**Summary of PPCC Election/Ballot Process (as of 8/1/22)**

For many years (2002-2012), ballots for the PPCC election were only distributed in traditional "paper" format, contained in PPCC newsletters that were sent via U.S. mail to Palisades addresses (this format was specified in prior versions of the rules governing the Area/At-large reps election).

In 2014, the board voted unanimously (per motion by C. Spitz, as PPCC VP) to allow *in-person* voting (via ballots to be filled out at venues chosen by the Election Cmtee) in addition to the usual mail-in paper ballots -- *for that election cycle only, i.e., as a pilot program*to try out a new format otherwise not allowed by the rules.  According to 2014 minutes, of 750+ ballots received that year, only 131 were in-person ("walk-ins").  C. Spitz (then PPCC Chair) participated in the process (tables at the Farmers Market & Rec Ctr.) and can confirm that the in-person process was not as successful as anticipated and was not employed again in future election cycles.

In 2015, PPCC discontinued newsletter/paper ballot mailings because the cost of printing and mailing was prohibitive relative to responses (C. Spitz then PPCC Chair).

In 2016, the board amended Attachment A to allow the Election Cmtee to conduct **online voting (for the first time).**  General in-person voting was not continued that year, but a different/partial "paper" ballot process was allowed, with paper ballots available in the Palisadian-Post and the Palisades News (then being published in hard copy) and "provisional" paper ballots provided at the Farmers Market (only for those who attested that they weren't able to access the online ballot and hadn't received either the Post or the News).

The results of the 2016 election can be seen at [2016 Results Data Sheet](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/PPCC-2016-Elected-Representatives-Election-%E2%80%93-Results.pdf).  Of a total of 1237 votes (an historic number -- larger even than any Neighborhood Council election at the time other than Venice), only 22 votes came in via ballot in the Post and 4 via the News; 3 of the newspaper ballots were deemed invalid (the author does not recall from which paper); and there were only 15 provisional (paper) ballots.

After the election, given the insignificant no. of votes received via paper (relative to the total votes) -- as well as the huge success of online voting -- the Election Cmtee (chaired by C. Spitz; M. Zar was PPCC Chair) in 2016 recommended **"eliminating paper ballots and moving entirely to online voting."**  See [2016 Report](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Election-Committee-Report-%E2%80%93-2016.pdf).

In 2017, Attachment A was amended per the Cmtee's recommendation:  to require online voting but also to allow for the Election Cmtee at its discretion to provide for an “*alternate”* means of voting (as determined by the Cmtee) to assist eligible voters who couldn't access the online ballot.

In 2018, the Election Cmtee (chaired by D. Card; G. Wolfberg was PPCC Chair) decided to **proceed with online/electronic voting only and NOT to provide for an alternate method involving paper ballots** (since the use of paper ballots was insignificant in 2016, the cost and time expended wasn't warranted given the low numbers who utilized newspaper ballots that year, yet at the same time, PPCC had the largest voter turnout in its history with online voting).

However, because of lingering concerns that some folks might still have trouble with electronic voting, the 2018 Cmtee decided to hold a "help" session in the library on a Saturday midday, for anyone who needed help in accessing the online ballot (this was the "alternate" method decided on).

This session was widely publicized in advance in the press, in meetings, via email and social media.  In addition, C. Spitz (advisor to the Election Cmtee) personally attended two meetings of the Palisades Alliance for Seniors at the time (since seniors were the folks who most people felt might have trouble accessing an online ballot); C. Spitz passed out flyers about the help session, answered questions and encouraged anyone who needed assistance to participate in the session and/or to contact the Cmtee if they needed help; to the author’s recollection this info. was also provided to Alliance members via email).  See [2018 Cmtee Report #2](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Committee20Report208-9-18.pdf).  As she recalls, no one contacted the Cmtee for help (and none attended the actual "help" session; see below).

Several Election Cmtee members were present at the 2018 "help" session with digital devices and/or laptops,

ready to help anyone who wanted help with voting online (C. Spitz among them as Cmtee advisor).  The session lasted 3 hours.  *Not one person came in the library to ask for help during the entire time of the session.*  (There were a few visitors interested in seeing how the session was coming along, including one or two candidates, but none of them needed or asked for help.)

After that, the Cmtee decided to recommend that Attachment A be amended to provide **solely for online voting and no alternate/paper or in-person format** (although to retain language to provide help in accessing the online ballot for any ***individual*** *eligible voter who contacted the Cmtee and asked for assistance with voting online)*.  Here was the specific recommendation to the board (in the Cmtee Report written by D. Card):

 *" • Online Voting: --****Keeping online voting as the only voting method,****eliminating a 3-hour in*

 *person’ help session’ at the Library (no one came to ask for help). An individual voter may still*

 *request assistance voting online from a Committee member, if the voter’s friends and family can’t*

 *help."*See[2018 Cmtee Report #3](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/PPCC20Election20Committee20Report209-13-18_final.pdf).

The board accordingly voted to amend Attachment A in March 2019 to so provide.  As reflected in meeting minutes, the board voted unanimously on the language (now in Attachment A).  Here is the redline distributed at the time which shows how the language was changed:  [2019 Bylaws Amendments Redline](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Proposed-Amendments-to-Attachment-A-March-2019.Redline.pdf) (see p. 5).

*Note in particular that the prior language allowing the Cmtee to decide on an “alternate” means of voting, via paper or in-person, was****entirely deleted in 2019.****Instead, the amended language provided only that voting was to be solely online via the website, and that the Cmtee was to take "reasonable" steps to assist any eligible individual who couldn't access the online ballot & asked for help with online voting. This remains the governing language today.*

The 2020 election was also held completely online in accordance with Attachment A.  The required election information notice (about ballot availability) was widely distributed and expressly noted that any eligible individual voter who needed help in accessing the online ballot could contact the Cmtee chair (then D. Kaplan, past PPCC Vice-Chair) for assistance (again, per Attachment A); to the author’s knowledge/recollection, no one contacted him or the Cmtee for assistance.  See [Election Information Notice](https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Notice-of-Ballot-Availability-2020.pdf).

Additional Election Cmtee reports and Results Data sheets for the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections can be seen [**here**](https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/ppcc-election-reports-notices-2016-2020/)**.**  Note also: past PPCC Treasurer R. Cohen was a member of all of these Election Cmtees since 2016 and was integral to the success of the online ballot interface; during these years he also chaired the PPCC Bylaws Cmtee which drafted and proposed to the board the various amendments to Attachment A described above (a cmtee on which C. Spitz also sat and participated directly in drafting these amendments).  He can further confirm all of the above if necessary.

*By Chris Spitz*

*Election Cmtee chair/member/advisor 2012-2020: chair 2012; ex officio member (as PPCC Chair) 2014; chair 2016; advisor 2018; member 2020*

*Bylaws Cmtee member 2014-2021: ex officio member (as PPCC Chair) 2014-16; member 2016-2021*