

Procedure for CFS Board of Director Elections

Background:

This procedure is put in place to guide the election of CFS Board of Director members during the annual meeting. This procedure follows the CFS By-laws and Roberts Rules of Order. The applicable sections of the By-laws and the rules of order are in Attachment A. Although not every circumstance can be anticipated, this will provide a guide if needed.

Procedure:

Prior to the Annual Meeting

1. The Board chair will appoint a nominating committee consisting of two Board members and two members at-large.
2. The nominating committee will review the membership directory and identify a list of qualified candidates.
3. The nominating committee will discuss the open positions, responsibilities and qualifications with the potential nominees.
4. The nominating committee will prioritize a list of qualified candidates.
5. The nominating committee will approach the candidates and obtain agreement during discussions with potential nominees using the priority list.
6. Once agreement to accept nomination is obtained from the number of nominees equal to the open positions, the nominating committee will cease the pursuit of additional nominees.
7. The nominating committee will work with the nominees to write a biography of the nominees that discusses their interest in a Board position and lists their qualifications for the position.
8. If no candidate is found for a position, the committee may leave that slot open for nominations from the floor. A member nominated from the floor would need to be present, have a nomination from a CFS member in good standing, an appropriate second and agree to serve if elected.

During the Annual Meeting

1. When requested by the Chair, a representative of the nominating committee will present the results of the nomination search, introduce the nominees and read the biographies.
2. The nominating committee will present the nominees one at a time for each open position.
3. The Chair or a designated representative will then conduct the election.
4. The Chair or a designated representative will then ask if there are additional nominees for each open position from the members in attendance at the meeting. This process will continue until there are no more nominees from the members. A member nominated from the floor would need to be present, have a

nomination from a CFS member in good standing, an appropriate second and agree to serve if elected.

5. If there are no nominations from the members, a voice vote will be conducted of the members present. One vote from each family in the organization is allowed.
6. If there are nominations from the members, a ballot vote will be conducted.
7. The ballots will be pre-printed prior to the meeting with the nominee from the nominating committee on the ballot and space for write-in candidates to expedite the process.
8. Each family present will be given one ballot for each open position. One of the parents from the family can vote for the nominee from either the nominating committee or the member nominee(s), or write-in a different candidate. (Students are not allowed to vote)
9. The ballots will be completed and returned to be counted prior to the members leaving the floor.
10. A nominee will be elected to the open position if a majority vote is received from the present eligible members. If a majority is not reached, additional rounds of voting will be performed until a candidate has obtained a majority of the vote.
11. The election will continue until the number of properly elected individuals are elected equal to the number of openings on the Board.

Attachment A

CFS By-Laws (section referring to election of Board of Directors)

Section 3. Election and Term of Office. The chairman of the Board of Directors shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of two Board members and two members not on the Board. The nominating committee will present to the membership at its annual meeting a slate consisting of one candidate for each vacant Board position. Additional nominees for each position may be made by the members. Directors shall then be elected by majority vote of the members present. The term for each director shall be three (3) years except that the Board terms starting July 1, 1990, shall be staggered so that one-third (1/3) of the directors shall serve a term of three (3) years, one-third (1/3) of them for two (2) years, and the remainder for one (1) year. At the end of a director term, upon nomination, a director may be reelected. The initial Board will be appointed by the interim Board; subsequent Boards must be elected in the manner described by the bylaws. A director can be removed from office at any time for good cause, however, by a three fourths vote of the other directors.

Roberts Rules of Order excerpts:

Nominations By A Committee

Using a nominating committee to assemble a list of willing and qualified candidates for office can greatly benefit members when the time comes to select their leaders. If the committee does its job well, the membership can enjoy some basic assurance that the candidates nominated have at least expressed interest in the job, have agreed to serve, and are qualified for the offices for which they're nominated.

The Nominating Committee's Role

The duty of a nominating committee is to find the best candidate for each office. The bylaws should not tie the hands of the committee to find more than one person to fill each slot; the committee should find the best candidate for each office. Persons serving on the committee can be nominated for office.

The secretary should give the committee a copy of the membership list, the bylaws, a description of the duties of each office, and the eligibility requirements. The committee must carefully review the eligibility requirements for each office and see that the nominees meet these requirements. If anyone is elected, and it is discovered after the election that the person is not eligible, the election of that officer is null and void. The committee then has to find a new nominee, and the members have to vote again.

The committee should meet, carefully review the membership list, and select the people who they think will do the best job in each office. A member of the committee should then be designated to call each nominee to see if he or she is willing to serve if elected. If someone is not willing to serve, the committee needs to meet again and find another candidate.

If no candidate is found, the committee can leave that slot open for nominations from the floor. Or, they can tell members publicly that they do not have a nominee for a certain office; this allows members to volunteer. No one should be nominated without his or her consent because, if elected, the person may decline to serve and members will have to hold another election.

A Nominating Committee's Report

The report of the nominating committee is usually given under "special orders." When called on to give the report, the chairman of the nominating committee states the nominations for each office.

Chairman of Nominating Committee: Madam President, the nominating committee submits the following nominations: for president, Alex Shaw; for vice president, Bianca Fernandez; for secretary, Raymond Platt; and for treasurer, Donna Agnese.

Sometimes there is a split in the nominating committee over who to nominate. If a minority of the committee wishes to nominate someone else, the members in the minority can make the nomination when nominations are taken from the floor.

As soon as the committee reports, it is discharged from its duties. Sometimes the committee is revived to make nominations to fill vacancies. After the committee reports, the chair states:

President: The nominating committee nominates Alex Shaw for president, Bianca Fernandez for vice president, Raymond Platt for secretary, and Donna Agnese for treasurer. Nominations are now open from the floor. Are there any further nominations for president?

Nominations From The Floor

Sometimes called *open nominations*, this method is probably the most familiar. It's used in the vast majority of situations in which members elect their officers at a meeting. Your group's rules and customs determine when floor nominations are accepted. Sometimes nominations aren't taken until the election is pending, and sometimes they're taken at other times, such as at a meeting before the election meeting.

The process of making floor nominations is subject to the following rules:

- Recognition by the chair is not required to make a nomination. However, calling nominations from your seat is often impractical, so you may want to adopt a more formal nomination process.

- Nominations don't have to be seconded, but it's not out of order for members to second a nomination to signal their endorsement.
- A person can nominate himself or herself.
- A member shouldn't offer more than one nomination to a position if there are several seats for the same office — such as for nominees to a board or a committee — until all other members have had the opportunity to make nominations.
- If the bylaws don't prohibit it, a person can be nominated for more than one office and can even serve in more than one office if elected.
- Nominees do not have to leave the room during the nominations, when the vote is taken, or when the vote is counted.
- The presiding officer can continue presiding, even if he or she is one of the nominees for the office.
- A member can rise and decline the nomination during the nominating process.
- After each nomination, the president repeats the name to the assembly.
- Nominations are taken for successive offices in the order they're listed in the bylaws.

Motions to close nominations are usually unnecessary because the nomination process simply continues until no one wishes to make further nominations. When the nominations stop, the chair just declares nominations closed after making sure that no more nominations are forthcoming. Customarily (although it's not required), the chair accomplishes this by calling three times for more nominations.

According to Robert's Rules, a motion to close nominations is out of order *as long as any member wishes to make a nomination*.

🗳️ A motion to close nominations is usually not necessary unless it is apparent that members are nominating people just to honor them, and that the nominees have no intention of serving.

🗳️ Usually the president closes nominations when no further nominations come forward from the assembly.

66 B. CONDUCTING ELECTIONS

The election process may be the easiest part of deciding who handles a particular job in the organization. Robert's Rules on elections are very straightforward after what is often a politically charged prequel of nominating and campaigning.

An election is really nothing more than the handling of an assumed motion, with the question being on whom to elect to fill a position. Like any incidental main motion, an election can be decided by voice vote or by ballot.

Electing By Ballot

Ballot voting is by far the surest way to allow for the free expression of the will of the membership. When holding ballot elections, you have two procedural options:

- **Nominations for all offices conclude before any balloting begins.** This saves time and allows for polling at a time and place other than a meeting. However, it disadvantages candidates who lose an election for a position decided earlier and then can't serve a different position.

When using this procedure, make it clear that a person can be nominated for and elected to more than one office. If a person is elected to two different positions, she can either choose which office to accept or serve in more than one position, if that's allowed.

- **Nominations for each office are followed by the election for that office.** The main advantage here is that it allows members to consider the election results of one office before proceeding to the election of another office. You take nominations from the floor for one office, and when no further nominations are forthcoming, you proceed to the balloting for that office. This method requires more time for the election process, making it probably best limited to smaller groups.

No matter which procedure you use, the order in which you take up each election is the order in which the offices are listed in your bylaws.

Voting by ballot enables a member to vote for a candidate not formally nominated by writing in a name – a *write-in vote*. A write-in vote is a legal vote unless it's unintelligible or cast for an unidentifiable or ineligible person or for a fictitious character, in which case it's counted as an illegal vote.

Ballot voting is the preferred voting method in situations in which knowing how all the members voted isn't desirable. You can use a ballot vote to decide either a motion or an election:

- **If the ballot vote decides a motion**, the question is clearly stated by the chair, and you're instructed to mark your ballot *Yes* or *No* (or *For* or *Against*).
- **If the ballot vote decides an election**, you're instructed to write the name of the nominee of your choice on your ballot.

It's never in order to vote *Yes* or *No* (or *For* or *Against*) a candidate when electing persons to office. The only way you can vote *against* a candidate is to vote *for* another person.

Who Gets To Vote

Depending on your organization and the decisions being made, balloting may take place during a meeting, or polls may be open during polling periods including times when no meeting is in progress. In either case, you need to appoint reliable ballot counters to hand out and collect ballots and to count the votes.

Only members entitled to vote are given ballots or are allowed to deposit ballots with a ballot counter or place them in the ballot receptacle. If polling is conducted outside of a meeting, members should verify their credentials with election officials when casting

their votes at the polls, and members' names should be checked on a list showing who has voted.

The presiding officer votes along with all the other members, although she is *never* allowed to cast a tie-breaker in a ballot vote.

A member has the right to vote until the polls are closed. A late-arriving member can vote only with other members' consent by majority vote.

Counting The Ballots

When counting ballots, ballot counters need to keep a few key points in mind:

- Blank votes are treated as scrap paper and don't count at all.
- Illegal votes cast by legal voters count toward the total votes cast, but they don't count for any individual choice or candidate. Illegal votes are
 - Unintelligible ballots
 - Ballots cast for a fictional character
 - Ballots cast for an ineligible candidate
 - Two or more marked ballots folded together (together they count as only one illegal vote)
- If a marked ballot is folded together with a blank ballot, the marked ballot counts as one legal vote, and the blank ballot is considered scrap paper.
- Each question on a multipart ballot is counted as a separate ballot. If a member leaves one part blank, the votes entered on the other questions still count.
- If a member votes for more choices than positions to be elected, the vote is considered illegal.
- If a member votes for fewer choices than positions to be elected, the vote is legal and those votes count.
- Small technical errors, such as spelling mistakes or marking an X when a checkmark is called for, don't make a vote illegal as long as the voter's intent is discernible.
- Votes cast by illegal voters must not be counted at all, not even included in the number of total votes cast. If it's determined that enough illegal votes were cast by illegal voters to affect the result, and these votes can't be identified and removed from the count, then the vote is deemed null and must be retaken.

After The Vote

After the votes are counted, the lead ballot counter reads aloud to the membership the complete report of the vote counts but doesn't declare the result. That job belongs to the presiding officer, who reads the report again to the members, concluding with a formal declaration of the result. The entire ballot counters' report should be included in the minutes of the meeting.

In determining how long to hold the ballots before destroying them, your main consideration is the possibility of needing a recount. After the period during which a recount can be conducted has passed, you don't need to keep the ballots. A decision on how long to keep them can be made at the meeting when the vote takes place, or a short retention period for ballots can be adopted as a standing rule.

Electing By Voice Vote

If your bylaws don't require you to conduct an election by ballot, and if candidates are unopposed or there's no major contest for an office, you can save time with a simple voice vote (or *viva voce*). After nominations are closed, the vote is taken on each nominee in the order in which they were nominated.

Because this form of voting favors one candidate over another based on the order of nomination, you should avoid using it except in mass meetings or when there's no serious contest for the office and a ballot is not required. If members don't understand exactly how it works, the ones whose preferred candidate doesn't get voted on are likely to think something is amiss.

Electing By Roll Call

If your assembly's members are accountable to a constituency, your rules may require you to conduct your elections by roll-call vote. You follow the same procedures for elections by ballot, as far as arriving at the point of the election is concerned, but instead of casting your vote by ballot, each member announces his vote when the secretary calls that person's name. The secretary repeats the vote after recording it, to ensure accuracy.

Determining Who Wins

Elections are decided by majority vote unless your bylaws provide differently. In a voice vote, the winner is easy to determine and the vote is over when someone wins the election. When it comes to ballot elections, your election isn't complete until a position is filled, and a position is never filled until a candidate receives the threshold number of votes required for election. In most cases, the threshold is a majority of the votes cast. If you have only two candidates and the vote is a tie, you repeat the balloting until one candidate receives a majority.