

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTION NOMINATIONS, CAMPAIGNING AND COMMUNICATION

Revised July 22, 2021

Preamble

As befits an Association of professionals, Illinois Park and Recreation Association (“IPRA”) (“Association”) elections shall be conducted in an ethical and fair manner. It is the responsibility of IPRA governance, and in particular, the Governance Committee to provide all members running for office with an opportunity to campaign on an equal basis. Nominees and their supporters will follow the campaign practices outlined in these documents when informing the IPRA membership of their interest in this position with respect to the Association, its future, and its policies.

- A nominee is an IPRA Professional Member whose name appears on the slate submitted by the Governance Committee for approval by the IPRA Board of Directors (“Board”).
- A candidate is an IPRA Professional Member whose name appears on the final ballot that elects a person to office.
- Additional information is given in the IPRA Bylaws, Article IX.
- The IPRA logo may not be utilized on any campaign materials including web sites or email messages.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the IPRA Guidelines on Nominations, Election Campaigning and Communications is to concisely state key requirements of fair and appropriate IPRA campaign practices; and, to assure that:

- All nominees are treated fairly and equally throughout the process.
- All parties understand appropriate campaign activities and required actions.
- Members have sufficient information to make informed choices in the elections.
- IPRA elections are conducted in a manner befitting a professional Association.
- These guidelines apply to all elections for members of the IPRA Board of Directors and describe appropriate activities for:
 - Nominees (i.e., those members whose name appears on the slate submitted to the IPRA Board of Directors by the IPRA Governance Committee)
 - Candidates (i.e., those members whose name appears on the final ballot that elects a person to office)
 - Persons acting on behalf of the nominees
 - Members of the IPRA Governance Committee
 - Members of the IPRA Board of Directors
 - IPRA staff

Governance Committee Formation

The Governance Committee of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association shall be a standing committee of the Board of Directors which reports to the Past Chair of the Board. The committee shall

have a staff liaison appointed to carry out the day to day necessary actions of the committee as directed by the Chair of the Committee.

The Governance Committee shall be comprised of the following:

Chair – the Past Chair of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association

At least two (2) representatives the Membership Council

At least one (1) representative from each region

The term for each representative shall be one year, with re-appointment possible by the incoming Chair of the Board. Any representative that cannot fulfill the obligations to the Committee shall be removed and the incoming Chair of the Board shall make an appointment to fill the vacated seat.

Governance Committee Requirements

1. All Region and At-Large slates must have a minimum of two (2) nominees running for an open IPRA Board of Directors position.
2. All Region and At-Large positions that do not have a minimum of two (2) nominees for the open IPRA Board of Directors position will have the Governance Committee bring forth a candidate(s) who may/or may not be part of that region following the same procedures as outlined in the process.
3. All candidate applications will be sent to and reviewed by IPRA Executive Director or designee to ensure that the application meets the requirements for review.
4. All candidate applications meeting requirements for a Regional or At-Large Board of Directors' position will be forwarded to the IPRA Governance Committee who will review and interview each qualified nominee by the date set forth in the timeline.
5. A nominee or candidate may only run on one slate per election cycle. No nominee or candidate will be allowed to run for the Board of Directors for more than one (1) slate.
6. Nominees or candidates that are Professional Members in good standing and reside outside the state of Illinois may run for the Board of Directors in the region closest to their office location outside the state. Final determination for a region location will be made by the Chair of the Board and the Governance Committee Chair with advice from the Executive Director.
7. No nominee or candidate for an IPRA Board of Director's position shall be allowed to be seated on the IPRA Governance Committee.
8. The IPRA Governance Committee Chair, on behalf of the committee, will present a slate to the Board of Directors who shall approve or reject the slate of candidates or any portion thereof for the election.
9. All nominees and candidates will be contacted by the IPRA Governance Committee Chair regarding their selection to be on the ballot for an IPRA Board of Directors position and the results of the election process.
10. The recommendation by the IPRA Governance Committee to the IPRA Chair shall be considered a complete slate that will be presented to the Board for a vote.
11. The IPRA Executive Committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Association members if a complaint or grievance is filed by any nominee or candidate against the IPRA Governance Committee.
12. A complaint or grievance must be filed within 5 (five) business days from suspected date of incident by the nominee or candidate.
13. The IPRA Executive Committee shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint or grievance in writing within two (2) business days.

14. Once a complaint or grievance is filed by a nominee/candidate to the Executive Director of the Association, it shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Directors and the election process will be suspended until such complaint or grievance is duly investigated.
15. The decision of the IPRA Executive Committee and its investigation shall be the final decision and the election suspension will be lifted and such election shall move forward based on the decision.

Criteria for Nominee/Candidate

1. Be an IPRA Professional Member in good standing for a minimum of three (3) years.
2. Be a member of the region (defined by office location) for at least one (1) year prior to nomination.
3. Required to hold a certification that is awarded by either examination, or balanced continuing education units or credits on an annual basis.
4. Attend a minimum of ten (10) hours of Continuing Education Programs per year while within office. The education shall be related to the Board Member's employment position.
5. Identify leadership skills and positions within the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, Illinois Association of Park Districts, National Recreation and Park Association or an Affiliate Organization of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association.
6. Provide with application a letter of support from the nominee's employing agency at the time of nomination. If a nominee/candidate changes agencies prior to the election a new letter of support will be required.
7. Identify leadership skills and positions within outside organizations for additional consideration for which include, but are not limited to; PTA, faith-based organizations, government-elected positions and non-profit organizations.

Nominations Process

The following process is to be adhered to by all nominees:

1. Nominees/Candidates for the IPRA Board of Directors may not begin any election campaigning prior to the IPRA Governance Committee's submission and approval of the slate by the IPRA Board of Directors.

Nomination

1. Prior to the election, according to the timeline and format provided by the IPRA Headquarters, each nominee must be a professional member in good standing, and must submit the following items for a Board Position:
 - a. Resume of nominee
 - b. Certification from a professional association or organization requiring continuing education units
 - c. Description of how you meet all criteria for nominee/candidate and eligibility requirements of the Guidelines for Election Nominations, Campaigning and Communication.
 - d. Resume of volunteer leadership experience (Section, IPRA Committee, Affiliate or community based) and list educational programs attended
 - e. Brief Statement of why you wish to run for the IPRA Board of Directors
 - f. Letter of Support from current supervisor/board chair
 - g. Biography of a maximum of 500 words
 - h. Photograph from the shoulders up only

Eligibility

1. No candidate may run for more than one position during an election cycle.
2. Irrespective of other provisions of these guidelines, no member shall become a nominee or candidate unless the member has indicated, in writing, a willingness to serve if elected (Statement of Commitment Form). It shall be the responsibility of the IPRA Governance Committee to present, prior to balloting, evidence that the nominee or candidate is willing to serve if elected.
3. Having held a prior IPRA Board or officer position shall not render anyone ineligible for nomination or election.
4. The IPRA Executive Director shall establish and submit to the Governance Committee for approval, balloting procedures that meet the requirements of (1) fair balloting that is open to all eligible members of the Association, (2) anonymity, (3) protection against fraudulent balloting, (4) ballot archiving, (5) the timely reporting and archiving of balloting results, and (6) electronic balloting and election confirmation.

Timing

1. In time for the fall board meeting, the IPRA Governance Committee shall transmit to the IPRA Board of Directors and Executive Director, the names of the member(s) of the Association who have been vetted and slated by the committee.

Ballot

1. A single choice ballot shall be used per position, and the candidate receiving the greater number of votes shall be declared elected.
2. The ballot shall contain the names of all candidates for positions available on the IPRA Board of Directors.
3. The ballot shall be electronic in nature, and all set up of the ballot system shall be done by the IPRA staff.

Voting

1. The IPRA Governance Committee shall set and announce in advance of the balloting, the interval during which ballots will be received to be counted; this interval shall be within thirty (30) days prior to distribution of the ballots.
2. In time for elections to be completed before the November board meeting, the IPRA Executive Director and designated staff shall ensure a ballot is made available to each professional member in good standing with the association.
3. Ballots shall be electronic in nature unless otherwise defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4. Ballots must be completed and submitted by the deadline as outlined in the Nominations and Elections Timeline for the specific year.
5. All IPRA professional members in good standing will have the opportunity to vote for all section and region candidates.

Tabulation

1. The results will be tabulated and verified via an independent system. The IPRA Executive Director shall report the results to the Chair of the Governance Committee.
2. The IPRA Governance Committee Chair shall notify each candidate of the results of the elections starting with the non-winners and moving toward the winning candidate as last notification.

3. Following the vote tabulation and electronic verification, the IPRA Executive Director shall make the election results available to the general membership by posting results without specific counts in the appropriate area of the IPRA website.
4. No results shall be posted until the Chair of the Governance Committee ratifies the results and confirms notification of all candidates.
5. The IPRA Board of Directors shall acknowledge the results, after five (5) days of the election at their next scheduled meeting.
6. The IPRA Governance Committee shall be responsible for receiving and acting upon all questions associated with the election process, to include any request for a special electronic verification recount.
7. The IPRA Executive Director shall assist the Chair of the Governance Committee with the process.

Procedure for Special Elections/Appointments

1. If, in a specific election, circumstances do not permit the procedures prescribed elsewhere in these Guidelines to be carried out, the IPRA Governance Committee shall forthwith devise a procedure for a special elections/appointment after consulting with the Executive Director.
2. Such procedure shall be transmitted to and publicized promptly by the Executive Director and used for that specific election/appointment.

Finances

1. The following guidelines and requirements apply to funds and/or other contributions in support of or in opposition to a nominee or candidate:
 - a. Solicitation of campaign funds by a nominee or candidate or his/her/their supporters is prohibited.
 - b. No funds of the Association shall be used to support or oppose the election of a candidate. In-kind contributions from the Association or its Council are prohibited.
 - c. Solicitation of campaign funds by a candidate from an IPRA Commercial Member is prohibited.
 - d. All expenses incurred in the creation, production and distribution of a web site and materials or literature to be used for promotion by the candidate shall be borne personally by the candidate.
 - e. Utilization of an agency email system is allowed upon approval of the agency director.
 - f. Any member, who has a direct or indirect financial interest in the IPRA Board of Director decisions that is known at the time of approval of the name(s) recommended for appointment slate of candidates by the Board of Directors, shall be declared ineligible to run for any position on the Board of Directors.
2. Fair Election Procedures, and Nominees' and Candidates' Activities
 - a. At a minimum, the IPRA Executive Director and the IPRA Board of Directors shall ensure every candidate's photo and biography and "statement" is on the electronic ballot during the duration of the election.
 - b. All elections and election campaigns for office in the IPRA Board of Directors shall be carried out according to the following:
 - c. No paid advertising space in any IPRA publication or electronic media will be permitted. Further the use of the IPRA membership lists in any form is prohibited.
 - d. Candidates shall not make campaign statements at any IPRA-level or section-level meeting, without the other nominees or candidates for that position being invited to speak and being present.

Ethical Expectations and Protocols on Campaign Activities

1. The IPRA logo may not be used on any materials used for campaign purposes, including the candidate's websites or email.
2. Propriety and decorum are expected at all times, and the nominee or candidate shall refrain from comparing themselves to or naming other nominees. Disparagement of any candidate is strongly discouraged and may be interpreted as impugning. Each candidate shall communicate this expectation to their supporters.
3. The candidate may create and publish his/her/their own web site, using their desired content and design. The IPRA logo and other IPRA graphics shall not be used in any form or manner. No other individual, agency or institution websites shall be used for campaigning purposes. IPRA will not provide links to any Candidates website. Disclaimer: The Candidate's website is his/her/their own creation and responsibility, and IPRA takes no responsibility whatsoever for the information posted on these sites. The IPRA reserves the right to totally separate the Association from negative sites that would not be in the best interests of the members as a whole.
4. IPRA will not allow utilization of member lists for campaign purposes.
5. Candidate literature, promotional materials, and novelties may be distributed at any time after the slate of candidates is approved by the IPRA Board of Directors.

Grievances or Complaints

1. If in any election the IPRA Governance Committee or IPRA Board of Directors finds a significant violation of the IPRA Bylaws, or provisions of guidelines regulating election procedures, which appears to benefit the winning candidate, the authority is vested within the IPRA Executive Committee to declare the election void and order a new election to fill the vacancy.
2. Opportunity shall be provided for a nominee or candidate whose election/selection is challenged, and the challenger(s) to state their views and convey such comments with any correspondence on the subject to the IPRA Executive Committee.
3. Opportunity shall be provided for full discussion by all nominees or candidates before the IPRA Executive Committee per these procedures and guidelines.
4. A positive vote by a majority of the combined members of the Executive Committee and Governance Committee either written or electronic shall be required to declare an election void. No nominee or candidate in the disputed election shall vote in the committee on the decision. The association shall hear no further appeal from this final decision.
5. Any grievance or complaint, except a voided election, may be directed to the IPRA Executive Committee. The IPRA Executive Committee acting on behalf of the IPRA Board of Directors will render a decision and that decision shall be final. All rendered decisions shall be made available to the IPRA Board of Directors and IPRA Governance Committee Chair in a timely fashion or at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Penalties

1. The IPRA Board of Directors or their designee has the authority to sanction any nominee or candidate for violation of any of the above principles concerning prohibited activities. Sanctions may be a written warning or suspension of IPRA membership without refund of dues or any other financial obligation of the member.

Terms and Terminology

1. **Nominee** - IPRA Professional member whose name appears on the slate submitted by the Governance Committee for approval by the IPRA Board of Directors ("Board").

2. **Candidate** - IPRA Professional member whose name appears on the final ballot that elects a person to office.
3. **Slate** - A group of nominees that are submitted by the Governance Committee to the IPRA Board of Directors.
4. **Membership Council** - A respective group comprised of one (1) individual from each identified section of the Association.
5. **Region** - A voting region of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association as designated within the Association Bylaws and is divided by counties within the state of Illinois.
6. **Affiliate** - An organization of members that are not organized under the umbrella of the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. Affiliates may be regional or special interest in nature.