

RULING OF THE APPEALS COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPEAL OF THE MANASSAS PARK UNIT COMMITTEE OF THE DECISION OF THE 10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE

Issued Date: August 20, 2024

FACTS OF THE MATTER

This appeal was brought by the chair and other officers of the Manassas Park Unit Committee. At a meeting on June 11, 2024, the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee voted on a motion to “...*to dissolve the Manassas Park GOP Committee...*” which passed by a vote of 7-4. In passing this motion, it is apparent the District Committee was exercising its authority under Article IV, Section D, Paragraph 1 (e) of the State Party Plan (SPP).

This Appeals Committee received various written documentation from both parties and held a hearing via Zoom on Monday, August 12, 2024 to allow each party to present their case and for appeals committee members to ask questions of the parties.

From the evidence gathered, in the 2024 reorganization cycle the Manassas Park Unit Committee did not elect delegates to the 10th Congressional District Republican Convention or elect a unit chair and members as required by Article VI, Section B of the SPP. The Unit Committee was later informed of this failure and decided to re-organize by calling a mass meeting for June 6, 2024. That mass meeting was held and officers and members were elected according to minutes that were provided of that meeting.

Five days later on June 11, the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee passed its motion on dissolution of the Manassas Park Unit Committee. It was known at the time by the members of the District Committee that the Manassas Park Unit Committee had reorganized on June 6.

ALLEGED VIOLATION

The Manassas Park Unit Committee asks in bringing this appeal “...*that the decision for the unit's dissolution be overturned and the District Committee carefully establish the relevant facts in the record, as they may have relevance to future actions and decisions for the best success of the Manassas Park Republican Committee.*”

The Manassas Park Unit Committee presented evidence that it is functioning in that it held the mass meeting on June 6 to re-organize, has officers, has several current members, manned the polls for the June 2024 Republican Primary, and even recently filed a statement of organization with the Department of Elections for campaign finance reporting purposes.

DECISION AND REASONING

The (SPP), Article IV, Section D, Paragraph 1 (e) states:

Whenever the District Committee shall determine that a Unit Committee, or its Chairman, has failed to function as such, the District Committee shall appoint a new Committee, or a new Chairman, as the case may be. A Committee thus created shall perform their duties provided in the State Party Plan until their successors are elected at a Mass Meeting or Convention called for that purpose.

As written, this provision gives broad discretion and latitude to District Committees to determine that a unit committee has failed to function. Notably, a definition of failed to function is not provided by the SPP. Absent such definition, it is the prerogative of the District Committee to make such a determination as to the meaning of failing to function. District Committees are best suited to make this determination with respect to their subordinate unit committees.

Thus, the decision of the District Committee to dissolve the Manassas Park Unit Committee is upheld.

Interestingly, it became apparent during the appeals hearing that the Manassas Park Unit Committee was still operating even after the District Committee voted to dissolve it. Presumably, this was permitted because the decision of the District Committee to dissolve the unit committee was being appealed. That Manassas Park was still operating was acknowledged by the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee. We could find no authority that would allow for this continued operation of a unit committee after a finding by the relevant district committee to dissolve or declare such unit committee as failing to function. To allow Manassas Park to continue operations was a disservice and must also be addressed in our decision.

We find that the District Committee does have culpability in this matter. Concurrent with the failed to function determination, the District Committee should have appointed a new chairman or new unit committee, as appropriate to the reasons for dissolution. Further, had the Manassas Park Unit Committee not been functioning at an optimal level for a long period of time, the District Committee should have acted sooner rather than later. Indeed, several members of this appeals committee have concerns with the timing of the unit's reorganization on June 6 and the District Committee's actions on June 11, a mere five days later.

Fully functioning unit committees are fundamental to the effective functioning of the Republican Party of Virginia, especially in this critical election year. Technically, there has not been a Manassas Park Unit Committee in existence for over two months now. Therefore, we direct the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee to take action to appoint a new unit chair and unit committee for Manassas Park and such a new unit chair and unit committee is further directed to hold a Mass Meeting, Convention, or Party Canvass to reorganize the committee. It is imperative that a new reorganization opportunity be held in order to allow full transparency

and for maximum participation from interested parties in seeking officer or membership positions.

FINAL DETERMINATION

The decision of the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee to dissolve the Manassas Park Unit Committee is UPHeld.

FURTHER, the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee is DIRECTED to appoint a new unit chair and unit committee for Manassas Park within 14 days from the date this decision was issued.

FURTHER, such new unit chair and unit committee appointed by the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee is DIRECTED to adopt and issue the proper call to hold a Mass Meeting, Convention, or Party Canvass no later than 30 days following their appointment. Such issued call shall at a minimum include in its purposes the election of a unit chairman and unit committee members in order to properly re-establish this unit committee.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

This decision was unanimously adopted by the members of the appeals committee appointed by the RPV Chairman in this matter.

We appreciate the representatives of both Manassas Park and the 10th Congressional District Committee answering our questions and presenting to our committee.

Adam Tolbert, Appeals Committee Chair, 9th District Chair
William Curtis, 2nd District SCC Representative
Jean Gannon, VFRW SCC Representative
Eric Phillips, 9th District SCC Representative
Nicholas Proffitt, 2nd District SCC Representative