

Secretariat Policy #2: Voting Implementation

Background:

Due to the geographic dispersion and unpredictable work schedules of many of our members, it is often difficult to get a representative selection of the membership to vote on an issue. This becomes particularly acute when approving an amendment or when electing officers.

This policy is an imperfect attempt to use electronic tools to enfranchise as many members as possible without leaving behind those who prefer to vote using traditional means. It also strikes a balance between cost, security and secrecy. Technical details are described in the *Implementation Supplement* to this Policy.

Policy Overview:

This policy applies only to elections of officers and to votes on proposed by-law amendments. It recognizes both paper and electronic balloting as equally valid means of voting, and also allows proxy voting regardless of the mechanism. This policy does not apply to the decision making process of regular meetings of the Secretariat, PAC, or any Committee.

“Electronic voting” includes (1) receiving a vote by email (“email vote”) and (2) tabulating the results of votes made on an Internet web site (“web vote”). All active members will have the option to choose how to vote – by paper or electronically.

The Secretary and the Communications Chair serve as “Voting Custodians” and jointly ensure the fairness of an electronic vote. A vote is deemed “fair” if everyone who wishes to do so has a reasonable opportunity to vote and there are no duplicate or improper votes.

A vote starts when the Custodians send an email to active members detailing the matter under review. The email also contains a unique “voting token” (like a password) that is used to validate each individual’s vote. The Custodians pre-print a paper ballot with a valid token for each person who cannot (or prefers not) to receive emails. These ballots may be used at the ratification meeting.

Most members vote by (1) accessing a web voting site or (2) by returning their ballot to the Custodians within the stated time frame. (Each member should choose only one method to vote.)

The Custodians count the electronic votes and bring the results to a regular Secretariat meeting. Then, people who chose paper balloting may cast their vote. In addition, a member who did not vote electronically may print his/her email ballot, bring it to the meeting, and cast it as if it were a regular paper ballot. The Custodians will use the tokens to ensure that all ballots cast are “fair.”

The Custodians will add the paper ballots to the electronic results to get the grand total, and then present an ordinary motion to the Secretariat to “ratify” the vote count. If the motion passes (by a simple majority) then the voting results stand. If the motion fails, then the vote also fails. In either case, the results are entered into the minutes.

Proxy ballots are handled in the same way as regular ballots.

Certification:

In accordance with the by-laws of the Community I hereby certify that the PAC duly ratified this policy 20 March 2010 and the Secretariat ratified this policy on 2 April 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Todd Sprister, Secretary