

**South Western Ontario Bridge Association
Unit 249, ACBL
Policy and Procedures Manual**

SUBJECT: Election Procedures	REF #2019-002
APPROVED DATE: May 3, 2019	REVISION DATE:
ISSUED TO: Unit 249	EFFECTIVE DATE: IMMEDIATELY
<p>POLICY: In accordance with the Unit 249 constitution, the members may elect up to ten (10) Directors to serve on the Unit 249 Board of Directors. Following from a successful pilot project in 2015, the Board of Directors has sanctioned that members in good standing of Unit 249 will have the opportunity to elect directors by voting on line, in person or by mail.</p> <p>This policy provides the framework for elections for the Board of Directors.</p>	
<p>SCOPE: Applies to all Unit-wide general elections of directors.</p>	
<p>PROCEDURES:</p> <p>1. <u>Election Committee:</u></p> <p>At least six months before the next scheduled election the Board of Directors should appoint an Election Committee consisting of three persons, preferably with at least person who will not be a candidate in the upcoming election. One member of the Committee will be designated as Chair and will assume the role of Chief Electoral Officer.</p> <p>The Election Committee will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling of activities • Issuing call for nominees • Coordinating collation of candidate biographies • Coordinating with Unit Secretary and Webmaster to post biographies • Preparation of the ballot • Preparation of voting instructions • Coordination with Webmaster to post downloadable ballot and voting instructions online • Establishing online voting system • Printing and mailing of ballots and biographies • Receipt of mailed ballots • Manning of polling station • Recruitment of scrutineers to input mailed ballots into online system (or otherwise compile ballot totals) • Preparation of final results • Communicating final results to Unit President • Compiling an “Election Committee Report” listing issues and concerns to assist future committees. <p>2. <u>Selection of an Online Voting System</u></p> <p>The Election Committee is responsible to select an Online Voting system from those commercially available.</p> <p>The system selected should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow each voter to vote only once. 	

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- provide for instances where more than one member shares an email address.
- allow the administrator to add voters that may have been missed when the system was first set up.
- prevent a voter from voting for more than the maximum number of candidates – in our case 10.
- allow for the recording of mailed in ballots and persons voting in person.
- prevent unauthorized persons from logging in to vote.
- tabulate the results.
- allow voters to view biographical information for each candidate.
- be cost-effective.
- have good technical support.

3. Call for Nominations

The Call for Nominations shall be made via an announcement in the unit's on-line magazine and by an email mailer to the manager of each club within the unit.

The call must specify:

- the number of seats available
- the date of the election
- the final date for submission of nominations
- the person to whom the nominations must be sent (normally the Unit Secretary)

4. Nomination Form

The Chief Electoral Officer will develop a Nomination Form to be used.

5. Acclamation of Candidates

In the event that the number of qualified nominees is equal to or less than the number of seats available, the Chief Electoral Officer will report accordingly to the current Board of Directors with a recommendation that the qualified nominees will be acclaimed. At the next Annual General Meeting a motion to accept the candidates by acclamation will be presented to the membership.

6. Publishing Candidate Lists and Biographies

Once nominations are closed, Unit 249 Secretary will send the nominees a request to submit a brief personal biography and photo.

Once the nominations are closed, the candidate information will be compiled into a common format, entered into the electronic election system for online voting, and a hardcopy document will be prepared to accompany the hard-copy ballots that will be mailed and which will be available at the voting site.

Additionally, the biographies will also available be on the Unit 249 website.

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7. Preparation of the Ballot

In order to overcome the bias that research shows on alphabetical lists in favour of those candidates near the top of any list, if possible the online version of the ballot should randomize the order of the candidates alphabetically and the randomization changed for each member opening the ballot. Such an option will not be available for those ballots that must be printed and mailed so a standard alphabetical list of candidates will be used for paper ballots.

8. Voter Lists

A download of the current membership roster for Unit 249 can be obtained from ACBL in .csv format. The key data elements are: ACBL Number, Name, Mailing Address and Postal Code, and Email Address.

The purpose is to load the on-line voting system with email addresses to invite members to vote online, and to prepare mailing labels for members who do not have or share an email address so we can mail them a ballot.

9. Posting of Results

The final posting of results will only indicate the successful candidates, but will not show the votes earned by any specific candidate.

If there is a tie for the tenth place each of the tied candidates will be declared elected.

If any geographical area is not represented after the ballots are counted the unsuccessful candidate from that area who received the most votes will be recommended for appointment to the Board of Directors.

Losing candidates, upon request, will be informed of the number of votes they received and the number of the votes received by the lowest ranking successful candidate only.

- Upon the compilation of the results and prior to them being posted to the website the President will contact each candidate to thank them for running and to advise them if they were successful.
- After the candidates have been notified personally the results will be posted to the Unit 249 website.
- The Unit's Secretary will issue a notice to each club manager in the Unit with the results in order that they may be posted at individual clubs.
- The Unit President will invite each of the newly-elected Directors to the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting

10. Key Benchmark Dates

Several key dates should be established, with the recommended timing noted herein.

Establishment of an Election Committee	Should be established at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Unit 249 Board of Directors in the year prior to the election.
Election Date:	To be held in either August or September, in conjunction with a Unit 249 Sectional Tournament.

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Selection of an Online Voting System:	Should be done at least six months before the election.
Call for Nominations:	A formal call for nominations should be published in the Online Kibitzer and emailed to all Club Managers for announcement/posting at clubs in sufficient time to be posted in the Winter Issue of the Kibitzer online magazine. Normal cut-off date is February 1.
Deadline for Receiving Nominations:	Nominations must be received not later than 15 days before the cut-off date for the publication of the Summer Issue of the Kibitzer. Normal publication cut-off date is May 1. The cut-off date for receipt of nominations shall be included in the call for nominations.
Deadline for Receiving Candidate Profiles:	<p>Candidates are urged to provide a short personal profile which can be published. This profile, including an optional photograph, should not exceed one-quarter (1/4) page. In order to allow time to format profiles and photos for publication the deadline for receipt should be ten (10) days before the cut-off date for the Summer issue of the Online Kibitzer.</p> <p>Note that any candidate not meeting this deadline will be listed by name only, without profile information in the Kibitzer and other election information provided to the members.</p>
Deadline for Publication of Candidates Profiles:	Election Committee to provide the Editor of the Kibitzer with the required information before the deadline for the Summer issue of the kibitzer.
General Notification of Voting	It would be preferable to have a Unit 249 email blast prior to the start of the election to alert our members that an electronic ballot will be sent, and to check their Spam folders if they do not receive one.
Cut-Off Times for Voting:	Due to the complexities of merging the results from online, mailed and in-person voting different cut-off times should apply. The following are recommended:
Mail-in Ballots:	Mail-in Ballots should be accepted as long as they are received <u>not later</u> than the close of polls for in-person voting. Any ballots received after that date will be unopened.
In Person:	Polls will close at the specified closing time on the date specified. This time should be 15 minutes prior to the last scheduled tournament game on that date in order to allow polling volunteers to secure the ballot box prior to game time.
Online:	It is necessary to hold the online system open at least 48 hours after the close of the in-person poll to allow scrutineers time to manually enter all paper ballots received.

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Publication of Cut-Off Times	The above cut-off times should be clearly stated in the Voter's Instructions.
Presentation of Results to Board of Directors	The Chief Electoral Officer will report the results of the election to the Board of Directors within 24 hours of the election.
Announcement of Results	Upon receiving the results the President will first contact the individual candidates to welcome them to the Board, prior to releasing the results to the Unit.
AUTHORITY: Authority is vested in the Election Committee and other positions named to carry out the duties specified herein, including the authority for expenditure for postage, stationery, printing and online voting.	