

Joseph Beaudoin

Feb 21 (2 days ago)

to bcc: me

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Sam Girson <[sgirson@comcast.net](mailto:sgirson@comcast.net)>  
Date: Wed, Feb 21, 2018 at 4:47 PM  
Subject: Re: Election information  
To: Executive Director <[execdir@narfe.org](mailto:execdir@narfe.org)>

Good Afternoon Barb — Thanks for the prompt response. However, I need some “accessibility” assistance. Sorry to say, because of visual issues, I continue to have problems navigating the BRC Report on the website. I received a hardcopy of the Report from HQ which is easier for me to access and read using my CCTV. I would like to know if the hardcopy is an exact duplicate of the website report and is in the same page order?

You also refer me to the first and second documents of the BRC Report. Does each document have a title or identifier so I know for sure which two documents you are referring? I

Will these documents answer my questions whether the recommended Amendments/Resolutions (A/R) for “adoption” and “rejection” will be combined together in an alpha/numeric order, on one integrated ballot all co-mingled together? Or, will the “adopt” and “reject” recommendation Amendments/Resolutions be separately listed on their own respective ballot? Or, some other unspecified variation on the theme?

Continuing, I am admittedly disturbed about your response concerning “appeals!” While I appreciate that the NEB will consider this subject, I am concerned about it going in to the next cycle. That’s possibly a year or two away, unless the NEB requests more immediate remediation thru the Referendum process. Unfortunately, that would still leave those current A/Rs hanging! Some of which could very well have potentially more immediate impact on NARFEs viability as an organization able to fulfill its Mission to the membership — now and going forward!

You know, this all kind of makes me think, we’re making all this up as we go along! Yes, I read your message that the BRC was made a Standing Committee in the Fall of 2017. The IM1V was authorized at NATCON August/September 2016. That’s one year earlier and begs the question what took so long? Retrospectively, the items we, and perhaps others have been surfacing, point to the need for the Ballot Committee to have been in place and active from the get go! Whatever, you weren’t here for most of that time, so I don’t expect you to answer these type of issues. Hopefully, they will be put under “Lessons Learned!”

Meanwhile on to Marc H., Gary N. and John S. insightful and thought provoking messages. Yes guys, as John S. points out, we know who’s generally at the controls! To what extent, will never know! As I pointed out in a much earlier message, the various Committees have access to and use sources/resources at HQ, “ex officio” and otherwise! I’m fairly certain they use them for input and guidance from time to time. The input and resultant output is a variable, depending on who the players are and all that’s going on at a given time!

Anyhow, Barb, I would appreciate you answering my request for assistance, and any of my other questions.

Thank you!

Sam g.

On Feb 21, 2018, at 10:36 AM, Executive Director <[execdir@narfe.org](mailto:execdir@narfe.org)> wrote:

Good morning, all.

The process by which bylaws may be amended is stipulated in Article IX, Amendments, of the 2016 Bylaws. Approval requires a “two-thirds (2/3) supermajority of the ballot vote of the membership.” For the June ballot, each amendment will be voted on separately. As shown in the first and second documents in the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee report published on the website February 1, both amendments and resolutions with a recommendation from the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee to adopt, and those with a recommendation to reject, will be presented to the

membership for a vote. Therefore, the ultimate fate of all of those proposed amendments is determined by the membership.

Currently, Article IX of the 2016 Bylaws makes no provision for an appeal of the decision of the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. There's nothing to be done about that for this cycle, but at its March meeting the NEB will be considering a proposed amendment to Article IX that will clarify the amendment process and provide for appeals. If the NEB agrees to forward that proposed amendment to the membership for a vote in June, and the membership then approves it by a 2/3 vote, it will become effective during the next ballot cycle.

Barb

[<image001.jpg>](#)

**BARBARA SIDO, CAE**  
**Executive Director**  
National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association  
[606 N. Washington St.](#)  
[Alexandria, VA 22314](#)  
[execdir@narfe.org](mailto:execdir@narfe.org)  
[\(571\) 483-1279](tel:(571)483-1279)

Visit us on the Web at [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)

Like us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

**Register now for [FEDcon18](#), NARFE's premier conference.**

**From:** Sam Girson [<mailto:sgirson@comcast.net>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 9:13 PM

**To:** Executive Director

**Cc:** Marc Harris; Joseph Beaudoin; Nigro; John D Stackpole; Clarence Robinson

**Subject:** Re: Election information

Barb — Thank you! Will you also please find out the guidelines/ground rules/criteria pertaining to balloting that is required to adopt an Amendment and a Resolution (A/R)?

Is it a simple 50% or 2/3rd majority vote required of ballots cast, or is it variable? If a variable, to make that determination what is the criteria and how is one A/R differentiated between one another? Also, are A/R votes tallied separately for each A/R, or combined in arriving at a baseline figure or percentage to determine the simple or 2/3rds majority for adoption?

Additionally, how will the Amendments/Resolutions be published on the ballot? In some separate or combined alpha/numeric order? For example, will A/Rs that were rejected by the By Law Committee be presented separately? If so, that's not a very democratic, objective practice and presents a built-in upfront bias. This may well be a deterrence, leading voters to completely ignore/disregard ballots that are listed under a "rejected" category! If the rejected A/Rs are to be placed in a stand alone category, is there an internal appeal process to reverse this and set up a neutral avenue? Or, does one have to seek relief thru the DC Statutes, or take some form of legal action outside of NARFE?

Let me also add to the unfairness of the above. At past NATCONS the By Laws Committee Report was presented to the attending chapter voting delegates in an open formal forum before balloting. A deliberative exchange process ensued thru this forum offering the opportunity to counter "rejected" A/R status. There was

also individual time for Chapter Delegates to caucus and/or individually discuss the merits of A/Rs. There is no apparent open exchange offered nor presented under this 1M1V balloting process. This does not offer a level playing field!

Please understand, I would like an answer on the potential appeal question now! I, and some others, do not believe there is time to wait until we go thru the current balloting process and be advised to take care of this sometime later.

Tempest fugit! Your prompt inquiry and feedback will be appreciated!

If any questions, please let me know!

Thanks for your attention to this matter!

Sam g.

On Feb 20, 2018, at 9:36 AM, Executive Director <[execdir@narfe.org](mailto:execdir@narfe.org)> wrote:

Good morning, everyone.

Your discussion seems to have moved on to other topics, but as promised last week, here is further information on the election. In the interests of a clear and definitive answer to some of your questions, I consulted Colette Trohan, NARFE's official parliamentarian. Here is her message, unedited:

Barb,

Thanks for forwarding these questions from NARFE members to me. Mr. Nigro's concerns are well founded, and luckily, are incorrect. As you know, sometimes with major bylaws amendments there are unintended consequences. While seeking a particular outcome in one area, other situations get missed, and this is certainly one of those. A few of the issues are on the bylaws ballot for this year, but others may take a bit more time to sort out, and I know the bylaws committee is keeping track of those.

Article II, Section 1.C.1. requires that election be by "a majority of the ballots cast." A majority is defined as "more than half," which is sometimes miscast as 50% + 1. (We usually don't see wacky percentages with membership associations except for condominiums, whose voting strength is by unit ownership and often goes 6 decimals.) Assuming 1,025 votes are cast, a majority is 63, which is the first whole number (as you don't have partial people voting) over half, which is 62.5. When there are two candidates on the ballot a majority is guaranteed. Should a third candidate emerge – even a write-in – the odds increase that no single candidate will get a majority vote on the first ballot. Knowing that there are four candidate for president of NARFE, this presents a serious issue. Were this election taking place at a meeting as it has in the past, we would just re-ballot until one candidate receives a majority, but this is now a mail ballot, so there's no mechanism for repeated balloting in a reasonable amount of time. The balloting is expensive and time consuming, and the association needs its leadership in place.

There are several principles in play.

- The candidates all have the right to run, and they can't be dropped from the ballot for a run-off election against their will. If this was done in the past, it was incorrect.

- We can't change to a plurality vote (that's where the one with the most votes win) because that's a direct violation of the bylaws (and very poor governance). This applies to all ballots, not just the first.
- Preferential voting (where the choices are ranked in order of preference and tallied accordingly) returns a credible result with only one ballot, but Robert's Rules requires preferential voting to be in the bylaws, and it is not.

Thus the choice is to violate the bylaws, violate the rights of members, or suspend the rule in the parliamentary authority that requires preferential voting to be in the bylaws. Some may state that this rule can't be suspended, but it doesn't violate any members' rights and the members are given the choice whether to use a different method that still returns a majority vote or to keep balloting until the majority is achieved. That question is part of the first ballot, and if there is a two-thirds vote to suspend the rule, we can take a second ballot by preferential voting. We can't do anything with the first ballot, but perhaps we can achieve a credible result in two ballots. And, should the first ballot result in a majority, this discussion is moot.

I usually recommend to clients who use mail balloting to add a provision that if there are more than three candidates for a single position, the balloting be by preferential voting and that ties are broken by lot. It was too late to get this bylaws amendment out for this year, but it's on the list for the future. In the meantime, we have to work with what we have and find the best solution that is the most fair to the members and the candidates.

CCT

Colette Collier Trohan, PRP, CPP-T

A Great Meeting, Inc.

[www.agreatmeeting.com](http://www.agreatmeeting.com)

[301-598-6338](tel:301-598-6338)

This month's Snippet is titled "The Chair's Work Area." Get it at [www.agreatmeeting.com](http://www.agreatmeeting.com)

There IS a Magic Gavel! Go to [www.magicgavel.com](http://www.magicgavel.com) to learn more about our Robert's Rules app.

<image001.jpg>

**BARBARA SIDO, CAE**

**Executive Director**

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

[606 N. Washington St.](http://606.N.Washington.St.)

[Alexandria, VA 22314](http://Alexandria,VA.22314)

[execdir@narfe.org](mailto:execdir@narfe.org)

[\(571\) 483-1279](tel:571-483-1279)

Visit us on the Web at [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)

Like us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

**Register now for [FEDcon18](#), NARFE's premier conference.**