitution/ bylaws:

- a. incorporates the principles set out in the Preamble and defines its purposes in a manner consistent with Section 1.04;
- b. provides that any member of the club has the right to receive any of the NWLC information and documents, membership services, and notices of general meetings and other activities from the club; the right to attend, speak, and vote at a general meeting of the club and the right to be elected to any office in the association;
- c. provides for the election of the President of the club and the officer primarily responsible for policy of the club by a vote of all members of the club;
- d. provides for an appeal procedure in respect of any action or decision of the club and any irregularities in connection with any meetings of the club except where an appeal is within the jurisdiction of the Permanent Appeal Committee of LPC; and
- e. provides for the establishment and maintenance of minutes of meetings and correspondence

**9.03** To be a recognized as a new club by the NWLC, a club must:

- a. have at least 25 members;

- b. hold a founding meeting, with at least 10 members present, for the purpose of electing an executive and adopting a constitution / bylaws;
- c. forward the following to the staff support of the NWLC:
  - i. minutes from the club's founding meeting;
  - ii. the club's membership list;
  - iii. the club's executive list;
  - iv. the club's constitution/bylaws as certified by the Chief Executive Officer of the Club; and
  - v. any affiliation fee established by the NWLC executive.

**9.04** Existing clubs must annually forward the following to the NWLC director:

- a. minutes of its annual general meeting;
- b. a list of the club's executive and contact information including postal address, phone number and e-mail address;
- c. a list of the club's members and contact information including postal address, phone number and e-mail address; and
- d. any affiliation fee established by the NWLC executive.

**9.05** The materials listed in Article 9.02 to 9.04 must also be forwarded to the provincial/territorial women's commission/association.

## **10. Delegates to Biennial Conventions**

**10.01** In order to be certified as a club in good standing for the purposes of sending a delegate to biennial conventions of LPC, a club must:

- a. be a recognized club in accordance with Article 9.02 and 9.04; and
- b. be recognized for the purposes of this Constitution for at least one year before the date of the call of the Biennial convention.

**10.02** Each club must hold a delegate selection meeting to select delegates and alternate delegates to conventions at the time, and in accordance with the procedures, established under the LPC Constitution and by the National Executive. Provincial and territorial rules relating to the election of delegates to conventions of the Party must be observed unless in conflict with the LPC Constitution.

**10.03** Each club that holds a delegate selection meeting in accordance with Article 9 and Article 10 has the right to send delegates and alternate delegates to a convention.

**10.04** Every member of a club who is a member of LPC has the right to attend a delegate selection meeting of a club and has the right to vote at that meeting if that member:

- a. is present at the meeting; and
- b. has been a member of the Party as per the LPC constitution requirements.

**10.05** Each club may elect any number of alternate delegates.

**10.06** Before the convention, each club must hold its delegate selection meeting as per the LPC constitution requirements.

## **11. Appeals**

**11.01** Appeals relating to:

- a. delegate selection from a club to any convention of the Party;
- b. delegate selection from a provincial/territorial Women's Commission to any convention of the Party; or
- c. the NWLC's interpretation of its Constitution or the constitution of one of its provincial/territorial Women's Commissions or Commission Clubs

shall be made to the Permanent Appeal Committee as established by Chapter 10 of the LPC Constitution.

## **12. Amendments to the Constitution**

**12.01** All amendments to this Constitution must be made at the General Meeting at the biennial convention.

**12.02** Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by:

- a. The Executive; or
- b. Any provincial / territorial women's commissions presidents or their designates.

**12.03** Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the President and to the LPC as per the LPC constitution before the general meeting at which they are to be considered.

**12.04** The Executive must publish a copy of each proposed amendment to this Constitution that must be submitted to a General Meeting on the public website of the NWLC twenty (20) days before the convention at which the proposed amendment is to be considered and as per the LPC constitution.

**12.05** So long as notice is provided in accordance with Article 12.03 and 12.04, amendments to this Constitution may be made with the support of two thirds (2/3) of the women delegates in attendance at the NWLC general meeting.

### **13. Official Languages**

**13.01** All documents of the NWLC produced for the public shall be produced in English and French and both languages shall be considered equally binding and authentic. Interpretation shall be provided at all NWLC meetings at conventions.

**13.02** All NWLC biennial meetings shall be presided over in English and French.

### **14. Definitions:**

In this Constitution, the following words have the meanings indicated:

“Club” means a group established in a particular area, or for a particular focus. The Club may be in an electoral district; cross a geographic region or electoral districts; or focus on a common interest or intent.

“Executive” means the National Executive of the Commission (as defined in this constitution).

“EDA” means a federal electoral district association, formerly referred to as a “Riding”.

“Judy LaMarsh Fund” also known as the “Judy Fund”.

“Member in good standing” means a member as defined by the LPC and NWLC constitutions.

“NWLC” means the National Women's Liberal Commission.

“LPC” means the Liberal Party of Canada.

The “ Party” means the Liberal Party of Canada.

## **Appendix 1**

Revision of the Constitution:

Where revisions to the Constitution are needed due to administrative or time changes of the LPC Constitution, these revisions shall be made automatically to the applicable sections of the NWLC Constitution and not require a vote of the Commission members.

## **Appendix 2**

Judy LaMarsh Fund

The Judy LaMarsh Fund mandate is to financially support the women candidates that are running and who are not present or past Members of Parliament. It is fundraising with the concept of collectively donating contributions directly to candidates at the grassroots level — turning small contributions into an imposing fundraising force. The fund is open to non-members who support these candidates, giving them the resources they need to win the close races, expand their majorities, and stand for women and families. The ultimate goal is to elect and support the next generation of women's leadership. 100% of the funds contribution to candidates goes directly to the campaign.