



PPCC Bylaws referral issues; April 12, 2018; Submitted by the Chair

For consideration by Bylaws Committee, and findings advised prior to the next area elections

Election related issues:

Independent oversight/administration of elections

It can be perceptually damaging when our elections are administered by board members and individuals who at times have been very vocal about their preferences for people and issues that have impacted the board. *Perceptions* can be just as important as conduct when it comes to maintaining the public trust. When candidates have clearly been preferred by the counters, there is a perception of impartiality and a question of conflict that *must* be addressed. The election Committee can be made of board members – preferably those whose positions on issues and candidates are not obvious – but those tasked with tallying the vote must be independent and unconnected to the outcome of the vote.

Suggestion: to appoint the non-voting legal advisor as the Chairman of the election committee, with the final authority over the appearance of the ballot, which ballots are disqualified, and the final certification/count.

PPCC Logo on Campaign Materials

Just as using the city seal on campaign materials is a disqualifying offense in NC elections, using the PPCC logo on campaign materials should be expressly prohibited in the Bylaws. This could be interpreted as a Council's endorsement of the candidate.

Multi-modal Voting

Paper ballots must be preserved for those who do not feel comfortable with digital ballots. Voters should not be dissuaded from voting one way or another by members of the EC. Voters should not, for example, approach the Farmers Market table ready to vote and then be told it is preferable that they vote online.

Release of Results

Full results of the election, including vote totals should be released publicly, all at once, when available.

Alternates Process

The same people (or substantially the same people) may not administer the elections and also be the ones who nominate the Alternates. This creates a tension whereby a candidate

cannot challenge the EC's conduct during the campaign, or the results of the election, without fearing retaliation during the Alternate selection process.

Suggestion 1: Having the newly elected Rep nominate their alternates, and then have them confirmed by the council voting members at a subsequent meeting.

Suggestion 2: Having a second place finisher (within a certain vote differential) automatically qualified as the 2nd Alternate.

Non election related matters:

Recording or live broadcast of Proceedings

All PPCC meetings or committee meetings should be audio recorded or live-streamed and made available to the public via the PPCC website.

Justification: The majority of Palisades residents do not choose to attend meetings unless there is an issue that interests them. There are other residents who do not want to attend full meetings but would be interested in what their elected representatives are doing on their behalf.

The minutes of the board meetings are broad and do not represent the complete discussions or supporting material that makes up board votes. Additionally, there have been multiple instances where both board members and participants have said things that are later contested or argued. This amendment would eliminate this unnecessary conflict and make everyone accountable.

Most modern public organizations and representative bodies make their proceedings available live or via online archive. The PPCC is no different and should be accessible to the public it serves in as many venues as possible, in keeping with the times, to fulfill its mission and remain relevant to the Palisades constituency.

The technical requirements to fulfill this responsibility is simple and free.

Statements of Conflict of Interest

The PPCC board consists of residents with broad professional experience and, in some cases, influential connections. These resources are invaluable when discussing particular subjects or motions before the board, but they can also give rise to conflicts, or the impression thereof.

Both the Bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order outline procedures for conflicts of interest, but do not include a method for board members or the public to systematically and defensibly ask about those conflicts, or a codified manner of addressing them.

A simple form or questionnaire distributed to members at the start of their service outlining their potential and real conflicts of interest through professional or social circles will ensure that the community can review and discover these potential conflicts, and the EC should have a tolerance for community or board members to question those conflicts and the appropriateness of members to serve on committees or vote on matters that may benefit them directly or indirectly. The Chair should be able to be required and able defend his/her appointees frankly and openly.

Term Limits

Consider whether Term Limits should be set for all officer roles. Consider whether term limits should be set for Area representatives. Please advise the pros and cons that were considered.

Other

a. Obvious interest: Should someone with an obvious interest that is of a controversial nature in our community be allowed on the board, as an organizational member (case currently worthy of highlighting: Rick Lemmo of Caruso Affiliated as well as representing our local Chamber)?

b. Private enrichment: If a Board member accepts an offer to become privately enriched (directly or indirectly) by an entity that has a matter before the board, should that be announced, and that person be prohibited from acting as a board member on that matter (advocating or voting)?

c. Newspaper interface: Letters to the Editor from Board members or Executive Committee members in the PPCC capacity should or should not be affirmed by the Chair? Can the Chair write without affirmation from the EC or a Communications Committee (to be appointed by each Chair)?

d. Polling: In the modern day, when digital polling is so easy to do, should Are reps be required to show that they've reached out to their constituents before voting on a controversial matter?