DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATES

Each chapter should elect or designate the voting delegate(s) to represent the chapter at the national convention. Any voting delegate(s) must have been a member of the national Society of Professional Journalists for a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the national convention.

Chapters which are entitled to more than one vote may designate as many delegates as the chapter has votes.

If a chapter designates fewer delegates than the number of votes which are authorized for the chapter, the votes must be designated by the chapter of split between the delegates to specific delegates in whole votes.

For example, a chapter with five votes may designate one delegate to cast all five votes or may divide the votes between several delegates. Once a delegate is assigned a certain number of votes, however, the delegate must cast that same number of votes throughout the session.

Each delegate may have an accredited alternate delegate to vote for in the absence of the designated delegate. Any such alternate delegate will vote with the same number of votes as the delegate represented, and in the same manner as the delegate, using the same voting mechanism (voting card or ballot) issued to the delegate originally. An accredited delegate from the chapter may, in the absence of another delegate, serve as an alternate for that delegate.

If a delegate arrives at the convention late or leaves early, the chapter votes may not be designated except by appeal to the Credentials Committee appointed by the president. The designated alternate of the delegate may, of course, represent the delegate as long as the appropriate credentials have been presented.

The Credentials Committee is designated to deal with any last-minute changes due to job difficulties, i.e., a designated delegate who is unable to attend because of an assignment at the last minute can have his or her delegate status transferred to another member or to an alternate.

VOTING PROCEDURES

Only accredited delegates and alternates voting in place of accredited delegates may enter the delegate seating area.

Votes are cast by each delegate holding up the voting card which indicates the number of votes he or she has. A delegate may cast a split vote, dividing the number of votes held by the delegate, but only by leaving the seating area and moving to a microphone in the aisle before votes are counted.

In the event of ambiguity regarding the will of the convention, a roll call vote may be called. Chapter delegates will reply to the call by holding up the voting cards and announcing verbally the number of votes and whether “yes,” “no,” or “abstain.”
CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Only registered delegates and national board members may address business sessions of the convention. Others may speak only by permission of the convention.

In order to assure accuracy, all main motions and motions to amend must be submitted in writing to the presiding officer.

ONE MEMBER, ONE VOTE

Bylaws change approved by delegates in 2011 allows individual members to vote for SPJ national officers and regional coordinators, but does not affect the need for delegates to vote on other matters at the annual convention.