

**SAN FRANCISCO REGIONAL MENSA
PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR 2016 OFFICER ELECTIONS**

Elections Committee

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Introduction

The San Francisco Regional Mensa ("SFRM") Bylaws call for election of officers in even-numbered years. The Bylaws mandate the appointment by the Local Secretary of a three-member Elections Committee ("EC"), which shall in turn publish rules and procedures, and enforce the provisions of the Bylaws as they relate to election of officers. The Bylaws require that these rules be published in the August newsletter. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 1(B)(iv).) These rules combine the specific requirements of the Bylaws and the EC's own decisions; if Bylaws, the citation will be provided.

Nominations

1. Nominations will be accepted for the offices of Local Secretary/President(LocSec), Assistant Local Secretary/Vice President(Assistant LocSec), Treasurer, Scribe/Secretary(Scribe), Ombudsman, and three Members-at-Large, starting with announcement in the August newsletter and ending on September 1, inclusive. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 1.)

- a. Any nomination received before publication of the August newsletter or after September 1 is invalid.
- b. Members in good standing may nominate themselves.
- c. No person shall seek or hold more than one elected office in SFRM at a time. (Bylaws, Art. IV, Sec. 1(E).) If any person is nominated for more than one office, the EC will require the nominee to select and state in writing which office she/he will run for.

2. Nominations must include the following:

- a. The name of the nominee, and
- b. The office for which the nomination is being placed, and
- c. The nominee's phone number and email address (if possible).
- d. Nominations will only be accepted in writing, delivered by email to: elections@sfmensa.org, or delivered by mail or other delivery to: Karl Heuer, 1798 Morrill Ave., San Jose, CA 95132-1634.

3. Only members in good standing may be nominated (Bylaws, Art IV, Sec. 1(D)) and nominees must agree in writing to accept nomination.

4. A list of nominees to date shall be available upon request to the Chair of the EC. (Bylaws, Art. V., Sec. 2.) Requests should be made to elections@sfmensa.org.

5. If only one person is nominated for any office (or if only three people are nominated for the three positions of Member-at-Large), then that (those) person(s) shall be declared elected and that contest will not appear on the ballot. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(B).)

Campaign Practices

6. All nominees are entitled to have a statement or platform published in the October Intelligencer. (Art. V, Sec. 1(B)(iii).) In addition, the EC invites each candidate to submit a photograph of himself or herself suitable for publication in the Intelligencer (i.e., thumbnail picture to go next to the candidate's statement; the editor of the Intelligencer recommends 300dpi). The candidate's statement cannot exceed 250 words. The Intelligencer will publish only the first 250 words that are submitted, and will not edit in any other way. For the purposes of the word count, all words are included, including articles and pronouns. The statement and photograph must be received by the Election Committee by 11:59pm September 4; email statements to elections@sfmensa.org. Any statements not received by this time will not be included in the October newsletter.

7. The Bylaws state: "In case of a violation of the election rules, or of any attempt to improperly influence the election through fraud, harassment, bribery, intimidation, or other means, the Election Committee has the final authority and responsibility to censure any member and to censure and/or disqualify any candidate. Such action shall be reported in the SFRM newsletter." (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(H).)

8. Notwithstanding Rule 7, above, the term "bribery" shall not include a nominee's paying for a campaign event (such as a party, refreshments, etc.) so long as it is at a function that is advertised in the Intelligencer or SFRM's listservs for attendance by all SFRM members, and that all SFRM members in attendance are welcome to partake of whatever is being provided by the nominee.

Balloting Procedures

9. Ballots shall be published in the October Intelligencer. (Bylaws, Art. V, Secs. 1(B)(v) and 3(A).) A PDF form of the ballot will be made available at www.sfmensa.org for the month of October. All voters must use one of these ballots or a photocopy of one of these ballots; any handwritten or otherwise improvised ballot is invalid.

10. Marking the ballot:

a. Ballots must be marked in ink.

b. In any contest in which there are only two nominees, voters must put an "X" or a check-mark or the numeral "1" in the blank next to the name of their chosen nominee.

c. In any contest in which there are more than two nominees, members are allowed to vote for up to one (1) less than the number of nominees listed, in order of preference, using the numbers 1, 2, 3, etc., with the "1" going in the blank next to the voter's first choice, "2" next to the voter's second choice, "3" next to the voter's third choice, and so on. If only one nominee is marked, an "X" or check-mark will be interpreted as "1".

11. There shall be no write-in votes. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(B).)

12. Voters must return their ballots in compliance with the following rules:

- a. All ballots must be returned by U.S. mail or other delivery service to: Ballot, c/o Karl Heuer, 1798 Morrill Ave., San Jose, CA 95132-1634.
- b. The upper left corner of the front of the envelope must contain: the voter's printed name, address, Mensa membership number, and the member's hand-written signature.
- c. Enclose only one ballot per envelope. If there is more than one ballot in an envelope, all ballots in that envelope are invalid.
- d. Envelopes must be sealed.
- e. The deadline for receipt of ballots is October 31. Any ballot received after the close of business October 31 is invalid. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(A).)

Counting of Ballots

13. The EC shall meet to count the ballots and certify the election in early November (date and location TBA). Members of SFRM are invited to attend.

14. At all times at this meeting, at least two members of the EC shall be in the presence of the ballots until all valid ballots are counted and the results of all contests are certified by all EC members.

15. Each envelope will be checked for compliance with each provision of Rule 12, above, and each Mensa membership number will be checked to ensure that each voter is a member in good standing.

16. Invalid envelopes and ballots will be marked "invalid" with heavy markers and kept separate from the envelopes that have been ruled valid.

17. Valid envelopes will then be stacked and opened address-side-down to ensure the secrecy of each voter's ballot. An EC member shall extract the contents of the envelope. At least one other EC member in addition to the member opening the envelope shall observe the extraction of the contents, and both members (opener and observer) shall ensure that the content is exactly one ballot.

- a. If the envelope contains exactly one ballot, that ballot shall be put in a box separate from the envelope to ensure the anonymity of voting.
- b. If the envelope contains anything other than or in addition to one ballot, the entire contents of the envelope is invalid and shall be marked "invalid" with heavy marker and placed with other invalid materials. The envelope itself, however, remains "valid" for purposes of tracking balloting. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 1(B)(vi).)

18. When all valid envelopes have been opened and all ballots extracted, the box of ballots shall be deemed "valid ballots." The EC shall count the number of valid ballots and will include that number in its report. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 1(B)(vi).)

19. The EC shall then start the counting process with the first office on the ballot, and proceed through each contest in order, according to whichever of the following methods applies to that contest.

a. In contests which have more than two nominees and are thus using preferential voting, the EC will follow the procedure described in Robert's Rules of Order. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(D).)

b. In contests in which there are only two nominees, whichever candidate receives the majority of votes cast in that contest is elected. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be decided immediately by a coin toss. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(C).)

c. In the contest for Members-at-Large, the same preferential counting method described in subsection (a), above, will be used as follows: All voted ballots will be processed according to subsection (a), above, all the way to its conclusion, and that one winner is elected. The process will then start over with the first elected candidate considered expired, and will continue until a second winner is produced; that person is elected. The process will then start over a third time, with the first two winning candidates considered expired, and will continue until a third winner is produced; that person is elected.

d. Ties will be broken as follows:

(i) In contests in which there are only two nominees, ties will be broken by coin toss. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(C).)

(ii) In contests in which there are more than two nominees and are thus using the preferential voting method described in subsection (a) above, ties in each round of counting are broken by counting the number of occurrences that each of the tied candidate is a voter's first choice. If there remains a tie, then it shall be broken by adding the occurrences of second choices for each candidate. If there remains a tie, then it shall be decided by coin toss.

20. As soon as feasible after the close of the election, the EC will report the results to the Local Secretary and the newsletter Editor in writing. In addition to the results of the contests, the report shall include the count of valid envelopes, invalid envelopes, valid ballots, and invalid ballots. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 1B)(vi).) The EC interprets the word "results" to be the names of the winners of the contests, and the vote totals for each nominee.

21. Thirty days after the close of polls (November 30), or when all formal complaints are resolved (see below), whichever is later, the EC shall destroy all ballots, envelopes, and vote count materials. (Bylaws, Art. V, Sec. 3(I).)

Complaints Regarding Election

22. Bylaws, Article V, Section 3(F) states: "The Election Committee shall accept formal written complaints regarding the election for up to five days after the vote count, and shall respond to such complaints within five days thereafter. The Election Committee has final authority and responsibility to arbitrate disagreements between candidates and rule on challenges."

The EC expects all nominees and members to act in good faith, but if there are complaints about the process, the EC will not hesitate to act to ensure fair, clean, trustworthy elections.

Please send your nominations by email to elections@sfmensa.org, or by postal mail to Karl Heuer, 1798 Morrill Ave., San Jose, CA 95132-1634.