



**In an effort to standardize board election procedures the
Nominating Committee has streamlined the 2009 Board Election Procedures**

TPSS Board Election Procedures

The election process will be supervised by the Chair of the Board Nominating Committee who will be assisted by the Outreach Coordinator.

Election Facilitators:

The Nominating Committee Chair with the assistance of the Outreach Coordinator will recruit members and staff to serve as Election Facilitators. Election Facilitators (volunteer or staff) must be members in good standing and cannot be a candidate or a family member of a candidate. Election Facilitators will complete a two-hour training. Once Election Facilitators have been trained, the Outreach Coordinator will establish shifts to ensure that there is at least one Election Facilitator available at all times in both stores.

Volunteer Election Facilitators will be thanked for their time with discounts.

There will be at least one Election Facilitator in each store at all times when the store is open during the voting period. The Election Facilitators will be available to answer questions about voting, to respond to any concerns, and to report any irregularity in writing to the Chair of the Nominating Committee and Outreach Coordinator. For the time periods when a member is volunteering to serve as an Election Facilitators, this individual will stay close to the Ballot Box and encourage members to vote. During times when a staff member will serve as an Election Facilitator, the staff member will continue with their daily activities, but will be available to answer questions and address issues, should they come up on their shift.

Ballots:

The Ballot will list all candidates in alphabetical order and will include instructions for use. The Ballots will be available next to the ballot box in each store.

Voting Process:

Members will be encouraged to vote through signs in both stores and reminders on the listserv and webpage. There will be no discount for voting. In the publicity, members will be directed to pick up a ballot in the store. The member will be instructed to place their vote, put it in the envelope, seal the envelope, and then put their member number and a name associated with that member number on the co-op's membership list on the outside of the envelope. Failure to include any of this information will result in disqualification of their ballot. They will then place the envelope in the locked ballot box. At the end of each day, the Membership Coordinator, or a trained designee, and the last Election Facilitator who served that day will collect all of the ballots, seal them in a larger envelope, put the date and store on the outside of the large envelope, and lock the large envelope in the safe.

Campaigning:

Before the Election:

Candidates, members, and staff (when they are not on paid time) are welcome to campaign both inside and outside of the Co-op stores.

Once the Election Begins:

Candidates, members, and staff (when they are not on paid time) can continue to campaign anywhere *outside* the store (including cyberspace). However, once the election begins, the stores themselves are considered polling stations. As such, in-store campaigning is not allowed.

- ❖ Members who campaign in either store will be asked to stop.
- ❖ Staff who campaign on paid time will go through the progressive disciplinary procedure.
- ❖ On the first report of inappropriate campaigning by individual candidates, a warning will be issued. If a second instance of inappropriate campaigning is made and is substantiated by the Nominating Committee Chair or the General Manager (if it involves a staff member), the candidate will be disqualified from the election. The same requirement pertains to staff candidates.

Concerns: Any concerns with the process should be directed to the Nominating Committee Chair or the Outreach Coordinator who will forward them to the Nominating Committee Chair. If they can resolve the matter with minor intervention, they will do so. If the concern is significant, then the issue will be brought to the full Board or General Manager (if it involves a staff member) for action.

Ballot Counting: The day after the close of the election, counting will begin. The Nominating Committee Chair, Outreach Coordinator, two or more Co-op members, and another staff member will serve as ballot counters. The process will be as follows:

- 1) The Ballot Counters will check all envelopes to against a membership roster. They will be checking to make sure there are no duplicate votes and checking that the name and number on the envelope match the name and number on the member roster. If there are two ballots with the same number and different names, then the ballot with the name of the primary member will be counted, and the other will be disqualified. If there are two or more ballots with the same name and number, then they will all be disqualified.
 - i. These and any non-matches of names and numbers will be removed and noted on the master list, including the reason for their removal. Within two months after the election, the Nominating Committee Chair and the Outreach Coordinator will contact all individuals whose votes could not be counted to explain to them what made their ballot invalid.
- 2) All envelopes will be opened and ballots will be removed in such a way as to ensure privacy. Ballot Counters will count and tally votes.
- 3) Piles will be switched and recounted. If they result in the same figures, they will be totaled to determine the winners. If not, Ballots will be recounted until they reach the same total.

This process will be open to observation by co-op members. Any member may observe the process, although those not officially serving as Ballot Counters may not participate in the ballot counting procedure.

******Within 24 hours of the completed counting, the results will be communicated with the candidates, posted in the stores, posted on the website, and distributed to the listserv.

Feedback: The Board is asking membership for their feedback on the voting process so that they can review and revise it as necessary.

Please send a comment or question to either of the following:

TPSS Board of Directors:
board@tpss.coop

Nominating Committee Chair:
lonimccollin@gmail.com

Snail Mail:

TPSS Board of Directors c/o Takoma Park Coop
201 Ethan Allen Ave.
Takoma Park, MD. 20912