

Replacing the Delegate System with Referendums, i.e., “One Member, One Vote”

Removing the apportionment of delegates

Article Five: Establishment and Operation of Chapters and Communities

~~Section Seventeen. The national headquarters shall annually shall determine the status of all SPJ Society professional chapters, communities or campus chapters chapters and communities annually. ... This process shall be completed in time for certification of delegates to the national convention. Chapters shall be notified of their status at least 60 days prior to the convention and shall have 30 days to bring themselves into active good standing status.~~

~~Section Eighteen. As part of the process of certifying chapter membership for purposes of apportioning delegates to the national convention, the national headquarters shall determine whether each SPJ member in the region is or is not counted as a member of any SPJ chapter within or outside the region, and establish the total number of SPJ members living in each region who are not counted as members of any SPJ chapter within or outside the region~~

Article Ten: Convention

~~Section Two. The convention shall be composed of delegates or representatives from each chapter, delegates chosen in each region by SPJ members residing in the region who are not counted among the members of any SPJ chapter within or outside the region, the national officers and at-large directors.~~

~~Section Three. The Board shall establish a procedure and timetable for the selection of regional delegates. In the event that the number of potential delegates exceeds the number of convention votes assigned to the region, the national headquarters staff shall conduct a ballot among SPJ members living in each region not counted as members of any SPJ chapter within or outside the region to elect their delegates.~~

~~Section Four. In the convention, each professional and campus chapter considered as active in good standing shall have one vote for each 50 members or fraction thereof. Each region shall have one vote for each 50 members or fraction thereof, who reside in the region and are not counted among the members of any SPJ chapter within or outside the region. Voting must be done by accredited delegates or their accredited alternate delegates present on the floor of the convention. Delegates cannot vote by proxy. National officers and members of the Board who are not delegates may not vote. In case of a tie, the presiding officer shall cast the deciding vote. Representatives of chapters who are not accredited as delegates may not vote.~~

~~Section Five. A convention quorum is present when delegates or alternates with authority to cast at least half of the delegate votes apportioned according to Article Ten, Section Three, are on the convention floor.~~

~~Section Six. All enactments of the convention shall become effective immediately unless otherwise specified.~~

Updating language on balloting, the convention, and “General Membership Meetings”

Article Five: Establishment and Operation of Chapters and Communities

Section Four. Upon presentation of a formal petition and completion of established requirements, a group or organization of journalists may be granted a charter by the Board ~~or the national convention~~ as a professional chapter or community of the Society. Charters of professional chapters and communities shall be granted upon approval by a majority vote of the Board ~~or by a majority vote of the delegates to a national convention.~~

Section Fifteen. For failure to meet financial obligations or otherwise to conduct itself according to the [Society](#) bylaws or ~~policies adopted by~~ the Board [policies](#) ~~or the national convention~~, a [professional chapter, community or campus chapter](#) ~~chapter or /community~~ may be declared probationary, inactive, or have its charter revoked by [a](#) majority vote of ~~the board of directors~~ [the Board](#). [Any such actions may be appealed to the Board through the process described in the board policies.](#) ~~Any such decision may be appealed to the full convention under the written charter revocation and probation policies of the Board.~~

Article Six: Society Officers

Section Seven. The secretary-treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing an accounting of all receipts and disbursements, assets and liabilities, and shall report to the president, ~~and~~ [and](#) to the Board, ~~or to the convention when requested.~~

Article Nine: Elections

Section One. There shall be an election annually ~~at~~ [during](#) the convention or, if no convention is scheduled, during the fourth week of September, to elect the Society’s vice president, secretary treasurer, and to fill the positions of elected at-large directors and regional coordinators whose terms

are expiring. The ballot shall include any membership referendums for resolutions or amendments to these bylaws proposed pursuant to the procedures in Article Eleven and Article Fifteen.

Section Seven. The ~~voting election~~ shall be conducted electronically by secret ballot beginning at the end of the opening ~~business~~ General Membership Meeting of the convention and ending one hour before the start of the closing General Membership Meeting. ~~final business meeting of the convention.~~ In a year when no convention ~~is scheduled, will be held, either in person or electronically,~~ balloting will begin at 12:01 a.m. Eastern Time on a date in the fourth week of September set by the Board and balloting shall remain open for at least 48 hours. Ballots shall be cast using a system established by the executive director with the approval of the Board.

Section Eight. All members of the Society in good standing seven days prior to the date and time balloting begins ~~are~~ shall be eligible to vote for officers and at-large directors. ~~and for any referendums for the general membership in good standing that may appear on the ballot.~~

Section Ten. A committee appointed by the president shall count the ballots and report the results of the election to the membership at the ~~final business meeting~~ closing General Membership Meeting of the convention. In a year when no convention is ~~held~~ scheduled, the committee shall report the results to the Board no later than eight hours after balloting is closed, and the board shall immediately publish the outcome of the election to the membership in a way that is publicly available.

Article Ten: Convention

Section One. ~~The convention shall be the supreme legislative body of the organization. The membership shall have supreme~~ sole authority to ratify any proposals on the ballot for (1) resolutions and to or (2) ratify ~~bylaw amendments in referendums that shall be held during the convention, or in a year without a convention, that shall be held during the annual election (See: Article Nine, Section One.)~~

Section Two. A convention shall be held at least biennially at a time and place designated by the Board. There shall be General Membership Meetings to mark the opening and closing of the

convention that shall be open to all Society members in good standing and shall be conducted

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according to the rules established by board policy. These meetings shall include discussion of any proposed (1) resolutions ~~and~~ (2) bylaws-amendments, which must be submitted in advance (See Article Eleven and Article Fifteen.)

Section Three. The convention shall include whatever other meetings the Board deems appropriate to foster interaction between the Society's members at the national, regional, committee, professional chapter, community and campus chapter levels. This should include, but is not limited to, a meeting open to all leaders of professional chapters, communities, and campus chapters in good standing for the purpose of supporting local and community leadership.

Article Twelve: Executive Director

Section One. An executive director shall be chosen by the Board to head the national headquarters. The executive director shall carry out the policies set forth by the ~~convention~~, president and board of directors, and by resolutions approved by the membership and resolutions that were previously approved by the delegates voting at convention.

Section Three. The executive director shall maintain a permanent record of the acts and of the expressions of policy ~~of the conventions~~ of the Society ~~of Professional Journalists~~. Each of such acts and expressions, whether originated by the Board or through resolutions approved by the membership or through resolutions that were previously approved by the delegates voting at convention, shall be ~~adopted and approved by the convention under a specific number and it shall be so recorded and~~ indexed in the permanent record ~~that it may be~~ and made readily available for reference both by the serial number and by the nature of its subject matter.

Article Thirteen: Finance

Section One. National membership dues, as established by the Board, shall be payable at the time of or before initiation and annually thereafter. Dues shall include membership and a subscription to Quill magazine. Any annual dues increase in excess of five percent (5%) shall not become effective unless ratified by ~~the convention~~ a majority of the members casting their ballots in a referendum

[that shall occur at the same time and in the same manner as the annual election. \(See Article Nine, Sections One, Seven, and Eight.\)](#)

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Ratifying bylaws by referendum

Article Fourteen: Amendment (NEW Sections 1-6)

Section One. Origination. Proposals to amend these bylaws may only appear on the ballot if they have been discussed in a public meeting of the national board of directors at least 60 days before the annual election, whether the idea originated with the Bylaws Committee, with the Board, or with a member in good standing. The presence of the Bylaws Committee chair or the chair's designate shall be required at this meeting. Any member wishing to suggest a bylaw amendment may contact the Bylaws Committee before this meeting.

Section Two. Review. The Bylaws Committee shall submit any proposed amendments that do not conflict with laws or with the Society's Code of Ethics to a minimum 45-day comment period open to all members in good standing in a manner consistent with the board policy on public comment periods and with the Society's communications with members. Should the Bylaws Committee not advance a proposal to public review, members may petition in the manner set forth in section four below. The Bylaws Committee may make changes to the language based on public comments. The Bylaws Committee may only submit proposals to amend these bylaws to the Board upon completion of this comment period, which may begin at any point so long as it is concluded before the board meeting described in Section Three below.

Section Three. Referral to ballot. The Board shall decide in a public meeting whether to advance proposals to amend these bylaws for ratification by the membership in good standing in an annual referendum no later than 60 days before the next annual election. The presence of the Bylaws Committee chair or the chair's designate shall be required at this public meeting. The Board may amend the proposed changes, provided that the Bylaws Committee chair or the chair's designate agrees. At least five board members must vote in favor of advancing a proposal to amend these bylaws to a membership referendum. Should the Board reject a proposal to amend these bylaws, whether the

proposal originated by petition or not, members may petition as set forth in Section Four below.

Section Four. Petition. Members of the Society may petition to advance a proposal to amend these bylaws, including against the recommendation of the Board or of the Bylaws Committee, in the manner set forth below.

a. The leaders of a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the chapters and communities considered as active in good standing may request that the executive director create a petition. The executive director shall immediately create the petition in a timely manner and shall confirm that all signatories of the petition are members of the Society in good standing.

b. The petition process may not be used to amend proposals drafted by the Bylaws Committee, whether by the Board, by the petitioners, or otherwise.

c. The petition shall remain open until the required number of signatures has been reached, as set forth in Subsection (d) below, up until 45 days before the annual election to allow time for the membership notification in Section Five below.

d. A petition shall be considered successful when it has obtained the signatures of at least five percent (5%) of the membership in good standing.

e. Following a successful petition made in this manner, the proposal shall be sent to members at the same time and in the same manner as proposals approved by the Board and shall appear on the ballot in the same manner as proposals approved by the board, as set forth in Sections Five and Six below.

Section Five. Notification. The exact wording of proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be sent to all members of the Society in good standing no later than 30 days before the annual election in which the proposed amendments will appear on the ballot. (See Article Nine, Sections One, Seven, and Eight.)

Section Six. Balloting. A proposal to amend these bylaws must be ratified by at least two-thirds of

members voting on the question, provided that the number of ballots cast on that question is at least 70 percent of the total cast in the annual election.

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Section ~~Seven~~^{Two}. Amendments ratified by the membership shall become effective immediately, unless otherwise specified in the ballot.

If passed this proposal will not take effect until the end of the 2023 convention.

~~Section One. These bylaws may be amended by referendum or at convention as hereinafter provided:~~

~~a. By a majority of votes cast in convention sessions, provided that the proposal to amend and the exact wording of the amendment shall have been submitted to all members not less than sixty days prior to the opening date of the convention and provided that the proposal shall have been originated by convention, the board of directors, or by a minimum of ten chapters and/or communities in the manner set forth in part (b) hereof. Proposed bylaw amendments may be amended by the convention, provided that (1) such convention amendment is approved by two-thirds of delegates voting and (2) the convention amendment does not change or add to the general subject matter of the proposed bylaw amendment. The provisions of (2) shall be enforced by the presiding officer, whose ruling may be appealed to the convention and may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of all delegates:~~

~~b. By a majority vote, as calculated under Article Ten, Section Three of these bylaws, of all chapters in good standing voting upon referendum ballot, provided that more than fifty percent of the certified vote is cast. The board of directors shall specify the limits during which ballots may be cast and counted, except that this period shall not be less than sixty days:~~

~~e. Proposals to amend by referendum may be originated by convention where a majority favorable vote shall be necessary to send the proposal to referendum or by the board of directors upon majority vote of the members, or by a minimum of ten chapters and/or communities by certifying to the executive director of the Society that such proposal has been endorsed by a majority vote of the board of each chapter or community:~~

~~Section Two. Amendments become effective immediately, unless otherwise specified:~~

