

SCOUTS-L

**DISTRICT
ORGANIZATION
AND
OPERATIONS**

Date: Tue, 6 Feb 1996 22:46:28 -0500
From: Drew Mrenna <dmrenna@USA.PIPELINE.COM>
Subject: Members-at-large
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

Hi gang,

Just returned from our District Meeting. I am a bit upset. I hope this does not open a hornets nest. The topic of nominating members-at-large for vote at our districts annual business meeting was brought up. As COR I made a request that a brief description of each nominee be compiled and distributed before the actual meeting. I was first told no. Other CORs at the meeting protested. They believe I have a valid point. Why should we vote for people we do not know? We were then told by our DE that this procedure is written into the BSA by-laws. We were also told that this was an all or nothing vote. Is this really true? If there was one person on the list that I disagreed as a candidate for member-at-large, I would have to turn down the whole list. I told them that I would vote NO if I did not get the requested information. Since very few CORs attend this meeting, my vote really counts. The few other CORs are on the same side. A resolution was made to attempt to compile this information and distribute it to the CORs before the meeting is held. It is still an all or nothing vote.

Am I off the wall here? The COR training I took just mentioned that I am a voting District & Council member. Yes, my gripe also goes to the council. They do the same thing. In a real corporation (at least the ones I got to vote in when I own stock) this is not done this way. Information is mailed prior to the annual meeting, inviting your attendance, with a proxy card if you cannot attend.

Can anybody provide more information? It might help if I knew better what the functions of the members-at-large were. I was told that any person working on a district committee (membership, camping, ...) need to be members-at-large. Also that members-at-large could hold other unit or district positions.

We were also told that the members-at-large are not registered until after their appointment. A background check is done afterwards. This sounds backwards to me, IMO the background check should be done first for new members-at-large. Why vote on somebody that may be disqualified

afterwards? Also some of our members-at-large are not registered. This does not sound right either.

If this is the case, no wonder a few CORs attend district or council meetings. Why bother. (Sorry, I am upset).

Thanks for being patient with me. I await some words of wisdom.

Drew

DMrenna@usa.pipeline.com

COR - P720 & T618, Hickory Ridge Community Association, National Pike District (A 1995 Quality District), Baltimore Area Council

Date: Wed, 7 Feb 1996 12:04:11 -0600
From: Kathie Cerveny <kathie@EECS.NWU.EDU>
Subject: Re: Members-at-large
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

Yes, they are correct. The district nominating system and the committee does all of the screening of candidates. The CORs have a vote, and the slate of the entire members-at-large MUST be mailed no later than 2 weeks PRIOR to the vote.

If there is ONE dissention, the slate is down. If the slate is down, it is down for 30 days. ALL rules pertaining to the council annual nomination and election procedures applies if and where nothing different is written within the COUNCIL/DISTRICT ANNUAL NOMINATING AND ELECTRION PROCEDURES (BLUE PAPER). It the district holds their annual election less than 30 days to 12/31 of any year, than the district will lapse PRIOR to the required 30 days for the NOMINATING COMMITTEE to address the problem that brought about the downed slate.

See the publication available on COUNCIL/DISTRICT ELECTION PROCEDURES; your own CHARTERED ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE manual, no. 33118m latest printing 1995.

The election procedure in BSA is NOT the same as other organizations it is:

1. Nominating committee chairman and members are chosen by the current

District Chairman (or Council President if it is a council nominating committee);

2. The proposed nominating chair and members is submitted to the Council Key

3 (Council President; Council Commissioner; and Council Scout Executive) which must approve, by written notice from the Council President, that the proposed members are satisfactory to the Council President. He/she may at

this point APPOINT a member of the Council Member-at-large members to sit on

the district nominating committee and/or as chair of such committee to insure that the BSA and local council by-laws on election procedures are indeed followed.

3. Upon approval (with or without additional appointed members by the Council President) the District Chairman officially appoints the chair and committee.

4. The committee solicits for nominations for the district committee members-at-large (but are NOT allowed to solicit for positions on the committee).

5. The District Chairman put up for election MUST be on the slate of members-at-large, as does the recommended person for district commissioner.

6. At election:

1). written slate must be MAILED to all CURRENT (elected at LAST annual election ---not newly added people throughout the year ---) members-at-large

and all CORs of the district. IF there are 2 listed CORs for one organization, that organization has only ONE vote. They may not split it among themselves, and the double registration should be corrected. The COR

is THE head of the organization's Scouting Dept. Only ONE such head per organization, no matter how many units.

2). Annual Election Meeting: chaired by Nominating Chairman, NOT the district chairman or D.E. --- two parts:

a. First the vote BY the members-at-large from the previous annual slate vote on the proposed slate for members-at-large. (voice or written ballot is allowed.) If a written ballot is used, only members of the nominating committee may handle the ballots, count, etc. The vote MUST be an all or nothing as explained earlier.

b. Once the members-at-large are voted in - then - the district chairman can be voted on. IF the district chairman candidate (who must be on the new members-at-large slate) does not get an all or nothing vote, he/she is not elected, but the district does not close down.

c. ALL district vice-chairmen are also on the SAME slate and SAME vote as the district chairman. So again - all or nothing vote.

d. Upon election, the new District Chairman RECOMMENDS a candidate for District Commissioner -- and that person is then (on the paper form provided) presented as a nominee to the COUNCIL COMMISSIONER, who must approve - present to the Council Executive Board for approval and vote - at the council annual meeting (yet another time for you the COR to vote) on an all or nothing vote.

NOTE: No time is the D.E. in this process. We used to refer to our unique election process as a Democratic dictatorship. But --- really --- it gets the job done -- and the tenure IS only one year at a time, guys - so if you don't like someone, get them out through the proper channels -- present your case to the next nominating committee.

By the way -- the nominating committee are CHARGED by the Council President and District Chairman to SPEAK to each person who is being considered, and MAY ask which of the three functions the district committee is charged to handle, they would be

interested in working with --- remembering that EVERY member-at-large must be assigned to one of those 3 functions: membership/program/finance. Commissioners are separately registered and are never the responsibility of the district committee.

Hope this helps. Your resource (district election procedure) will confirm. Just keep in mind that this is a movement where we have a pled "On my honor...."

this is just another one of those times where we can set the example of honor, reliability, trust.. or...

Kathie

Kathie Cerveny
Northwestern University
2145 Sheridan Rd.
Evanston, IL 60208-3118

PH:847/467-2172

VC Membership/Relationships
Troop Committee member
Pack Committee Chairman
BSA Trainer
Antelope EC-CS-2
Eagle EC-215W

Date: Wed, 7 Feb 1996 20:55:47 -0500
From: "Bruce E. Cobern" <bec@PIPELINE.COM>
Subject: Re: Members-at-large

On Feb 07, 1996 12:04:11, 'Kathie Cerveny <kathie@EECS.NWU.EDU>' wrote:

>If there is ONE dissension, the slate is down.

You seem to be saying that the vote must be unanimous. That is not the case. It is true that the vote is either for or against the entire slate, but the slate need only get a majority of the vote to be elected.

>If the slate is down, it is down for 30 days.

Just because the district slate is voted down does NOT mean the District shuts down. The old committee serves until their replacements are elected and qualified. Thus, the old committee continues to run the district. If the district recharter in the interim then I would guess that it would be the old committee that would recharter, pending subsequent replacement with

the new committee.

>ALL rules pertaining to the council annual nomination and election procedures applies >if and where nothing different is written within the COUNCIL/DISTRICT ANNUAL >NOMINATING AND ELECTION PROCEDURES (BLUE PAPER).

I believe that councils can adopt rules and regulations that differ from those in the national material. I remember reading that those rules apply in the absence of contradictory rules adopted by the council.

>It the district holds their annual election less than 30 days to >12/31 of any year, than the district will lapse PRIOR to the required 30 >days for the NOMINATING COMMITTEE to address the problem that brought about >the downed slate.

Not every District or Council recharter on a calendar year, to the best of my knowledge. We recharter in June and hold the elections for MAL's at our May meeting. However, the Council bylaws provide that the terms of the District Chairman does not start until September.

>The election procedure in BSA is NOT the same as other organizations it is:

Let's see, what it REALLY is is totally undemocratic. There is absolutely NO provision for an opposition to any recommendation of the nominating committee, either for MAL or for Chairman or Vice-chairman.

>4. The committee solicits for nominations for the district committee >members-at-large (but are NOT allowed to solicit for positions on the >committee).

I suppose by this you mean that the nominating committee cannot recruit an Advancement Chairman, for example, because it is the District Chairman's job to select his operating committee chairmen. While I certainly agree with this in theory, in practice very often discussions are held prior to the nominations and, unfortunately, the nominating committee ends up dealing with all of the "I won't hold this position if so and so is the District Chairman" or "unless so and so has this position" etc.

>a. First the vote BY the members-at-large from the previous annual >slate vote on the proposed slate for members-at-large. (voice or written ballot is >allowed.) If a written ballot is used, only members of the nominating >committee may handle the ballots, count, etc.

A couple of points. First, the people who vote in this election are ALL the members of the old District Committee - the old MAL's AND all the CORs.

Second, it is my understanding that these ballots are to be conducted following Robert's Rules. Thus, the ballot is by voice vote or show of hands, UNLESS a motion is made for a secret ballot, in which case the secret ballot motion MUST be approved by a majority, by voice vote or show of hands. It is NOT true that any ONE member of the group can force a secret ballot merely by demanding it.

>The vote MUST be an all or nothing as explained earlier.

All or nothing meaning the entire slate approved by a majority of those present and voting.

>b. Once the members-at-large are voted in - then - the district chairman can >be voted on. IF the district chairman candidate (who must be on the new >members-at-large slate) does not get an all or nothing vote, he/she is not >elected, but the district does not close down.

>

>c. ALL district vice-chairmen are also on the SAME slate and SAME >vote as the district chairman. So again - all or nothing vote.

Yes, again the entire slate of officers gets voted on at one time, with a majority vote being required to elect. However, this time it is the NEW committee which votes, not the OLD committee which voted for the NEW committee.

>We used to refer to our unique election process as a Democratic dictatorship. But >--- really --- it gets the job done -- and the tenure IS only one year at a time, >guys - so if you don't like someone, get them out through the proper channels -- >present your case to the next nominating committee.

To call it a democratic dictatorship is being charitable. No matter what

you do, if the nominating committee chooses to keep somebody on the ballot

there is no effective recourse. I have never seen either a committee slate or an officer slate voted down. It is really very similar to the old communist one party system.

The message it sends is that the organization is afraid to allow the same democratic methods that it tells its troops to use to select their leaders to select the district's leaders. Not a very positive message, is it. I know you feel otherwise, but you are on the inside, as am I, but if you sit back and reflect on it, what possible justification can be given for this method? Preventing dissension? I believe it fosters it because it prevents any of this from getting out in the open for discussion.

>By the way -- the nominating committee are CHARGED by the Council President

>and District Chairman to SPEAK to each person who is being considered, and

MAY ask >which of the three functions the district committee is charged to handle, they would >be interested in working with --- remembering that EVERY member-at-large must be >assigned to one of those 3 functions: membership/program/finance. Commissioners are >separately registered and are never the responsibility of the district committee.

MUST be assigned to one of the three? Really? Does it REALLY say that?

--

Bruce E. Cobern

Date: Wed, 7 Feb 1996 18:50:17 -0800

From: Warren Williams <warrenw@FELIX.TECLINK.NET>

Organization: Eastern District, Andrew Jackson Council, BSA

Subject: Re: District Committee Key questions

Jim Miller Jr. wrote:

>

> I remember the announcement being made about the addition of a District

> Committee Key this year, but I have yet to see any details on the award. I

> have a few questions about it and I was wondering if anyone here could

> answer them:

>

> First (in my case anyway) Is a Division Committee(i.e. Council Exploring
> Committee) eligible to receive this award? We do function as a District.

Would that be considered an Explorer Service Team? There is a separate Service Team Key.

> What are the requirements? (Training, tenure, meetings)

District Committee Key Requirements

Training: Review "The District", No. 33079, and the Highlight book for your position. Discuss the role of the district and your position with your committee chairman or district executive. Complete the Key Scouter's Workshop.

Tenure: Complete three years as a district committee member within a five-year period.

Performance: Your district must earn the Quality District Award at least once within a three-year period. Take part actively in six district committee meetings. Help give leadership to eight projects of your operating committee or other projects as approved by your district executive (organizing a unit, running a training course, planning a camporee event, completing an SME assignment, etc.)

> Better yet, what BSA publication is the award application form included
> in?

"Leadership Training: Plans, Procedures, Materials"; BSA No. 34169

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YiS,

Warren Williams, Chairman

<warrenw@teclink.net>

Camp Promotion and Outdoor Committee

Eastern District

Andrew Jackson Council

Jackson, Mississippi

<http://members.aol.com/ajxnbsa/>

Date: Sun, 28 Jan 1996 01:36:52 -0500 (EST)

From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>

Subject: Re: Who does what.

Mike Walton stated that ALL District Executives are expected to perform staff functions "on behalf and in the physical absense of" the KEY

volunteers of his or her District citing BSA's Southeast Region Administration Manual, page 14-5, second paragraph.

Mike, are you sure this is uniform and up-to-date? We are in the Northeast Region and are encouraged to have two-deep leadership in all positions including "Key" District positions. If the District Chairman is unable to make a meeting, the most senior Vice Chairman takes on the role of Chairman for the meeting. Likewise, I've filled in for the District Commissioner more than once in his absence. In our area we expect that volunteers will always have a back-up person to cover, if they are not available.

It seems to me that this should be a last resort that would only apply in a very small District that has severe problems in recruiting volunteers. And if it does apply, it should be a signal that volunteer recruiting is needed and now.

I can understand paraprofessional involvement in economically challenged areas where recruiting efforts have had less than stellar success, but I would hesitate to generalize this experience to all Districts.

The issue of whether professionals should be involved in program delivery is interesting and may be confusing because of the language we use. Every professional has a stake in program delivery and is involved to some degree through administrative functions like recruiting volunteers, acting as a staff advisor, etc. I don't think anyone was saying professionals have no role in program. On the other hand, should that role extend to running a program or activity?

My inclination would be to minimize any such role simply as matter of good personnel resource management. In any District we should be operating as a team and in that team the ratio of professionals to volunteers speaks for itself. In our District with over 2600 registered adults serving 6,800+ Scouts and only two professionals, I think it would be folly to commit professional resources to running programs that could be run by volunteers. I can guarantee you that our two professionals work more than 40 hours a week already doing a stellar job. :-) Now I realize that we are a little big and that in a very small District things may be a little different. But I wonder even there whether it makes sense to have a professional run a program that could be run by a volunteer.

I think we all want the professional staff to be supporting the program aspects of Scouting, which is a different issue from running a program.

We could discuss just what kind of support or how much is right, but that is really dependent on the needs of each District and its unique make-up. Consequently, I don't think there would be a universal correct answer on just how much support is right. No doubt some would argue for less fundraising :-) and more program, but the issue here is whether a professional should run a program.

I would encourage strong support of program, but stop there. I think that we are better served to build a strong volunteer base that runs programs.

**Speaking Only for Myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman
a/k/a Professor Beaver (WB), ASTA #2566, OA Vigil Honor '71, Eagle
Scout '67, Serving as Deputy District Commissioner for Training,
G.W.Dist., Nat. Capital Area Council, BSA - mfbowman@capaccess.org**