

# **A Quick Primer on Republican Precinct Conventions**

## **Political Party Conventions**

In Texas, parties hold their own conventions in election years. In even-numbered years, Texas Republicans hold precinct conventions, county or senatorial district conventions, a state convention, and in presidential years, a national convention. The purposes of the conventions are to:

- 1) Choose delegates and alternates to the next higher convention level, when applicable; and
- 2) Consider resolutions or statements on policy issues to send to the next higher convention and/or for eventual inclusion in the state or national Party platform.

## **Delegates/Alternates**

Delegates are persons elected at a convention to represent the body electing them at the next higher convention level, except at the highest convention level in a given year where they simply serve as the representatives of the body that elected them. Alternates are elected to serve in the event that a delegate cannot or does not serve. In order to be elected a delegate or alternate to a Republican convention, the person must be a registered voter in the represented area and have voted in the most recent Republican primary election.

[Click here for Frequently Asked Questions.](#)

## **Resolutions**

A resolution is a formal statement or expression of an opinion put before or adopted by an assembly. Resolutions are offered by delegates for discussion and may address any topic. Resolutions passed by delegates at a convention are sent to the next convention level for consideration. Resolutions may eventually become part of the Party's platform.

[Click here for more information on Resolutions.](#)

## **What Republicans Believe**

A platform is the formal declaration of the principles on which a party stands and makes it appeal to voters. Basically, it is the Party's statement of beliefs on certain issues. As explained below, the RPT platform is passed at the state convention in June of even-numbered years.

[Click here for an overview of our conservative principles.](#)

[Click here for the RPT Platform.](#)

## **Precinct Convention**

The precinct convention is the first step in the Party process.

A precinct convention is held on the night of the primary election at each polling place after the polls close. If it is not held at the polling place, notice of where the convention will be held must be posted at the polling place.

## **WHO MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE PRECINCT CONVENTION**

- 1) A Precinct Convention participant must be registered to vote in the same Precinct as the Precinct that is holding the Precinct Convention and must have affiliated with the Republican Party either by voting in the 2010 Republican Primary or by taking an Oath of Affiliation as described in TEC 162.007 and 162.008. If the person voted via Provisional Ballot, that person is not permitted to participate in the Precinct Convention, via RPT Rule 20.
- 2) It is the Voter's responsibility to present proof that they voted in the 2010 Republican Primary. The voter should either have "Republican" stamped on their new/current blue Voter Registration

Card, or they should have the affiliation certificate provided by the Polling Place staff when they voted in person or by the Early Voting Clerk when they voted by mail.

If the Voter does not have proof of Party Affiliation, the Election Judge is required, by HCRP Executive Committee resolution, to make available to the Republican Temporary Precinct Convention Chair the list of persons who voted in that Precinct's Republican Primary for that precinct until 8:00 p.m. or 30 minutes after the last voter has voted, whichever is latest.

The convention begins at 7:30 p.m., and is usually called to order by the precinct chairman. If the precinct chairman is absent, any delegate may open the meeting. There is no minimum number of people who must be present to hold the precinct convention. If you are the only person present, ask the election judge for the precinct convention packet, and hold the convention by yourself. The packet will have instructions, and the required paperwork that must be turned in to the local Republican Party headquarters by the date set forth in the packet to be valid.

Delegates to the precinct convention first elect permanent convention officers, usually a convention chairman and secretary. They then elect delegates and alternates to their county or state senatorial district convention. Finally, they consider and vote on any resolutions offered by the delegates.

[Click here for a Sample Script for Precinct Conventions.](#)

Each precinct is allocated an equal number of delegates and alternates to the county or senatorial district convention. The number is based on the number of votes the precinct cast for the governor in the last gubernatorial election, taking into account any applicable boundary changes.

#### **PLACE**

- 1) Per RPT Rules, the facility must be large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants and shall be of easy public access.
- 2) Per Texas Election Code Section 43.034(a), the place selected for a precinct convention must meet the same requirements for access by the elderly and persons with physical disabilities as a polling place.
- 3) If the Democrats and Republicans are sharing a polling place, Texas Election Code Section 161.006 requires the rooms in which the conventions are held to be separated so that communication from one room to the other is precluded, and a sign in bold print identifying the party holding the convention must be posted at the entrance to each room
- 4) The place where the meeting is called to order must be the Election Day polling place for that precinct, unless both of the following have occurred:
  - a. Written notice must be received no later than February 10, 2010 by the HCRP Primary Director either by e-mail (donna.bahorich@harriscountygop.com) or by fax (832- 413-5918) for the Party's public posting required for a minimum of 10 continuous days immediately preceding the date of the convention in Texas Election Code in Sec. 174.023, and
  - b. Notice was prominently posted from 7:00 a.m. continuously throughout Primary Election Day at the polling location for said precinct.
- 5) If it is necessary to call the meeting to order and recess to another location (see 1-3 above), the meeting may not be recessed for a period exceeding one hour, and must be reconvened at a location within the physical boundaries of the voting precinct, and a notice of the reconvened Precinct Convention time and place must be posted conspicuously at all entrances of the location where the previous notice of the Precinct Convention was posted, and such notice must provide clear information designating the time and location where the Precinct Convention will reconvene within the hour and shall be descriptive in sufficient detail that a person not familiar with the specific location will be able to find it. (Example: "1234 Maple Street, 1 block south of Main @ Center" – NOT "Mary Smith's house".)  
Please be sure to qualify all participants before leaving the polling place (See "Who May Participate" #2, below)