



2024 NOMINATING CAUCUS RULES

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The City Democratic Committee of Burlington, Vermont (the “Committee”) will hold its Mayoral and Ward City Councilor Nominating Caucuses for the 2024 Town Meeting Day Election (collectively referred to as the “Caucus”), on Sunday, December 10, 2023.

Due to unprecedented Caucus registrations and a lack of sufficient venues to host the event in-person, voting will be done virtually. The Committee will also provide the option to vote in-person only for those that require special accommodation. The Committee has determined this system of participation and voting is the best way to promote access and ensure election integrity.

In order to win a Caucus election, a candidate will need to earn more than 50% of votes cast. A runoff election will occur if, in any race, a single candidate fails to achieve a majority. Caucus voters may be required to cast more than one ballot to complete the nomination process. If there is a race in which no candidate receives more than 50% of the vote after two rounds of voting, the Committee may schedule another caucus at a later date.

This document outlines the Committee’s rules for the Caucus. Any questions regarding these rules should be sent to the Committee by email at burlingtondems@gmail.com. This document may be updated to answer additional questions or clarify rules.

Section I - Caucus Voter Eligibility

A. Who is eligible to vote in the Caucus?

To be eligible to vote in the Caucus, you must:

1. Be a resident of Burlington and be listed on the Burlington voter registry by the time of the Caucus. The Committee will rely solely on the City of Burlington’s voter registration roll as the means to confirm eligibility to participate in the Caucus.
2. Register for the Burlington Democratic Party Nominating Caucus. Voters can [register online](#) prior to the Caucus. Early registration closes on December 9 at 5 p.m. Voters who miss the early registration deadline may register in-person from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. on December 10, 2023 at Edmunds Middle School.

3. Affirm that you have not voted in another political party's caucus for the 2024 Town Meeting Day Election.
4. Affirm that you are not a member of another political party's committee.

All who register in accordance with this criteria are eligible to vote in the Caucus. Voters who register early will receive a notification by email confirming their eligibility prior to the Caucus. Early registration is required for online voting. Voters who register in-person will be confirmed as eligible in-person. All voters who register in accordance with this process will be considered present at the Caucus. Rules related to the Caucus voting process are separately outlined below in Section V.

Section II - Caucus Registration

A. Is there a deadline to register in advance of the Caucus?

Yes. Early registration for online voting in the Caucus closes at 5 p.m. on Saturday, December 9, 2023. Early registration is required for online voting. In-person registration on December 10, 2023, closes at 1:00 p.m. Eligible voters who are in line to register in person by 1:00 p.m. on December 10, 2023, will be permitted to participate in caucus voting.

B. If an individual misses registration deadlines, will any exceptions be made for late registration?

No. Once registration deadlines close, there will be no exceptions.

C. How do I register to vote in the Caucus?

You can register to vote in the Caucus on the [Official Caucus Registration Form](#). If a voter is unable to access the registration form, they may contact the Committee by email at burlingtondems@gmail.com or call 802-777-3255 and the registration form may be completed on the voter's behalf by the Committee.

Those who lack internet accessibility or require other accommodations that cannot be met through the online voting mechanism may register to vote in person between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. on December 10, 2023 at Edmunds Middle School, 275 Main Street, Burlington, Vermont. Eligible voters who are in line to register in person by 1:00 p.m. on December 10, 2023, will be permitted to participate in Caucus voting.

D. Will I receive confirmation that I have successfully registered to vote in the Caucus?

Yes. After submitting the registration form online, you will be taken to a webpage confirming the form was successfully completed. This notice will not include final confirmation of your eligibility to vote. As soon as is practicable after registering for the Caucus, you will receive an email from the Committee confirming your eligibility to vote. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section I, you will be notified by email and offered an opportunity to cure any issue, as long as the registration is received prior to the Caucus registration deadlines.

Those registering in person at Edmunds Middle School on December 10, 2023, will receive voting instructions at that time.

E. Will candidates be given access to a list of those who are eligible to vote in the caucus?

Yes. Each candidate who has properly and timely declared their intent to seek the Democratic nomination will be provided a list of all eligible Caucus voters. This list will include a voter's first and last name, address, and ward, as listed in the voter rolls of the City of Burlington. Voter email addresses and phone numbers will not be shared with candidates.

Section III - Candidate Declaration

A. How do candidates declare to run in the Caucus?

Those seeking the nomination for Mayor or City Council must notify the Committee no later than 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 30, 2023, by emailing burlingtondems@gmail.com or otherwise communicating directly to the Chair of the Burlington Democratic Party, Adam Roof.

B. When will a list of declared candidates be available to Caucus voters?

A final list of declared candidates will be published as soon as practicable after the notification deadline on the [Caucus webpage](#).

C. Will there be nominations made for Inspector of Elections and Ward Clerks?

Nominations for Inspectors of Elections and Ward Clerks will not be made at the December 10 Caucus. These nominations will be made at a later date as determined by the Party Chair. If you are interested in running for Inspector of Election or Ward Clerk, please email burlingtondems@gmail.com.

Section IV - Caucus Event Details & Logistics

A. When and where will the Caucus event take place?

The Caucus starts at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 10, 2023. To ensure accessibility for Caucus participants, the Caucus will be streamed to YouTube and public access television by Town Meeting TV. A link to the YouTube stream will be published and shared prior to the Caucus. Voters who require in-person voting can do so at Edmonds Middle School, located at 275 Main St, Burlington, VT 05401.

B. What is the agenda for the Caucus event?

The Caucus event will begin precisely at 1:00p.m. A final agenda will be published after the candidate declaration deadline of November 30 on the [Caucus website](#). The Caucus agenda will include expected times for the Mayoral and City Council nominations, the in-person registration deadline, and the length of the voting period. The speaking order of the Mayoral candidates will be random. City Council nominations will go in order of Ward number, starting with Ward 1 and ending with Ward 8.

C. Will there be an option to watch the Caucus speeches at Edmonds Middle School?

Due to unprecedented Caucus registrations and a lack of sufficient venues to host the event in-person, voting and participation will be done virtually. There is limited space at Edmonds Middle School, so the Committee is reserving viewing space for those that require special accommodation, candidates and their campaign teams, members of the press, Caucus volunteers, and Caucus administrators.

Section V: Caucus Voting

- A. The [By-laws](#) of the Committee require that all elections be decided by a majority vote (50% +1). Specifically, Article IV.A. of the By-laws provides as follows:

Nomination for an office shall require a majority of those present and voting, and if no candidate shall have received a majority after the first ballot, the candidate with the lowest number of votes in the first and in each succeeding ballot shall be eliminated until a candidate receives a majority. Where multiple nominees must be selected, including but not limited to Justice of the Peace nominations, the Committee may choose to use one ballot and nominate those who receive the largest number of votes on that ballot, up to the number of nominees required.

Voting in contested elections shall be by secret ballot and proxies are prohibited.

Where a ballot is determined to be “spoiled” and will not count toward the vote total of any one candidate then it will not count toward the overall vote total. A spoiled ballot will be treated as if it had never been cast.

B. How will voting be administered for the Caucus?

Due to unprecedented Caucus registrations and a lack of sufficient venues to host the event in-person, voting will be done virtually. Virtual voting will be done using the secure, reputable platform of [ElectionBuddy](#). This election tool has been used successfully since 2020. The Committee hosted a presentation to Caucus candidates and their campaign team on the features and security of the election software to ensure confidence in the administration of the election.

The Committee will also provide the option to vote in-person only for those that require special accommodation. Refer to subsection I. of this Section for information on how to request a special accommodation.

C. What time will voting start and end for the Caucus?

Voting will begin at the conclusion of all candidate speeches on December 10, 2023 and continue for 120 minutes. This voting period is the same for both virtual and in-person voters who require special accommodation. The voting period will begin and close at the same time for all elections.

D. What time will virtual ballots be delivered?

A link to your virtual ballot will be delivered once all candidates conclude their speeches. Virtual ballots will be delivered to an eligible voter at the email address they used to register for the Caucus and can be completed by smartphone or computer. No ballot links will be active until the beginning of the voting period. Voters will have 120 minutes to submit their ballot. Refer to subsection E. of this Section for information on how to deal with issues receiving or accessing your virtual ballot.

E. Will there be reminders sent about voting?

Yes, there will be no less than 3 reminders sent throughout the voting period.

F. Who do I contact if I don't receive my virtual ballot or experience other issues with casting my ballot?

If for some reason you do not receive your virtual ballot or if you experience other issues, immediately contact the Committee by email at burlingtondems@gmail.com. If you do not have access to your email, you may call 802-777-3255.

G. Will there be a “write-in” option when voting?

No. In accordance with the Committee [By-Laws](#), there will be no option to “write-in” candidates during Caucus votes.

H. Can I vote against a declared candidate’s nomination?

Yes. If a voter wants to vote against a candidate’s nomination, the ballot will provide an option to “abstain.”

I. If I participate in another political party’s caucus and “abstain” from voting in a particular race, may I still vote in the Democratic Caucus?

No. If you participate in any other party’s caucus, you cannot submit a ballot in the Democratic Caucus.

J. If I register for the Caucus now, how do I let the Committee know that I need a special accommodation to vote in-person?

To exercise the option to request a special accommodation to vote in-person please email burlingtondems@gmail.com. If you do not have access to email, you may call 802-777-3255. Please note that the Committee encourages voting to be done virtually, reserving in-person voting to those who do not have internet access or otherwise require a special accommodation.

K. Is there a plan to deal with the potential of a runoff election?

Yes. A runoff election will occur if, in any race, a single candidate fails to achieve a majority of votes cast (50% + 1). All those who vote on the first ballot will be eligible to participate in the event of a runoff. The caucus agenda contemplates conducting one runoff during the December 10, 2023 Caucus if necessary. Remaining candidates will have the opportunity to address Caucus voters prior to the commencement of the second voting period. If additional runoffs are required they will be held at a time determined by the Party Chair. Those who register to vote at the Caucus but do not cast a vote on the first ballot will not be eligible to vote in any runoff election.

L. When will the results be reported?

The results of Caucus voting will be reported as soon as practicable. Results will be publicly posted by the Committee on the Caucus webpage, shared via the Party’s email

listserv, shared with media via a press release, and will be emailed directly to all candidates.

M. Will candidates be able to observe the administration of the election and ballot counting?

Yes. All candidates are encouraged to have an observer present while the election is being administered and while ballots are tabulated at Edmonds Middle School.

Section VI: Additional Information

A. How do voters ask questions of candidates?

The Committee encourages voters who have questions to contact candidates prior to the Caucus. All available candidate contact information can be found on the [Caucus webpage](#). The Committee will also be hosting a Mayoral Forum on Sunday, December 3rd, 2023 at City Hall's Contois Auditorium from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. The Committee will also provide a Q&A period 90-minute starting at 11 a.m. on Sunday, December 10th. The Committee also encourages voters with questions to use the 120 minute voting period to have last-minute questions answered from candidates.

B. What are the details of the Mayoral candidate forum?

The Committee will be hosting a forum for mayoral candidates on Sunday, December 3rd, 2023 from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. The forum will be hosted at City Hall's Contois Auditorium. It will also be streamed on YouTube and broadcast on Town Meeting TV. The forum is open to the public. To ensure fairness to all participating candidates, the Committee has decided the forum be moderated by an unbiased member of the local press. Katharine Huntley, reporter from WCAX, will moderate the forum.

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