

# The Green Party of Virginia

## Rules of the 2008 GPVA Presidential Preference Primary

March 11 - April 11, 2008

The Green Party of the United States (GPUS) will be holding its 2008 Presidential Nominating Convention in Chicago from July 10-14, 2008. The Green Party of Virginia (GPVA) is the institution recognized by the GPUS as representative of the State of Virginia, and has been allotted 8 delegates as of this writing, the privilege of whom will be to cast votes for a presidential nominee at this convention. The GPUS has allowed the GPVA the right to select these delegates, and the votes they cast, according to the GPVA's own rules.

### Conditions which must be met by the Preference System

To that end, at its February 2nd General Meeting, the GPVA agreed to hold a Presidential Preference Primary among its membership, and authorized the use of a point-based system of rules for gauging the membership's presidential preference, with the conditions that :

1. The exist options on the membership ballot for "None-of-the above" (NOTA) and write-in candidates.
2. The votes cast by delegates for candidates (or options) at the convention (hereinafter known as "delegate votes") will be in proportion to the relative number of points cast by the membership (hereinafter known as "ballot points") for these same candidates or options, to the maximum extent possible given current qualification status of such candidates/options at the time of voting.
3. The point-based system used must allow points forfeited by losing or disqualified candidates or options to be applied proportionately to surviving candidates or options.

### Balloting Process

The GPVA will be holding its Presidential Preference Primary from March 11, 2008 to April 11, 2008, via electronic and paper means:

1. GPVA members who have a valid email address on file as of March 3, 2008 will be sent an email containing information which will allow them to use an online ballot hosted at the GPVA's web domain, as long as they do so by April 11, 2008.
2. GPVA members who do not have a valid email address on file, but have a valid Virginia physical address on file as of March 3, 2008, will be sent a postcard ballot by mail, which must be returned at their expense no later than April 11, 2008.
3. GPVA members who have neither a valid email address nor VA physical address on file will need to contact Chris Fink and make arrangements, if they wish to vote in this primary.

## **Ballot Validity**

A valid ballot is described as follows :

1. Each ballot shall contain the name of each candidate officially recognized as still in the race by the Green Party of the United States on their [Presidential Campaign Support Committee page](#) as of March 8, 2008. Ballots shall also contain a "None-Of-The-Above" (NOTA) option, and a space for a write-in candidate.
2. Each ballot shall allow the voter to assign a positive integer number of "points" to each candidate or option, including NOTA and a write-in candidate. Blank point boxes shall count as zero (0) points. The total of all points assigned by a single voter must equal 100. If it does not, the ballot is still valid, but the ballot points will be renormalized to sum to 100 according to the renormalization process described below.
3. A ballot can be considered invalid if it is submitted with negative or non-integer points assigned to any candidate or option, if more than one write-in candidate is submitted on this same ballot, if the voter's intent cannot be determined due to ballot illegibility, or if deliberate intent to misinterpret the rules is evidenced.
4. If more than one ballot, electronic or paper, is submitted by the same voter, only the first valid ballot received will be counted.

## **Description of the Delegate Vote Assignment Process**

The formal process by which the national party will be conducting its delegate vote count has not, at the time of this writing, been posted on the GPUS website, but the GPVA has received, via its National Committee membership, an unofficial document which can be viewed here : [GPUSConventionvoting.pdf](#). It states that the convention may have multiple rounds of delegate voting. At the beginning of each round, the following process will be used to decide Virginia's delegate votes:

1. **Assessment of Candidate/Option Qualification** : The Green Party of the United States, via its procedure for conducting the delegate vote, will keep a running list of those candidates who are still qualified, and those who have been disqualified, due to insufficient vote count in prior rounds, withdrawal of candidacy, or other reason. The Virginia delegation will use this list as its basis for 2nd and higher voting rounds, but will not drop any declared or write-in candidate, or NOTA option, in the first round without reference to a specific GPUS requirement. No such party requirement exists at the time of this writing, to the knowledge of the GPVA's National Committee members, and so it is expected that all candidates and options are open and viable for 1st-round voting.
2. **Removal of Disqualified Candidates/Options, and Vote Reassignment** : Each primary ballot will be processed by removing any points assigned to disqualified candidates or options. Each ballot will then be renormalized to 100 points according to the renormalization process described below. This effectively re-assigns disqualified points to remaining, still-qualified candidates/options in a manner proportional to their relative support.

3. Assessment of Delegate Vote Threshold : To receive a Virginia delegate vote in this round, a candidate or option must receive a point total equal to or above a certain threshold. This threshold is calculated as the sum of all point totals on all valid ballots (100 points times the number of valid ballots), divided by the number of delegate votes available to be cast by our delegation. This threshold will be registered as a floating-point number. NOTE: If the convention rules allow half-votes to be submitted by the delegation, the process being described here still pertains, but with effectively twice the number of delegate votes, and so any language herein referring to "delegate votes" shall be understood as meaning "delegate half-votes".

4. Calculation of Candidate/Option Point Totals : For each still-qualified candidate or option, the total number of points received over all valid ballots is computed.

5. Assessment of Delegate Votes per Candidate/Option : The number of delegate votes earned by each candidate or option is calculated by dividing the corresponding point total from Step 4 by the delegate vote threshold in Step 5, and rounding DOWN to the nearest integer. Any remaining fraction for a candidate/option corresponds to points which are insufficient to fill the threshold for another delegate vote, so there may be remaining unassigned delegate votes at this point as well. The method by which these remaining delegate votes are filled via an iterative Remainder Renormalization Process described here:

a. Assessment of Number of Reassignable Remainder Points : The candidate or option with the lowest number of unassigned (i.e. remainder) points will have these remainder points reassigned to other candidates/options. If there are two or more candidates/options who share this lowest number of remainder points, all of their remainder points shall be similarly reallocated. Any delegate votes already earned via Step 5 above still stand.

b. Assessment of Relative Support among Reassignment Recipients : The relative amount of support among candidates/options to whom the remainder points will be assigned is gauged by dividing their current remainder points by the total number of remainder points they share. This fraction is considered zero (0) for those candidates/options whose remainder points are being reassigned.

c. Reassignment : Each candidate/option is assigned an additional number of remainder points (floating precision) equal to the product of their relative support fraction and the total number of reassignable remainder points.

d. Reassessment : If any candidate/option now has a new remainder point assignment equal to or greater than the threshold for earning a delegate vote, that delegate vote is assigned to that candidate/option, and the corresponding threshold number of points is subtracted from that candidate/option's current number of remainder points. Once all candidates/options are so assessed, if any delegate votes remain unassigned, the remainder renormalization process continues from Step (a) above. If at any time, two or more candidates share the same highest number of remainder points, and the Remainder Renormalization Process is unable to uniquely and fairly reapportion the reassignable remainder points among these candidates, the Virginia convention delegates shall have the authority to apportion the remaining undecidable delegate votes in such a

manner as they choose. This is expected to be a very unlikely occurrence.

### **Ballot Renormalization Process**

a. If the total of all points on this ballot for still-qualified candidates (including write-ins) other than NOTA is zero (0), the ballot will be counted as having 100 points for NOTA, and the renormalization of this ballot is complete.

b. Otherwise, the sum of all points on this ballot for still-qualified candidates (including write-ins) and NOTA is calculated. The new, renormalized value for each qualified candidate or option is then calculated by dividing the corresponding current value by the aforementioned point sum, and multiplying by 100. From this time on, the point values are considered floating-point-precision, and no rounding or other integerization is performed.

### **Example**

A simple example, with two remainder iterations, is given here :

[PrimaryPointSystemExample.pdf](#). The MS-Excel file used to perform the sample calculations is available by contacting Chris Fink at the number below. Keep in mind that the actual delegate vote assignment process will be conducted via specifically-written computer code, not an Excel spreadsheet.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions about this Presidential Primary process, feel free to contact [Chris Fink](#), 540-786-0608.

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**GPVA**

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**The Green Party of Virginia**  
*Latest Update: March 10, 2008*