



MONTGOMERY COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS

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Shunned by the Republican Party of Texas, County Chairman Sues Political Opponents

Files, Then Dismisses Lawsuit When Challenged

CONROE, TX - County Chairman Bryan Christ ran on a platform of bringing the Montgomery County Republican Party together. Instead, he and two of his followers filed a lawsuit on December 4, 2023, against his conservative political opponent and 17 other grassroots precinct chairs in the party he was elected to lead.

When challenged by the defendants' attorney on the lack of merit in their case, Chairman Christ's attorneys filed for nonsuit (a procedure in which a plaintiff drops a lawsuit) and the Judge dismissed the case on December 14. The counterclaims filed by the defendants in the case are still active.

Chairman Christ waited until just before the Primary Election filing deadline to file the lawsuit in what many are viewing as an effort to intimidate and silence his political opponents.

The Situation at a Glance



Precinct Chairs were duly appointed when vacancies arose



Chairman Christ refused to report duly appointed Precinct Chairs to the Texas SOS



State Chairman recognized the local party majority



Chairman Christ sued his political opponent & 17 Precinct Chairs



Court papers improperly served at Dec. 5 party meeting, temporary restraining order kept Precinct Chairs from participating in political process



Case challenged on the merits by defendants; Chairman Christ dropped the case

Chairman Discourages Grassroots Volunteers From Getting Involved in the Party

Although the Chairman has publicly claimed he wants to "[stand in the gap](#)" and make sure no Republicans wishing to serve are kept off the ballot, Chairman Christ's lawsuit says otherwise. Bringing a restraining order and lawsuit against precinct chairs (volunteers) shows the Chairman's true intentions to intimidate those who do not follow his dictatorial leadership. As several of these current precinct chairs have filed again to run on the 2024 Primary Ballot, he is discouraging them and others from getting involved in the political process.

The 18 precinct chairs who were sued are volunteers who were vetted by the party's Vacancy Committee and duly appointed by the majority of elected precinct chairs to fill vacancies on the local party's County Executive Committee (CEC), per Article III, Section 4 of the [party bylaws](#). They are now having to use their personal savings to defend themselves for daring to insist that Chairman Christ follow Texas Election Code, party rules, and party bylaws.

One of the precinct chairs, Gwen Withrow, is Chairman Christ's opponent in the 2024 Primary Election. Withrow is a conservative member of the [State Republican Executive Committee](#), which governs the Republican Party of Texas. She is running against Christ for County Chair to [heal the division](#) and bring the party back together.

The Plaintiffs' Case

On December 5, 2023, members of the Montgomery County Republican Party's County Executive Committee (CEC) met for a CEC meeting to be followed by the statutorily required Montgomery County District Executive Committee (DEC) meeting.

The DEC meeting was [called](#) by Republican Party of Texas (RPT) Chairman, Matt Rinaldi, for the same location that the Montgomery County Republican Party was conducting its December 5 CEC [meeting](#), instead of the location where Chairman Christ and a handful of his followers were planning to meet. In response to the RPT's recognition of the party majority as the legitimate Montgomery County Republican Party, attorneys Bruce Tough and Eric Opiela immediately filed a lawsuit on behalf of Chairman Christ, Precinct 30 Chair Matt Mitchell, and Precinct 105 Chair Charles Parada.

The lawsuit sought to prevent duly appointed precinct chairs from participating in the DEC meeting and requested the Judge make a declaratory judgment that the defendants are not valid precinct chairs.

A serving agent showed up at the December 5 CEC meeting and improperly served most of the defendants by tossing a stack of petitions on a welcome table and loudly declaring that everyone was served before storming out of the room. The serving agent disrupted the meeting and inflicted extreme and unnecessary anxiety and distress on precinct chairs and Republican Party visitors. Several of the defendants who were not in attendance did not find out they were being sued until they heard the news from other defendants days later.

Duly Elected Precinct Chairs Prevented From Participating in the Political Process

The lawsuit included a temporary restraining order (TRO) to prevent the 18 defendants from voting in the DEC meeting. The Judge's decision to grant a TRO did not constitute a ruling on

the merit of the case filed by Chairman Christ and did not make a judgment on whether the precinct chairs were legitimate.

The [Defendants' Answer](#), filed by attorney Warren Norred on December 13, explains that the TRO was wrongfully issued without considering all of the facts and interfered with the defendants' right of association. And since the DEC meeting had already happened, the injunction hearing appeared to be moot, and thus frivolous, while disallowing the defendants proper due process to dispute the claims.

Norred was recommended by a member of Republican Party of Texas leadership and recently served as a member of the State Republican Executive Committee. He is known for representing citizens [fighting against government abuses](#). No party funds were used for the defendants' defense.

Lack of Merit in the Case

Norred spoke to Chairman Christ's counsel prior to filing the [Defendants' Answer](#), enumerating the lack of merit in the case. Some examples of the lack of merit detailed in the Defendants' Answer include:

- **The plaintiffs were not irreparably harmed.** Chairman Christ's small group of followers is greatly outnumbered on the CEC and the lack of participation by the majority of the defendants did not change the outcome of the District Executive Committee meeting, but did interfere with the defendants' right of participation in the political process.
- **Chairman Christ didn't show up to lead the District Executive Committee meeting called by State Chairman Rinaldi.** Instead, Chairman Christ held his own improperly called meeting (see Texas Election Code [171.054](#)).
- **The request for declaratory judgment was unsupportable because not all of the parties who would be affected were named in the suit.** The Defendants' Answer states, "Plaintiffs' inadequate request does not include the members of the Montgomery County Republican Party who will be impacted, the association itself, the officers of the party who are responsible for administering its members' activities, or the Republican Party of Texas, which Christ wishes to bend to his fanciful misunderstanding of reality. By naming only the members themselves, Plaintiffs' suit simply fails in its fundamental goal."
- **The plaintiffs' argument that the 18 named defendants are not legitimate precinct chairs would not hold up in Court.** The plaintiffs' suit argues that the defendants are not legitimate precinct chairs because they are not listed on the Texas Secretary of State website. What the suit fails to mention is that Chairman Christ is statutorily responsible for entering the precinct chairs on the website himself. The Secretary of State has nothing to do with approving or verifying precinct chairs listed.

The plaintiffs also claim that several of the defendants swore that they were not precinct chairs when they filled out their application to be on the Primary Election ballot because they did not check the "incumbent box" on the form.

The Defendants' Answer explains, "As the Court can see by actually reading the applications, the applications filed with Christ do not include a statement that they are not incumbents. They swore no such thing...All these individuals were aware that Christ would not accept their applications had they checked the box, which is not part of the Election Code, but merely provided by the Secretary of State to assist party chairs."

The Plaintiffs Dropped the Case

Following this discussion between the attorneys, Chairman Christ's counsel filed a nonsuit on December 13 to dismiss the case and the hearing was canceled by the Judge on December 14.

Chairman Christ withdrew the case, not the defendants. Attorney Warren Norred never asked for the case to be withdrawn and never tried to postpone, suspend, or draw out the case. The Defendants' Answer was filed in an expedited manner, not drawn out as a stall tactic as Chairman Christ later claimed in his December 12 news release.

The Defendants' Counterclaims Remain Active

The Defendants' Answer includes a counterclaim for wrongful injunctive relief under the common law, stating that the plaintiffs "could never win at a likelihood of success had the Court been given all the facts."

It further states that a substantial sanction is necessary because plaintiffs' claims are "objectively frivolous. Plaintiff attempts to bring injunctive claims only to attack a political rival, including Gwen Withrow, who is challenging Plaintiff for chair, as though the judicial system exists to make for cheap political points in a third-world banana republic." The defendants are awaiting judgment on the counterclaim.

Chairman Christ Tries to Spin the Truth to Cover for His Failed Lawsuit

On December 12, Chairman Christ published an "update" so full of falsehoods and spin that attorney for the defendants, Warren Norred, [published a response](#).

Take Action

Montgomery County has historically been a Republican stronghold that figured significantly in keeping Texas "red." Chairman Christ has had two terms to bring the party together, but under his failed leadership, the party now is more dysfunctional than ever before.

1. We encourage all Montgomery County Republicans to make plans to vote in the March 2024 Primary Election. Learn more about the Primary Election [here](#).
2. Click [here](#) for a graphic outlining Chairman Christ's damaging actions as County Chair that you can share with fellow Republicans as they prepare to vote in the Primary Election.