

# Rotary Election Guidelines

## Excerpts from the *Rotary Code of Policies* October 2005

### **17.040. District-Level Elections**

Districts are encouraged to use the nominating committee system for all district elections (with a ballot-by-mail in the event of a challenge to the selection of the nominating committee) provided however, that nominating committees need not be used to select the members of nominating committees. (*Nov. 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 45*)

#### **17.040.1. Guidelines for District-Level Elections**

The governor shall send the "Guidelines for Candidates for Elective Position in RI," as adopted by the RI Board, as well as the following list of election guidelines to all clubs at the time of the official call for nominations:

Rotarians and election candidates shall:

1. learn and follow both the spirit and the letter of RI's election guidelines.
2. consult with knowledgeable Rotarians if you have any concerns about a current assignment or a new assignment if it may give an appearance of campaigning.
3. not undertake personal initiatives to gain visibility, personal recognition, or favor.
4. not respond in kind to another candidate's improper activities.
5. not communicate with or visit clubs involved in the applicable election except to fulfill necessary functions. (*November 2004 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 59*)

#### **17.040.2. Timetable for District Governor Elections**

It is recommended that all districts adopt the following timetable for district governor elections. The RI Board may extend the date for selection of a nominee for governor pursuant to RI Bylaws section 13.010.

1 January	Completion of selecting members of the nominating committee for governor
15 January	Official call by the governor inviting clubs to submit suggestions for the office of governor for consideration by the nominating committee and announcing 15 March as the deadline for receipt of such suggestions by the nominating committee chair. Additional announcements inviting suggestions for the office of governor should be published in the January and February issues of the governor's monthly letter.
15 March	Deadline for the receipt by either the governor or the nominating committee chair of club resolutions suggesting candidates for the office of governor.

30 March	Deadline for selection of nominee for governor by the nominating committee. The nominating committee chair will promptly notify all candidates of the decision.
7 April	Deadline for governor to publish the name and club of the selected nominee and to announce 21 April as the deadline for receipt by the governor of challenges on behalf of previously suggested candidates.
21 April	Deadline for receipt by the governor of club resolutions naming previously suggested Rotarians as challenging candidates.
30 April	Deadline for the governor to publish notice to clubs of challenging candidates.
15 May	Deadline for receipt by the governor of club resolutions concurring with a challenge or challenges
1 June	Mailing of ballots by the governor for a contested election when there are valid challenges with the required number of clubs concurring with each original challenge or challenges.
21 June	Deadline for receipt by governor of ballots in a contested election.
30 June	Deadline for counting ballots by a balloting committee appointed by the governor. Following the count, the governor will promptly notify the candidates of the election results. The name of the elected candidate will be published in the July issue of the governor's monthly letter.

If resolutions of challenge are not submitted by clubs by the deadline, or they are subsequently withdrawn, or there are not a sufficient number of concurring clubs to a challenge, or concurrences are withdrawn, then the governor will declare the unchallenged nominee to be the official nominee and so notify all club presidents within 15 days thereafter. (*November 2004 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 58*)

**21.010. District Rules and Procedures Committee**

Districts are encouraged to form a district "Rules and Procedures" committee to advise and assist governors on nominations and elections and other matters involving RI's constitutional documents. The committee shall consist of three members, each serving a staggered three-year term with the possibility of reappointment. Appointments to the committee are made by the governor at the conclusion of his or her year in office. Members should be knowledgeable about RI's constitutional documents and election procedures.

Governors with questions concerning RI election policies and procedures that they cannot resolve within their districts with the assistance of their Rules and Procedures committee should contact their Club and District Administration representative, Rotarians in neighboring districts familiar with RI election procedures and guidelines, or the RI director from their area for assistance. (*Nov. 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 45*)

## **26.100. Election Guidelines and Campaigning**

### **26.100.1. Board Approved Statement of Guidelines**

A single statement of guidelines for RI elections should apply to the entire Rotary world. All candidates for elective office should be advised in writing of the RI election policies and procedures by the person responsible for administering the election. *(November 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 45)*

### **26.100.2. Official Report of Nominating Committee**

After confidential discussion in committee, all nominating committees for RI offices, including nominating committees for governor, shall state in writing on official reports to the general secretary that the selected nominee, to the best of the committee's knowledge, has not violated any of the rules against campaigning, electioneering or canvassing in the RI Bylaws. The report of all nominating committees shall also contain the names and signatures of all committee members in attendance. Such report should be forwarded to the general secretary along with the name of the nominee of the committee. *(Jun. 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325)*

### **26.100.3. Balloting Procedures for Selection of Directors-nominee**

Ballots sent to clubs to select Directors-nominee shall be accompanied by return envelopes, pre-addressed to the balloting committee, with instructions that the ballot must be returned in the pre-addressed envelope.

Ballots returned in the pre-addressed envelopes shall be delivered unopened for safe-keeping to a member of the staff as designated by the general secretary. With the approval of and at the instruction of the chair of the balloting committee, the general secretary may open the envelopes before the committee's meeting in order to sort ballots and verify the number of votes to which clubs are entitled, without tabulating the votes, and taking all necessary steps to safeguard the confidentiality of ballots. Ballots for directors-nominee cannot be duplicated and only returned original ballots shall be counted.

If a club does not return a ballot in the pre-addressed envelope, that ballot shall be delivered to the designated staff member for transmittal to the committee along with a written explanation of why the ballot was not enclosed in the official return envelope. *(November 2004 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 58)*

### **26.100.6. Guidelines Regarding Campaigning, Canvassing and Electioneering**

It is a fundamental principle in Rotary that the best qualified candidate should be selected for service in Rotary's elective offices. Therefore, any effort to influence the selection process by campaigning, canvassing, electioneering or otherwise is prohibited under the RI Bylaws.

The following guidelines shall be followed concerning campaigning, canvassing and electioneering for any Rotarian considering election to the office of president, director, Governor, or representative to the Council on Legislation, or the

nominating committee for any such office. These guidelines are designed to ensure that the best qualified candidate is selected for office:

1) Rotarians should at all times conform to the prohibitions of the RI Bylaws concerning campaigning, canvassing or electioneering. All Rotarians should observe both the letter and the spirit of the bylaws and refrain from any activity whose purpose or effect is to influence others by promoting or soliciting support for a candidate's or another Rotarian's candidacy. Such activity is repugnant to the spirit of the bylaws and the principles of Rotary and will be grounds for disqualification of a candidate.

2) Campaigning, canvassing or electioneering is any action seeking votes, requesting support in a forthcoming election, distribution of literature or promotional materials or other overt actions intended to promote one's candidacy for an elected Rotary office.

3) The periods of candidacy for elective office begin when individual Rotarians begin to give serious consideration to submitting their names for a position covered by the RI rules for nominations and elections. Commencing at that time, candidates should be particularly careful to avoid any actions designed to publicize their names or achievements, to call attention to the applicable nominations or elections, or to give candidates an unfair advantage over other candidates for the same position.

4) The normal performance of duly-assigned Rotary activities would not be considered to be a violation of the policies related to campaigning, canvassing or electioneering.

5) Should a candidate become aware of any campaigning or electioneering activities which are undertaken on the candidate's behalf, the candidate shall immediately and in writing express disapproval to all concerned and instruct them to terminate such activity. *(June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325)*