

# CONVENTION SCRIPT

1. Call to order the 2020 district convention of the District \_\_\_\_ Dem-NPL Party
2. Let's join together in the pledge of allegiance.
3. Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm \_\_\_\_\_, chairperson of the District \_\_\_\_ Dem-NPL. I'd like to welcome you all - delegates, members of the press and guests - those of you who have been here before and those of you who are new.

This is step one of our political system. Today we'll endorse our candidates for the legislature, discuss what we want in our platform, and elect delegates to carry our wishes to the next level - the state convention - where they'll endorse the statewide Dem-NPL candidates, draft and approve the state party platform, and more.

No membership or fees are required for participation - only a willingness to be identified with the North Dakota Democratic Party. All here are equal, and we urge you to be a full participant and get your share of the action as a full-fledged citizen, interested and caring enough to participate.

If any of the procedures are unclear or confusing, please ask the Chair for clarification. As a rule of thumb there are no dumb questions here and your question will most likely help others around you who are confused as well.

We have many goals to accomplish here so it may be a long meeting. However, if you leave early, you may miss out on one of the most important parts of that business - perhaps endorsing our legislative candidates or selecting delegates to the state convention. So, I urge you to please stay for the entirety of the event.

If you wish to be recognized, please just stand up or raise your hand. The Chair will recognize you, so please state your name for the minutes.

Let us begin.

4. Keeping the minutes tonight is our Secretary, \_\_\_\_\_  
Our Consulting Parliamentarian, \_\_\_\_\_  
Our Timekeeper, \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduce any other officials that the chair deemed necessary to appoint
5. I call on \_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson of the Committee on Credentials, for their report of how many delegates are present
  - a. The Chairperson will report.
    - i. This report needs to be formally adopted
  - b. Follow this procedure for this and all other motions:

**Call for a motion so you can act:**

“Is there a motion to adopt the report of the Credentials Committee?”

**Ask for a second:**

“Is there a second?”

**Repeat the motion so that everyone understands what is going on:**

“It has been moved and seconded that we adopt the report of the Credentials Committee.”

**Call for a discussion:**

“Is there any discussion?”

**When it’s over, get ready to vote.**

“Seeing none, I’ll call the question.”

**Call for and conduct the vote.**

“The motion is to adopt the report of the Credentials Committee. All in favor, indicate by saying ‘Aye.’ (pause) All opposed, say ‘Nay.’”

**Announce the vote so everyone understands what happened:**

“The motion has passed, and the report of the Credentials Committee is adopted.”

**The Chair declares a quorum is present, and we may begin.**

“And thanks to the Credentials Committee: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

6. The Chair calls on \_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson of the Committee on Rules & Procedures, for its report.
  - a. The Chairperson will report.
    - i. This report needs to be formally adopted
  - b. Follow the procedure for adopting motions motions
    - i. This report will come in two parts, each requiring a motion, discussion, and adoption. First, take the agenda they are proposing. Then, take up the rules.

Thanks to the Rules Committee: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

They’ll be busy helping us throughout the convention.

8. The Chair calls on \_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson of the Permanent Organization Meeting, for its report.
  - c. The Chairperson will report.
    - i. This report needs to be formally adopted
  - d. Follow the procedure for adopting motions motions

Thanks to the Permanent Organization Committee: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
They'll be busy helping us throughout the convention.

**9.** Introduction of guests and explain the time-based speaking limit.

**10.** One of our jobs this evening is to elect \_\_\_\_\_ delegates to the state convention. Some years ago that would have been a very simple process - we would right here and now have nominations from the floor and elect our delegates and alternates.

However, in the Democratic Party, that's been changed. When that kind of process proved difficult for people new to the party to ever get elected as delegates, the McGovern Reform Rules changed the delegate selection process. It was changed so that new delegates with very strong interests can band together to elect a delegate of their own to represent that interest.

It works as follows: Instead of all of us voting on all the delegates, we may choose to subdivide the convention. So, those of you with similar interests can get together to elect your very own delegate or delegates. You form, then, what is called a "preference caucus" - you prefer to get together with others of like mind to elect your delegates.

Preference caucuses are generally formed around (1) interests - such as law enforcement or labor; or (2) candidates - national or state - presidential candidates, or any of our statewide candidates such as those you heard from tonight; or, are (3) uncommitted.

A preference caucus can be formed on any item or person so long as there are enough people interested - it is your choice. And the uncommitted caucus will be formed with those who do not wish to participate in a special grouping.

Altogether we'll be electing \_\_\_\_\_ delegates and \_\_\_\_\_ alternates to the state convention.

If everything were simple, we could have \_\_\_\_\_ preference caucuses, and each would elect one delegate and one alternate. It's far more likely, though, that our preference caucuses will be different sizes. So, our Rules Committee will be working on the mathematical procedure of how many delegates each preference caucus gets - which depends upon what percentage of us here are interested in it. It's too complicated to do all at one time, so we'll be working on it throughout the meeting in stages. Any questions so far?

**11.** At this time, we will have a report from the Rules Committee as to how many delegates must be interested in a preference caucus in order for it to be formed (there have to be enough to qualify for one delegate) - and how that figure was

arrived at.

a. There will need to be a motion, discussion, and adoption for each

12. It is now time for you to nominate a preference caucus you would be interested in. Nomination of a preference caucus at this time does not mean it will exist - it will be formed only if enough other delegates are also interested in that subject or candidate. There must be enough interested folks to qualify for at least one delegate. Therefore, nomination by you of a caucus at this time does not commit you to attend that caucus. It merely means that people can consider it to see if they are interested in attending. Any questions?

a. Are any preference caucuses nominated?

b. Rise and be recognized if you wish to make a nomination

i. These nominations don't need seconds

ii. Something on which to list the preference caucuses should be placed where the entire group can readily view it

iii. Be sure to add "uncommitted" to the list of preference caucuses -- **If no other preferences are nominated, all will be "uncommitted"**

13. You are now going to vote on whether you want to see one of these caucuses formed. While the ballots are being handed out, does anyone wish to speak to invite others to join his or her suggested caucus in order to increase your numbers and possibly get more state delegates? Each speaker will be subject to the pre-established time-based speaking limit.

You are to write down only one item on your ballot - either the name of a preference caucus or "uncommitted." If you put down a preference caucus, it should be the one you are most interested in attending.

- This vote does not commit you to participating in that caucus, but does provide an estimate of how many caucuses will be formed - so we need to know fairly closely which are desired. The Rules Committee will report the ballots and report soon.

14. The next item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Platform and Resolutions. The North Dakota Democratic Party is an open party - and this is the beginning of citizen input on what our party platform should be. All districts will submit their approved platform items to the State Platform and Resolutions Committee. They will be considered there, and the resulting package will be voted on at the state convention for the state platform.

If you are interested, there is a copy of the 2018 state platform. We can choose to consider this document in sections and make proposed changes, if we so wish. We may also draft new platform planks or individual resolutions to be considered by the District.

When we have finished the written report, we will consider all resolutions submitted at precinct caucuses. We want to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and that we adopt a platform that we in the district agree with.

Remember, debate is limited to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes on an issue, with speakers limited to \_\_\_\_\_ speeches of no more than \_\_\_\_\_ minutes each, and not in consecutive order.

\_\_\_\_\_, The Chairperson for the Committee on the Platform, would you please move the adoption of the resolutions in the first section:

- This process will include many motions, seconds, amendments, and votes.

Were any resolutions submitted at the precinct caucuses?

- These resolutions have to be read aloud several times and then acted on.
- At the end, you need a final vote to approve the whole platform.

A special thanks to the Platform Committee: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

**15.** We are now ready for step 2 of the preference caucus process.

Rules Committee - which preference caucuses have been established, if any?

- Put the approved caucuses on the board - plus uncommitted
- This report requires approval

**16.** Now, we must determine the exact number of people attending each caucus so that we can assign the proper proportion of our state convention delegates to that caucus. Every caucus must be big enough to have at least one delegate - so every caucus must have at least 1/\_\_\_\_rd of the people in this convention if it is to continue. After that, the more of us that sign up for a caucus, the more delegates it can receive.

Does anyone wish to speak to invite others to their caucus?

At this time you are required to sign up for the caucus you are going to attend. On the ballots you are receiving from the Rules Committee, you must write down the name of one of these on the board and sign the ballot. Failure to do so at this time means you will not be able to attend a caucus. Vote and sign. The Rules Committee will now retire to determine caucus strength.

In the event that any proposed caucus doesn't get enough votes to qualify, the Rules Committee members will offer those who signed up for that particular caucus a chance to sign up for a different caucus instead.

**17.** It is now time for a major item of this evening's business - nomination of those we wish to endorse as our legislative candidates for District \_\_\_\_\_. Nominations are open to all. A reminder - according to the rules you adopted at the beginning of the meeting, the nominating speeches, seconding speeches, and words from the candidates are limited to a total of \_\_\_\_\_ minutes per candidate.

We will now hear a report from the Candidate Recruitment Committee, which interviewed candidates to ensure that they're eligible, informed about campaigns, and agreeable to doing what they'll need to do to win if they are endorsed.

A special thanks to the Candidate Search Committee: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

- If there are not candidates, you can make a motion to give the Search Committee or Executive Committee authority to endorse candidates later on.

Nominations are now open for our endorsees for the North Dakota State Senate.

Are there any nominations? Is there a second to that nomination?

Would the candidate wish to complete the minutes?

Are there any further nominations?

- Nominations must be called for 3 times.
- Don't let anyone cut off nominations until all in attendance have had ample time.

The Chair declares nominations are closed.

- If there is only one candidate, you may allow a motion to cast a unanimous ballot. A majority vote will pass the motion.
- If there is a contest, call upon the Rules Committee to pass out ballots. Then say: "We will now vote by secret ballot. You can vote for one. In order to win endorsement, a candidate must have a majority of the votes cast. For example, if 100 people vote, a candidate must have at least 51 votes to be endorsed. If no one gets a majority, another ballot will be taken."

Has everyone voted? The polls are closed.

I'm going to ask the Rules Committee to hold the ballots before they retire to count them. Also, the nominator of each candidate should go along as an observer.

Nominations are now open for our endorsees for the North Dakota House of Representatives.

Are there any nominations?

Is there a second to that nomination?

Would the candidate wish to complete the minutes?

Are there any further nominations?

- Nominations must be called for 3 times.
- Don't end nominations until all in attendance have had ample time.

The Chair declares nominations are closed.

- If there are only two candidates, you may allow a motion to cast a unanimous ballot. A majority vote will pass the motion.
- If there is a contest, call upon the Rules Committee to pass out ballots. Then say: "We will now vote by secret ballot. You can vote for one. In order to win endorsement, a candidate must have a majority of the votes cast. For example, if 100 people vote, a candidate must have at least 51 votes to be endorsed. If no one gets a majority, another ballot will be taken. Also, if only one candidate receives a majority, another ballot will be taken to get the second nominee."

Has everyone voted? The polls are closed.

I'm going to ask the Rules Committee to retire to count the ballots. Also, the nominator of each candidate should go along as an observer. There will now be a short recess.

When they return, announce the results.

**18.** Do we have any unfinished business?

**19.** The Chair will call for the Rules Committee report on preference caucus strength.

- Move, Discuss, Adopt

**20.** Now is the time to elect our delegates to the state convention. The state convention is scheduled this year for March 19-22, 2020 in Minot.

Delegates pay their own expenses and are asked to pay a registration fee of \$50, if they can, to cover some of expense of the convention. This fee is optional but encouraged. If you've never been to one, it's an exciting and stimulating experience where you'll meet the party faithful from across the state and have the opportunity to be one of the real decision makers for our party. I hope everyone here will consider it.

You'll be moving into your preference caucuses to do the electing. Please be sure to elect as many delegates and alternates as you are entitled to. Remember, you elect as many alternates as you elect delegates. Plans change, and we must often call on alternates to attend. Alternates also pay their own expenses and are asked to pay a registration fee of \$35, if they can, to cover some of expense of the convention. Remember, also, you must balance your delegation by sex if your preference caucus gets more than one delegate. If your first elected delegate is female, your second should be male - and so on.

If, at the end of the evening, our state convention delegation is unbalanced severely with either too many males or too many females, the Rules Committee and the convention must act to change the situation until the delegation is balanced. Due to this needed balance, it is important for the preference caucus chairs to deliver your final report immediately at the conclusion of your preference caucus.

After our preference caucuses, we will all return here to give final approval to our overall delegation. At that time the elected state convention delegates and alternates will receive the information you'll need for attendance.

**21.** And now, it's time to recess to the preference caucuses.

- Call out each caucus and tell members where to meet
- Choose a temporary chair for each to help them get started
- When preference caucuses are finished, and the Chairs return with their reports, the rules committee should quickly check the delegation balance for any changes that may be needed.

**22.** The convention will return to order.

Will the Rules Committee please read the names of our delegates and alternates?

Is there a motion to approve the delegation?

- Motion, Second, Discuss, Vote

Thank you to everyone for attending and participating today.

**23.** The convention will finish with one of the following two endings:

- a.** Use if your legislative candidates have been endorsed or if it has been decided that the Executive Committee of the district will do it:
  - i. The Chair calls for a motion to adjourn sine die
  - ii. Motion, Second, Adopt and the convention has ended
  
- b.** Use if the convention is recessing and will reconvene at a later date and time to endorse legislative candidates:
  - \*If you choose this option you will need to gather 40% of the delegates present at the district convention in order to proceed.
  - i. The Chair calls for a motion to recess the convention until  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. Motion, Second, Adopt, the convention is in recess

**Be sure you leave with all the necessary materials for reporting the results of the district convention to the state party. Please report the results of the convention to the state party as quickly as possible to [people@demnpl.com](mailto:people@demnpl.com).**