

SECTION 3**Election Policy****Election/Voting Procedures “Cheat Sheet”**

Note: This information reflects accepted Club “past practice” and guidelines found in Robert’s Rules of Order 10th Edition (*RRNR*).

Nominations: Held at two consecutive Club meetings. Generally, one or both of these meetings will be in March, as the Constitution requires Elections to be held in April and also requires a 2-week (1 meeting) interval between the end of Nominations and Elections.

Procedure:

During “New Business”, the chair should ask for nominations for each office, starting with the office of “President”. (Past Club practice requires that the nominee accept the nomination at that time, or has previously informed an officer or the Elections chair that they will accept the nomination.) Once no more nominations for the position are made, the chair declares nominations for that position to be closed (but only for that night, during the first week of nominations) and moves on to the rest of the positions, successively. According to *RRNR*: no member should nominate more than one candidate for a particular position, and no “second” is necessary for a nomination.

Two-week Interval: New in 2003. In essence, this targets the meeting that falls between Nominations and Elections for a “Candidates Forum” and/or any other activities that would allow the candidates to campaign and the members to question them.

Voting by Proxy: Prohibited by the Club’s Constitution & By-Laws.

Absentee Ballots: Current Club practice provides for Absentee Ballots (for Club Elections and Constitutional Amendments) only to members who are prevented from attending the Election night meeting by participation in a Club-organized event or Club-related business. The appropriate VP or the President is required to certify this participation. (A proposed Constitutional Amendment which would have added the Club’s Absentee Ballot policy to the Club Constitution & By-Laws, presented to the membership for vote on 1/16/03, did not receive enough votes to pass.)

Elections: By written ballot. The ballots for Officer positions and Board of Director positions should be separate, as candidates for the former may also be nominated for a Director position (in the event that they lose the race for the Officer position). For elections, and any other voting business of the Club, a quorum (10% of the members or 100 members, whichever is less) is required. However, once a quorum is established, the numbers of votes cast does not need to equal the quorum amount (hopefully, this will never happen!) and voting can continue until someone questions whether a quorum is present. At that point, the presence (or absence) of a quorum must be determined. If a quorum no longer exists, all voting must cease immediately; the only exception to this is for a vote to Adjourn.

Procedure:

1. At the start of the meeting, the Elections chair (or another member) should make a motion in the following format: “Madame (Mister) President, I ask unanimous consent to Suspend the rules in order to hold elections during the course of the meeting instead of during New Business”. The chair asks for a “second” and then asks if there are any objections. If not, the motion passes. If there are, the chair proceeds with the standard voting procedure; the motion requires a two-thirds majority to pass.
2. The Elections chair should have the candidates for Officer positions assemble at the front of the room, in order to present their speeches. Each candidate (or his or her representative) has 3 minutes to speak and is allowed one supporting speaker, who has 1 minute to speak. (For the sake of time, uncontested candidates should limit their speeches and omit supporting speakers.) Once all have spoken, the Elections chair calls for a vote, giving members a time limit for the casting of ballots (e.g.: “10 minutes” or “by 9:15pm”). Only ballots for Officer positions should be accepted at this time.

SECTION 3**Election Policy****Elections, Procedure:** *(continued)*

3. *Important note:* In the past, we had the Secretary “cast one vote to signify unanimous approval” in cases where voting on an Officer position was uncontested. Unfortunately, this practice must cease immediately, as it is in direct violation of *RRNR*: (p. 398-399) “When the bylaws require a vote to be taken by ballot, this requirement cannot be suspended, even by unanimous vote. Thus, it is out of order in such a case to move that one person – the secretary, for example – cast the ballot of the assembly.” (Oh well, more counting!)
4. During the balloting and counting interval, the meeting should return to the normal course of business
5. For each position, the first candidate receiving a simple majority wins. If no majority is achieved on the first ballot, the top two candidates by numerical count will be retained for the succeeding ballot. In case of a tie for the top two candidates, all candidates included in the tie are retained for the succeeding ballot.
6. Once all Officers position votes have been cast and counted, the results should be announced to the membership. If any winning Officer candidate is also a candidate for a Director position, the Elections chair should direct members to strike that candidate’s name from the Board of Directors ballot form.
7. The Elections chair should now have all candidates for Director positions assemble for their speeches. Each candidate (or his or her representative) has 1 minute to speak; no supporting speakers are allowed. Once all have spoken, the Elections chair calls for a vote, again giving a time limit.
8. If any other Club business for the evening has not been dispensed with, it should be conducted now.
9. The number of open Director positions depends on whether the immediate past President is self-succeeding or not. If so, the number is 10; otherwise, there will be 9 open positions and the past President will automatically occupy the 10th position.
10. Candidates receiving a simple majority will be declared the winners (up to the number of available positions). If there are any seats not filled by majority vote, then the number of open positions will include those candidates having the highest plurality (number of votes), in order of plurality, equal to the number of open positions PLUS the next two candidates in order of plurality. The Elections chair should direct voters to write in these candidates names on the run-off ballot(s) and voting shall continue until all available positions are filled.

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