Bylaws #3

Subject: Elections Process Improvements

Authored by: Jenn Cramner

Submitted by: Board of Directors

WHEREAS, SEIU Local 503 is proud to have a strong democratic process where members throughout our union can run for elected positions, and

WHEREAS, SEIU Local 503 conducts elections for over 800 sublocal positions across the state every two years, and

WHEREAS, members who run for office invest real time and energy into their campaigns and deserve the opportunity for members to learn about their candidacy, and

WHEREAS, a strong democratic union depends on members being able to vote with ease and having the information they need to make informed decisions, and

WHEREAS, while electronic voting increases access, it can create expectations of immediate results when elections still require time to ensure accuracy and integrity,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that SEIU Local 503, OPEU Bylaws Article XV, Section 2 shall be amended to add the following subsection:

> **(e)** Candidate statements shall be made available online for all sublocal elections with more than thirty (30) members, including notice where no statement was submitted. Each candidate may submit one regardless of the number of offices sought. The position title that a candidate is running for will not count as characters in the official statement and will be listed on the statement. Statements shall be organized to allow members to search by office and shall be available in a format that supports online translation. Statements may be submitted at the time of filing, with a deadline no sooner than two weeks after the filing deadline. Required candidate information shall be clearly available online and submitted

through an online system to ensure accurate tracking. Members shall be notified by email of where to access candidate statements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SEIU Local 503 shall adopt policies to implement the following election process improvements:

Election Results and Timelines

- The timing of initial election results postings will be determined based on when results can be accurately tabulated. The timing of initial results will be communicated to candidates before voting ends.
- Initial results will be posted no later than five (5) days after voting closes, as required by the Bylaws.
- The timeline for any election challenges will run from the date an individual race result is posted to the website.
- Election timelines should be set to avoid holidays and school breaks where staffing may be reduced.

Candidate Communications

- Key information for candidates—including deadlines and requirements—will be communicated through both email and text.
- Candidate should be able to submit all required information online, including candidate statements.
- It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure their contact information is current and that they are opted in to receive SEIU Local 503 communications.

Member Participation

- SEIU Local 503 will send regular, neutral emails encouraging members to vote and explaining how to do so.
- Once the candidate statement deadline has passed, election emails will include links to candidate statements so members can learn about those running for office.

Transparency and Access

- The Voice, election timelines, and the full election process will be easy to find online.
- Clear and concise information about how to run for office and associated timelines will be available online.

A minimum of three (3) trainings per election cycle will be offered covering how to run for office and the applicable rules.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

Financial: Estimated Technology Costs
Enhancement Estimated Cost
Configuration of existing election software $15,000–$40,000
Website enhancements and workflow automation $30,000–$75,000
If the Union's current election vendor can support these features, expanding the existing platform would likely be the most cost-effective solution. Developing or purchasing a new election management system would substantially increase implementation costs.

Equity: This resolution would have a positive impact. The increased clarity, organization, and presentation of candidate statements could lead to increased voter turnout as well as enable members to make informed voting decisions.

Legal: This resolution, in part, puts current election practices into the bylaws, but some proposed changes could make elections significantly more complicated by increasing costs, delaying election timelines, and creating risks to election integrity. In particular, requiring position titles to be added to candidate statements and requiring statements to be filed with nominations would create significant manual work across approximately one-thousand positions, increasing the chance of errors that could lead to election challenges or reruns. Election reruns not only reduce member trust but can be very expensive, with the Union’s most costly sublocal election costing about $40,000. The proposal could also allow some candidates’ statements to appear multiple times online, potentially giving them greater visibility than other candidates. Other changes, such as online posting, translation support, and extended statement deadlines, can generally be implemented without major concerns.

Political: No political impact