

*IAMAW Official Policy Regarding*  
**LOCAL LODGE ELECTIONS**

*- Checklist of Ten Key Issues -*

Note: Election Rules are based on bylaws, not the posted Guide

*Revised January 2002*

# IAM LOCAL LODGE ELECTION GUIDELINES

## *- Checklist of Ten Key Issues -*

### Introduction

- A. The following is a brief overview of the key issues involved in conducting elections for local lodge officers.
- B. In addition, and prior to conducting any election, it is **essential** that all those involved review and be completely familiar with the following:
  - 1. Pertinent provisions of the IAM Constitution (see, especially, Articles B, C and Article II, Sec. 3 and 4)
  - 2. Local Lodge Bylaws
  - 3. Officials Circular \_\_\_ (LMRDA Election Requirements)
  - 4. Official Circular \_\_\_ (Absentee Ballots)
  - 5. Official Circular \_\_\_ (Voting Rights of Retired, Laid Off, or Exempt Members)

### 1. *What office must be filled by election?*

- A. President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Secretary-Treasurer, Conductor/Sentinel, and 3 member Board of Trustees, and any other officers who are members of the lodge executive board.
- B. Term of office for all officers is three (3) years.

### II. *Who is eligible to run for local lodge office?*

- A. Member in good standing of the local lodge for at least one (1) year at time of nomination;

- B. Working at the trade during the six (6) month period prior to the nomination meeting (members who are retired on pension and paying full dues may run for the office without regard to the “working at the trade” requirement, however, they may not run for the office of Business Representative or General Chairman. They are also ineligible to run for any offices that have a direct impact on the collective bargaining agreement.)
- C. Satisfied meeting attendance requirement, if any (See **Attachment B** to the Checklist);
- D. Not on indefinite layoff (See Official Circular 791).

III. **Who is eligible to vote for local lodge officers?**

- A. Members in good standing;
- B. Retired or exempt members and members on indefinite layoff (but such members may not vote for positions having a direct effect on the collective bargaining agreement, such as stewards or committee persons).

IV. **How must the local lodge notify its members of nominations and/or elections?**

- A. Local lodges can satisfy all their obligations under the IAM Constitution and the law by having the Recording Secretary mail a single, combined notice of nomination and election. This mailing must be done not less than 60 days prior to the election and must be mailed to each member qualified to vote at their last known home address, even if the lodge knows the address is incorrect.
- B. The notice must contain the date, time and place of nominations, the election and the runoff election should one prove necessary. It must be accompanied by an application for an absentee ballot and must specify who is entitled to receive an absentee ballot.
  - 1. The requirement to send notices by mail does not apply to local lodges in Canada.
- C. The notice should also be posted on bulletin boards, appear in newsletters and be posted on the lodge's web site, if they have one.

V. **How are nominations conducted?**

- A. All nominations must be made from the floor by a member in good standing.
- B. Members may nominate themselves.
- C. Nominations may not be submitted in writing.
- D. Members who are not present may be nominated, but they must have a letter on file with the Recording Secretary stating that they will accept nomination for that particular office.

VI. **Who can vote by absentee ballot and how are such requests to be handled?**

- A. Members may vote by absentee ballot if they:
  - 1. reside more than 25 miles from polling place;
  - 2. are confined by verified illness;
  - 3. are on vacation, official union business, employment assignment, reserve military leave or on leave qualifying under U.S. and Canadian family leave laws.
- B. The Recording Secretary must:
  - 1. Mail ballot packets to members who have filed written requests within 5 days of the close of nominations or as soon thereafter as ballots are available and present all voted absentee ballots to the inspectors;
  - 2. Preserve all absentee ballots along with election materials for **1 year**, including all written requests for ballots, lists of ballots mailed, identification stubs, unused ballots, ballots returned for incorrect addresses, envelopes containing voted ballots, voted ballots, challenged ballots declared void, impounded ballots and eligibility rulings made by the inspectors, tellers, or R.S.

VII. *How must the lodge handle requests for distribution of campaign literature?*

- A. All candidates must be treated **equally!**
- B. All candidates may inspect (but not copy) membership mailing lists once during the 30 days preceding the election and all candidates are entitled to have their requests to mail campaign literature (at their own expense) treated equally.
- C. Candidates will not be given a copy of the mailing list, but gummed labels or addressed envelopes will be prepared by the lodge at a predetermined price, not less than the actual cost, and mail campaign literature for the candidate.

VIII. *How are election tellers appointed and what are their duties?*

- A. The president shall, at least 60 days prior to the election, appoint at least three (3) tellers to conduct the election in a fair and impartial manner;
- B. Tellers are responsible for conducting the actual balloting and tabulating the ballots; their specific duties are outlined in **Attachment A** to the Checklist.

IX. *What rules govern ballots and the balloting area?*

- A. Voting instructions should clearly inform members as to the manner in which their ballot must be marked, the number of votes allowed for each office, and that write-in votes are not permitted.
- B. The ballot itself should be arranged so that candidates for each office are clearly identified, with legitimate nicknames if the candidate so requests, and with the position of the candidate on the ballot being determined in any reasonable and fair manner, in accordance with the bylaws and/or past practice (such as alphabetically, by order of nomination, or by lot).
- C. Ballots must contain a numbered, detachable stub upon which the voter will provide identifying information, including the voter's name, address, lodge and book number;
- D. The balloting area and at least a 50 foot area surrounding it must be designated a "campaign-free" zone, and booths and/or partitions must be provided to permit members to mark their ballots in privacy.

X. **What is the role of observers?**

- A. Each candidate has the right to one observer, but a candidate may not serve as his/her own observer or that of any other candidate;
- B. Observers must be members of the lodge and serve at the expense of the individual candidates;
- C. The following rules apply to observers: they must be permitted in areas where they can observe the voting and tabulation procedures; they may not handle ballots; they may not engage in campaigning (by wearing campaign apparel during voting or otherwise); and they may not converse with voters or obstruct the balloting process.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **CONDUCTING AND TABULATING THE BALLOTING** **- *Duties of Local Lodge Tellers* -**

A. When conducting an election, tellers shall:

1. conduct the actual balloting and tabulation
2. account for all ballots, voter registers, and voting materials
3. determine the eligibility of voters and resolve challenges
4. ensure that the polls open and close at the stated times; permit members to vote if in line at the designated closing time
5. inspect the ballot box in the presence of the observers before the start of the balloting and then secure the box
6. seal the ballot box during any periods in which balloting has been interrupted and verify the seal before the ballot box is reopened
7. where machines are used in place of paper ballots, verify that they have been cleared and are in good working order prior to the start of the voting; insure that the machines are locked during any periods in which voting has been interrupted
8. require members voting on-site to identify themselves as required by the election rules and record each member as having voted
9. permit members to vote challenged ballots, and place such ballots in an individual envelope with the reason for the challenge written on it
10. place challenged ballots in the ballot box and resolve challenges if of sufficient number to determine the outcome of any election
11. provide a replacement ballot to a member who has spoiled the initial ballot and maintain custody of such ballots and account for them

12. open absentee ballots, check the enclosed detachable stub to determine the eligibility and identity of the voter, and commingle ballots cast by eligible voters with those cast on-site, prior to the start of the tabulation process
13. require voters to cast their ballots in the secret balloting booths provided
14. maintain a campaign-free zone around the voting area, periodically police the area during the balloting and remove any campaign materials
15. prohibit members from lingering in the election room or engaging in campaigning while waiting to vote
16. refrain from wearing any campaign buttons or political garments indicating support for any candidate
17. report the results of the election and ensure that all election records are delivered to the R.S. of the lodge for preservation for one year

B. When tabulating the ballots, tellers shall:

1. prohibit candidates or observers from handling ballots
2. no open ballots until the observers for the candidates are present, if they choose to be in attendance
3. record votes for the candidate(s) designated by the voter, if the tellers can determine the voter=s intent
4. void that portion of the ballot if a voter fails to vote for the stated number of open positions for any office, however, this does not void the entire ballot
5. void a ballot in its entirety if the voter has defaced the ballot or made markings which identify the voter
6. void the ballot for that office if the voter has voted for too many candidates for one office
7. count the ballot cast on-site and impound the absentee ballot of a voter who has cast an absentee ballot and also votes on-site
8. void the ballot for that office if a voter has indicated a write-in vote

9. mark "void" through any ballot or specific portion of a ballot which is not being counted, record the reason and initial the ballot
10. void any absentee ballot without a completed identification stub

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **MEETING ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Article B, Section 3 of the IAM Constitution grants to local lodges the authority, through their bylaws, to require members to have attended up to 50% of the regular lodge meetings held during the twelve month period ending the date of close of nominations in order to qualify as an officer or delegate. Several points need to be clearly understood when applying this language.

1. Only regular meetings count in determining a member's eligibility. Special or called meetings are not counted.
2. Only meetings at which a quorum was present count.
3. Article B, Section 3 lists the various reasons for which members must be excused from regular meetings. The lodge should adopt a clear policy on the time limits for submitting requests to be excused.
4. The lodge must establish a method of determining who, in fact, attends the meetings. A sign-in sheet or log book must be kept. The lodge must establish a policy as to the manner in which members must sign-in or register.
5. Any lodge policies established in connection with the meeting attendance requirement must be enforced in a uniform manner.
6. When lodge members have been granted excuses from attending some meetings, the method for determining their eligibility is as follows: take the number of meetings held; then subtract the number for which the members was excused; divide by two and round all fractions down in favor of the member.

Any questions as to a particular member's eligibility must be resolved promptly so that the process of printing the ballots may proceed in a timely manner. To facilitate the resolution of eligibility questions, the sign-in sheets or log book and the record of approved excused absences should be available at the nominating meeting. The president of the lodge is the final arbiter in these matters, subject to appeal to the International President.