

Proposed Changes to the

STANDING ELECTION PROCEDURES

as recommended by the USGenWeb Election Committee

Last Update October 20, 2003

AB amendment added October 29, 2003

A. Standing Election Subcommittee

The Advisory Board shall appoint a standing Election Subcommittee (EC). This subcommittee shall operate year round. Day-to-day operating procedures shall be determined by the members of the EC.

1. Composition of the Subcommittee:

[1]The EC shall consist of 12 members total and shall include two members from each region, two members for the Special Projects, and two at-large EC members. From these members, the EC shall choose a Chair and a Publicist-Secretary, each to serve for one year as defined in (3) regardless of the length of their individual terms. The Chair of the EC shall vote only in the case of a tie. The National Coordinator, as ex officio member, and one other Advisory Board Representative, chosen by the Board, shall serve as advisors on the EC subcommittee. They shall not be eligible to be either the Chair of the EC nor its Publicist-Secretary.

[1]Recommended Change -

The EC shall consist of 12 members total and shall include eight members from the XXGenWeb States, two members from the combined Archives and/or Special Projects, and two at-large EC members. From these members, the EC shall choose a Chair and a Publicist-Secretary, each to serve for one year as defined in (3) regardless of the length of their individual terms. The Chair of the EC shall vote only in the case of a tie. The National Coordinator, as ex officio member, and one other non-voting Advisory Board Representative chosen by the Board, shall serve as advisors on the EC subcommittee. They shall not be eligible to be either the Chair of the EC nor its Publicist-Secretary.

2. Formation of the Subcommittee:

[2]The Advisory Board shall publish on the National Webpage, STATE-COORD, USGENWEB-ALL, USGW-CC-L, USGENWEB-DISCUSS, the Special Projects mailing

lists, the regional mailing lists, and any other avenue appropriate to reach the most volunteers including, but not limited to, a personal e-mail to each project volunteer, a brief overview of the formation of a EC and a request for volunteers for such committee.

[2]Recommended Change -

As necessary to select new or replacement EC Members, the EC will publish a Call for Volunteers on the Election Committee's Webpage, USGENWEB-Discuss, STATE-COORD, USGENWEB-ALL, the Special Projects mailing lists, the regional mailing lists, and any lists or other avenue appropriate to reach the most volunteers including if necessary a personal e-mail to each project volunteer.

[3] From the list of volunteers the EC shall select a temporary chairperson of the committee. The chairperson shall select from the volunteer pool volunteers to fill the following positions: Two volunteers from each region, two volunteers from the Special Projects (as a group and not two volunteers for each special project) and two volunteers to represent the "at large" region for a total of 12 Standing Election Committee members.

This list of volunteers shall then be submitted to the Advisory Board for approval. The Advisory Board shall not be allowed to "pick and choose" any individual committee member. Should the Advisory Board disapprove the slate of members in its entirety then the Advisory Board shall chose a new temporary chairperson and the process shall be repeated.

Replacement of EC members due to end of term shall be handled in the same manner as above. For members who need to be replaced within the term due to resignation or continuing non responsiveness, a new member shall be chosen from the volunteer pool by the EC committee thru a majority vote. This majority opinion shall be forwarded to the Advisory Board for final approval.

[3]Recommended Change - to replace preceding three paragraphs

From the list of volunteers, the EC shall select new or replacement members for the EC. This list of volunteers shall then be submitted to the Advisory Board for approval and confirmation. The Advisory Board shall not be allowed to "pick and choose" any individual committee member. Should the Advisory Board disapprove the slate of members in its entirety, the process shall be repeated.

[4]If deemed necessary by the EC, the EC may take on additional workers (as opposed to committee members) during actual election periods which shall be defined as the time from nominations through final vote count.

[4]Recommended Change -

If deemed necessary by the EC, the EC may take on additional temporary workers (as opposed to committee members) May 1st through the final announcement of National Election Results.

[5]The selection of the EC Chair and the EC Publicist-Secretary shall be made by secret ballot sent to the National Coordinator and the Advisory Board Representative for

counting and verification.

[5]Recommended Change -

The selection of the EC Chair and the EC Publicist-Secretary shall be made by secret ballot sent to the two Advisory Board members for counting and verification. The results of the voting shall be posted by both Advisory Board members to the EC list. The current EC Secretary (or EC Chair) shall forward the results to the Advisory Board.

[6]Any member of the project who is eligible to vote is eligible for membership in the EC unless they are presently running for office. EC members who decide to run for office must immediately withdraw from the EC and its mailing list. This includes the National Coordinator and the Advisory Board Representative. Should both of them choose to run for office, they shall together select another Board member who is not currently running for office to serve as ex officio member of the EC until after the election.

[6]Recommended Change -

Any member of the project who is eligible to vote is eligible for membership in the EC, the exception being that no Advisory Board member may serve as a working member of the EC. An EC member who is elected to national office may continue to serve on the EC until seated on the AB. Current EC members are exempt from this exception until completion of their appointed terms."

Any EC member or individual subscribed to the EC List, including workers and each AB member, is required to notify the EC chair not less than one day prior to the opening of nominations of any election conducted by the EC, of intent to accept a nomination in said election, so he/she may be temporarily unsubbed from the EC List. If the member does not accept a nomination, he/she may rejoin the EC at the end of the nomination period. If the member accepts a nomination, he/she may rejoin the EC once the election has reached a final conclusion relative to the position he/she was seeking.

3. Tenure of the Subcommittee:

Initially, each pair of EC members as outlined in (2) shall have one individual serving for one year and one individual for two years so as to stagger the turnover in EC members. Thence forward, regular terms (not the filling of unexpired terms) shall run for two years. Terms shall be from January 1 to December 31. EC members shall serve only one term and be ineligible for reappointment for one year after the expiration of a full two-year term. Those EC members serving for only one year initially in order to stagger terms may be re-selected for another term in the second year.

[7]If a member of the EC is not performing his/her duties on the EC or is disruptive of the EC's business, the EC may petition the Advisory Board via the National Coordinator and/or the Advisory Board Representative for replacement of that member by a new volunteer. EC members be removed only for cause, which shall include but not be limited to failing to respond promptly and considerately to members of the EC, or continually disrupting the business of the EC with inappropriate or unprofessional behavior.

[7]Recommended Change -

EC Members may be removed, by a simple majority vote of the EC, for Cause including but not limited to: failure to perform his/her duties on the EC especially during critical election periods; disruptive, inappropriate, or unprofessional behavior either on the EC list or publicly; public or private breach of confidentiality of either the EC list or Project members information; non responsiveness; and/or other actions not in keeping with the intent and spirit of the EC which present a conflict of interest.

By majority vote of the EC, the EC may petition the AB for removal, from the EC, the AB Advisor to the EC for the same reasons as above, via a request of an ex officio member or other AB member to forward said petition, including appropriate documentation, to EXEC for timely consideration."

Replacement of EC members shall be handled in the same manner as 3) above.

[8]B. Duties of the Subcommittee:

1. The EC shall conduct all national level elections for Advisory Board Representatives, including elections for National Coordinator, Representative-at-Large, Regional State Coordinator Representatives, Local Coordinator Representatives, Special Project Representatives, and votes on Bylaws Amendments as well as any elections required by future bylaws revisions or any other national level elections that may be held.

2. The EC shall be responsible for maintaining current voter rolls. Lists of voters and email addresses shall be kept up-to-date on a quarterly basis. The voter rolls shall be maintained solely for the purpose of conducting national elections and shall be kept entirely confidential and shall not be supplied to the Board or to other parts of the project for any purpose.

3. As its first order of business the EC shall compile a current voter list. The EC shall request the list(s) of eligible voters from the last election and current voter lists from each State Coordinator and Special Project Coordinator. All duplicate entries (i.e. volunteers who work in more than one state, region or position) from the above specified lists shall be combined into one voter record. All voter records shall be maintained in a database capable of producing reports sorted by regional basis, special project basis, state basis, national basis or other breakdown as may be deemed necessary in the future. The voter record shall also be structured so as to contain information on all areas/issues in which the individual voter is eligible to vote.

4. Verification of e-mail address and positions shall be made by use of an e-mail broadcast system to send personal e-mail messages to each voter. Other means of verification may be used as determined necessary by the committee to fulfill its obligation to have an accurate, up to date voter list. Any disputes or discrepancies shall be: (1) resolved between the State Coordinator and the EC (2) If no resolution is possible the matter shall be referred to the regional Advisory Board representative for resolution. If the dispute cannot be settled by the region Advisory Board representative, then the matter shall be referred to the entire Advisory Board for resolution.

5. The committee shall be responsible for keeping the voter list up-to-date on a quarterly basis through:

a. Using an e-mail broadcast software to send individual messages to all voters

verifying e-mail addresses and positions;

b. Maintaining a membership registration or contact area on an EC website

c. Submitting the current list (sorted by state) to the current SC and/or other person chosen within the state to handle such duties;

d. Resolution of any disputes or discrepancies shall be handled as stated above in item 4.

e. Each regional voter list and communications shall be maintained and managed by the two members chosen for/by that region. The national list shall be managed and maintained by the two members chosen by the National Coordinator and the Advisory Board Representative, and the Special Project voter list shall be managed and maintained by the members chosen by the Special Project representatives.

f. The regional and national members shall manage communications with the state liaisons and/or the State Coordinators, but the Publicist-Secretary shall manage communications to the Advisory Board and to the project as a whole via the main lists (USGENWEB-ALL USGENWEB-DISCUSS, USGW-CC-L, STATE-COORD, the regional lists) and by any other avenues deemed appropriate during day to day operations of the committee.

g. The Publicist-Secretary shall be responsible for writing quarterly and post-election reports for submission to the Board and the Project.

h. The Publicist-Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a web site for the EC that shall include but is not limited to:

I. Contact page detailing who on the EC to contact, listing all members with emails both clickable and written out, their region of responsibility including the listing of the states in each region as well as noting who the current Chair and Publicist-Secretary;

II. A page detailing eligibility guidelines including how and who to contact regarding problems;

III. A general page about how the election mechanism functions in general (nominations, voting process, result release) to be replaced at an actual election time with a similar page detailing the specifics of that election including clickable and written out URLs to where each region voter goes, where to vote for national level, a listing of states in each region, alternative voting mechanisms for those who for any reason have a problem using the chosen voting mechanism, etc.;

IV. A page linking to all public election committee reports to date; and

V. During an election period a page listing all candidates with URLs to their campaign pages both clickable and written out.

[8]Recommended Change - To replace all of the original Section B:

Section B. Duties of the Subcommittee

1. The EC's primary responsibility shall be to conduct the USGenWeb Project's Annual

Election. The EC may conduct other polls or elections within the Project, as appropriate.

2. The EC shall be responsible for maintaining a Project wide Membership List.

I. Such Membership List shall be kept updated on a continuing basis through the following:

a. Solicitation of the appropriate local leadership or appointed contact person for updates to the State or Special Project's membership list on a quarterly or as needed basis.

b. Maintaining a site and means for the appropriate local leadership or appointed contact person within each state and special project to notify the EC of changes within their membership.

c. Harvesting of members names from State or Special Project web sites when necessary.

d. Maintaining a site and means for members to register, change, or delete their own personal membership information.

e. Other such means as the EC shall deem necessary from time to time.

II. Use of the Membership List:

a. The Membership List may be used for broadcast mailings from time to time as necessary to notify the entire membership of items of interest to the whole membership.

b. Other such uses as may be deemed necessary and appropriate in the future by the AB or EC.

3. The EC shall also be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date Registered Voter List:

I. All Project members who are eligible to vote, shall also be eligible to Register to vote.

II. Such Registered Voter List shall be kept updated on a continuing basis through the following:

a. Maintaining a site and means for members to register to vote, to change their membership participation or email address, or to remove their name from the Registered Voter List.

b. The notification of availability of registration through postings to all appropriate Project lists, broadcast messages to the entire membership through use of the Membership List, and by whatever means the EC shall deem necessary and helpful from time to time.

c. Registrations shall be accepted throughout the year, with the exception of 30 days before the National Election begins, continuing through the end of that election.

i. Registrations shall be actively solicited during the months of April and May.

ii. For Polls and other appropriate elections, a period of not less than two weeks shall be provided for Registrations.

iii. State Elections are exempt from member registration.

d. Verification of all voter registrations shall be determined by:

i. Checking State and Special Project web site listing of members.

ii. Cross checking against the Membership List

e. Any discrepancy shall be directed to the appropriate local leadership or appointed contact person within the voter's state or special project, for resolution. In the event the appropriate person does not respond in a timely fashion, or resolution has not occurred, the matter shall be forwarded to the AB Regional Representative for resolution.

- f. Other means as the EC shall deem necessary from time to time.
- III. Use of Registered Voter List;
 - a. The confidentiality of the Registered Voter List shall be maintained by the EC at all times.
 - b. Voting Passwords shall be sent to only those members on the Registered Voter List.
 - c. Only registered voters will receive a password to vote.

4. Upon adoption of these amended procedures, the Master Voter List held by the EC at time of adoption shall become the Membership List.

I. At time of adoption, all members on the Membership List, shall be considered Registered, and be placed on the Registered Voter List.

II. Members shall be removed from the Registered Voter List under the following circumstances:

- a. Bounced email address
 - i. The appropriate local leadership or appointed contact person will be notified.
- b. Request for removal by the member.
 - i. Follow-up by confirmation email to member.
- c. Notice from appropriate leadership or appointed contact person that member is no longer with that particular project.
 - i. Member will be notified

III. All unresolved discrepancies shall be referred to the AB Regional Representative for resolution.

5. The Membership List and the Registered Voter List will be maintained regionally by the two EC members representing the region, and by the Archives/Special Project EC members representing the Archives and Special Projects.

I. If a regional or special project seat is vacant, the EC Chair shall appoint an EC member to maintain the lists.

II. The regional and archives/special project EC members shall manage communications with the state and special projects.

III. The Publicist Secretary or the EC Chair shall manage communications to the Advisory Board and to the project as a whole via appropriate project lists, and any other avenues deemed appropriate during day to day operations of the Committee.

IV. The Publicist Secretary or the EC Chair shall be responsible for writing quarterly and post-election reports for submission to the Board and the Project.

C. Eligibility of voters

[9]No restriction should be made on the right of any member (excluding transcribers and lookup volunteers) to vote. Therefore, any number of coordinators per county or state, town coordinators, and state level special project coordinators (as opposed to Special Project coordinators from the national level projects) such as Native American projects, African American projects, military projects organized as and part of the XXGenWeb state projects, shall be eligible to vote. A requirement that one be a member for at least 30 days prior to the start of an election is acceptable purely on an administrative basis. State-level or Special Project-level voting restrictions shall not affect a member's right to vote in any national level election.

[9]Recommended Change -

All members of the Project (as defined in USGenWeb By-Laws ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP) shall be eligible to register to vote and to vote in any election or poll in which they are a qualified voter.

A requirement that one be a member for at least 30 days prior to the start of an election is acceptable purely on an administrative basis. State-level or Special Project-level voting restrictions shall not affect a member's right to register to vote, and as a registered voter to vote in any national level election or poll.

Challenges to a member's eligibility to vote shall in no circumstances be addressed by the EC. The Project Coordinator or XXGenWeb State Coordinator shall address the challenge in a timely fashion so as to allow the person to vote in the current election. If they do not, the person shall be given the benefit of the doubt and allowed to vote. If a Local Coordinator continues to challenge the decision of the State Coordinator, then the matter shall be referred to the regional Advisory Board rep. If the Local Coordinator continues to challenge the decision made by the Regional Advisory Board Representative, then the matter shall be referred to the entire AB. The decision of the entire Advisory Board shall be final. However, should the matter fail to be decided before the end of any election or voting issue, the person shall be given the right to vote by default.

[10] Eligible voters may vote once for each region or special project position for which they are eligible, once for national positions and once for any national issue that may be placed on a ballot, including but not limited to bylaws amendments.

As has been the practice in past elections, Special Project state and project level File Managers and Coordinators shall be eligible to vote in elections for Special Project Representatives. Transcribers are not included as defined in the Bylaws, Article VII Section 6.

[10] Recommended Change - To replace two previous paragraphs-

Eligible registered voters may vote once for each region or special project position for which they are eligible, once for national positions including NC and RAL, and once for any national issue that may be placed on a ballot, including but not limited to bylaws amendments. The ability to change a vote will depend on the capability of the voting software used at the time of the election.

D. Nominations

[11] When nominations are made, the EC shall be responsible for verifying that the nominees are eligible to run for office, based solely on the criteria in Article VI, Section 9 of the bylaws. No other determination of eligibility shall be made by the EC, including that of good standing. Nominees shall be assumed to be in good standing unless determined otherwise by the Advisory Board or State Coordinators or Special Projects Coordinators.

[11] Recommended Change -

1. When nominations are made, the EC shall be responsible for obtaining verification

that the nominees are eligible to run for and hold the office for which they are nominated, by contacting the appropriate project leadership, and based solely on the criteria in Article VI, Section 9 of the Bylaws. No determination of eligibility shall be made by the EC, including that of good standing. Nominees shall be assumed to be in good standing unless determined otherwise by the Advisory Board or State Coordinators or Special Projects leadership.

2. Contact persons for eligibility verification:

County Coordinator Representative nominee - The State Coordinator

State Coordinator Representative nominee - The AB Representative At Large, or the National Coordinator.

National Coordinator or Representative At Large nominee - The State Coordinator and the seated AB

Rep for the region in which the individual serves.

3. In the event the appropriate project leadership does not respond in a timely fashion, the NC or an available AB Representative will be contacted.

[12] If the nominee challenges a finding that they are ineligible to vote or run for office, the EC shall in no circumstances make a ruling on their challenge. The Advisory Board should address the challenge in a timely fashion so as to allow the person to vote or run for office in the current election. If they do not, the person shall be given the benefit of the doubt and allowed to run for office.

[12] **Recommended Change -**

4. If the nominee or member challenges a finding that they are ineligible to run for and hold office, or to vote, the EC shall in no circumstances make a ruling on the challenge. It shall be incumbent upon The Advisory Board to address the challenge in a timely fashion. In the case of a nominee, not later than two days after the close of nominations; in the case of voting, not later than one week prior to the voting period.

5. Nominees shall have not less than 48 hours from the time that they are notified of their nomination, to inform the EC of their decision.

6. In the event there are two AB seats available in a region (one to fill an early vacated seat, the other to fill a full term seat), each seat shall be handled as a separate race. Members shall be nominated for either the two year term, or the one year term. Voting will be accomplished as in any individual race.

E. Voting Mechanism

[13] The voting mechanism selected should meet at least the following criteria:

1. Accept votes (more than one per person, with the ability to drop earlier votes);
2. Display appropriate ballots depending on the ID of the person or have clear directions so a voter can easily find the correct portions of the ballot for which they are eligible to vote;
3. Send a confirmation email once the vote is accepted that includes a date/time stamp,

and their votes;

4. Count votes and return reliable results within 24 hours;
5. Compile vote statistics in a way that the EC can post so that people can verify their votes; and
6. Be confidential and secure.

Additionally, the mechanism should be flexible, reliable, and free.

A voting method meeting the above requirements should be chosen initially from an outside or "third-party" service. The EC shall research and select an outside voting service as one of its first orders of business after being seated. The system should be in place and functional as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2001.

[13] Recommended Change for all of the above in E.

E. Voting Mechanism

The voting mechanism selected should be confidential and secure, accept votes according to member participation and eligibility to vote for an individual position, give notice either online or via personal email that the vote or votes were recorded, count votes and return reliable results within a short period. It should also be flexible, and free.

The EC shall also look into forming a supporting group to work on producing election software that meets our requirements. Should the Project decide that the development of its own voting software is desirable, a working group of programmers be shall formed who shall address the requirements and design a suitable program. This working group shall operate independently of the EC but shall report to it regularly so that reports on development progress may be included in the EC's reports to the Project.

[14] Recommended Change - Addition of Section F

F. EC Website

a. The EC shall be responsible for maintaining a web site for the EC that shall include but is not limited to:

I. A page or pages easily accessible from the Home page containing a form (or forms) to allow members to Register, make changes to their individual information including changes in Project participation and email address, and the ability to remove their names from Registration;

II. A page or pages easily accessible from the Home page containing a form (or forms) to allow local project leadership or appointed contact persons to inform the EC of changes within their membership.

III. A page easily accessible from the Home page detailing eligibility guidelines including how and who to contact regarding problems or questions;

IV. A Contact page easily accessible from the Home page detailing who on the EC to contact, listing all EC members with emails both clickable and written out, their region of responsibility including the listing of the states in each region, as well as noting the names and email addresses of the current Chair and Publicist-Secretary;

V. A general page about how the election mechanism functions in general (nominations, voting process, result release) to be replaced at an actual election time with a similar page detailing the specifics of that election including clickable and written out URLs to where each region voter goes, where to vote for national level, a listing of states in each region, alternative voting mechanisms for those who for any reason have a problem using the chosen voting mechanism, etc.;

VI. A page linking to all quarterly election committee reports to date;

VII. During an election period a page listing all candidates with URLs to their campaign pages both clickable and written out.

VIII. A page containing information on past members of the Advisory Board.

b. Content and design, including forms, may change from time to time according to need and technology changes.

EC Home



Soaring into the next millennium...