

## **Ethics and Elections Committee Report**

January 2015

### **Candidates for Director and Vice Director**

The Committee reviewed nomination paperwork for candidates for election in the fall Board elections in the Atlantic, Dakota, Delta, Great Lakes, and Midwest Divisions. We also reviewed 300-word statements for those candidates who were in contested races. Most recently we reviewed the nomination for the appointment of the new Vice Director in the Midwest Division.

### **Election Issues**

During the election period we received a complaint from a candidate about access to Division activities. After review we decided to take no action. There was also concern from one Division that a number of people did not receive ballots. After review, there was no action taken, aside from the reminders sent to members in the Division. See the section below on electronic voting.

Another issue came up about Division electronic newsletters and how they should be handled during the election period. In this case we decided that since the newsletter was done on a regular basis and that the Vice Director had a regular section of the newsletter, it was appropriate for the candidate Vice Director to continue. There was not clear enough direction in the election rules to do otherwise.

A week after ballots had been mailed, we received word that Great Lakes Vice Director candidate Steve Putman, N8ZR, had become a silent key. We discussed what options were available and if any changes in communication to members was indicated. We decided that the election should run its course - all votes cast by members in the Great Lakes Division would still be counted. If Putman received the most votes, a vacancy would be declared that President Craigie would fill by appointment. An ARRL web story about his passing was posted the same day:

<http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-vice-director-candidate-steve-putman-n8zr-sk>

### **Conflict of Interest**

In early August a revised Conflict of Interest disclosure was received from Vice Director Allen, and the Committee determined that there was no longer any need for the special agreement agreed to by Mr. Allen and the Board dated May 22, 2014.

## **Electronic Voting**

As reported in July, after reviewing options for improving voter turnout with Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS), we added two things. First was an email to members prior to the election in the two Divisions where there was to be balloting. The email asked members if they preferred a paper or electronic ballot. Additionally, there were some additional reminders to voters, including a web and ARRL Letter story about the two Division elections being balloted. A reminder from SBS was sent to members who had not voted by the end of October, and two email reminders went to all members, one in late October, one in the first part of November.

Turnout was close to 20% in the Atlantic Division where there was real competition for both Director and Vice Director positions. That's up from the roughly 13% turnout in the Southeastern Division election, but still 10% less than the average of the last few years of all paper balloting.

We decided to allow electronic voting by a Board vote modifying Article 4 at Minute 35 of the July 2011 Board meeting, followed by changes to ByLaws 19-20-41 at Minute 37 of the January 2012 Board meeting.

We moved to a hybrid paper and electronic balloting process for the fall 2012 Board elections based on estimates that the cost for electronic balloting would be covered by the savings in printing and postage. Because so few Divisions have had contested elections there have not been any real savings. While the members who use electronic voting overwhelmingly like it, it's difficult to justify the increased cost if it results in less participation.

After the 2013 Board elections, Board members expressed concern about the decline in voter turnout. This year the Committee worked with SBS to improve voter turnout and it was only partially successful. As a result, Committee members are recommending (2-1) that we go back to a paper ballot system.

That choice will be up to the new Ethics and Elections Committee, with whatever guidance they receive from the rest of the Board.

We'd like to thank Director Widin for being our (and the Board's) representative when the ballots were counted and certified by SBS in November.

My personal thanks to Directors Bodson and Vallio for their guidance and quick responses to issues we handled during the second half of the year.

**Tom Frenaye, K1KI, Chairman**

**Dennis Bodson, W4PWF**

**Bob Vallio, W6RGG**