Southern California World Service (SCWS)

Area Elections

Assembly Discussion
November 18, 2023

Review of our SCWS Election Procedures

Please refer to complete Election Procedures document on SCWS website, and the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, (**SM**) 2022-2025, V-2*, p. 154-157 (P-24/27).

- Today our Group Representatives elect the Area Officers for our next three-year Panel, which begins January 1, 2024.
- The Officers are: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. (This is the order in which they are elected)
- Our Area Chairperson (normally) serves as the “Election Chairperson”.
- We will begin by having the Election Chairperson review the proposed Election Procedures with the Assembly.
- The Election Procedures have been in place since 1996, were revised and approved in 2017, and have been posted on our website for several months. Therefore we will focus on the highlights.

2

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued)

(Note: The numbers after the bullet point refer to the Election Procedures document.)

- 4. The Election Chairman asks for a vote of acceptance of the proposed method of election, below. If another method is considered, it should be clearly understood and agreed upon by **2/3 vote of the Assembly**.

- 5. Election Chairman invites candidates who believe they are prepared, willing and who have submitted a resume to come to the dais (microphone), starting with candidates for Delegate. Each candidate will be given 2 minutes at the microphone to answer the following specific question from the resume form in their own words: “Describe why you would be an asset as an SCWS officer.”

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued):

2. Election of Delegate, requires 2/3 vote

• A first ballot is taken. The candidate receiving 2/3 vote is elected Delegate.

• If first ballot does not elect the Delegate, the Election Chairman may ask candidates receiving the lowest votes to withdraw. If two candidates each receive at least 40% of the total vote, the Election Chairman may ask those two candidates to remain and the others to withdraw.

• Whether or not names are withdrawn, a second ballot is taken.

• If still no election occurs, a third ballot is taken between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

4

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued):

2. Election of Delegate, continued

• If 2/3 vote still is still not reached, the Delegate is selected **by lot***. The first name drawn becomes the Delegate.

3. Election of Alternate Delegate

• Follows same procedure as for Delegate.

*** "by lot"**: a method of selecting between two candidates for Delegate as well as Alternate Delegate (***SM***: p. 156; 229). In case of a tie between two candidates, where neither candidate receives a two-thirds majority, the two names are written on pieces of paper and placed into a container (sometimes called "the hat"). The name that is drawn from the container will become the Delegate for the next three-year Panel.

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued)

4. Election of Chairman, requires Majority (50%+1) vote

- Majority is 50% + 1 vote
- A first ballot is taken. The candidate receiving the majority vote is elected Chairman.
- If no candidate receives a majority vote, whether or not names are withdrawn, a second ballot is taken.
- If still no election occurs, a third ballot is taken between the two candidates receiving the most votes. The candidate receiving the most votes on the third ballot is elected Chairman.

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued)

5. Election of Secretary and Treasurer

- Follows same procedure as for Chairman.

6. No Candidate

In the event there is no candidate for a position, it will be treated as if a vacancy has occurred.

7. One Candidate

In the event there is only one candidate for a position, it will be a yes, no vote. (We also add “abstain”, “Not a voting member” to our poll)

7

How did our SCWS Area decide upon our current Election Procedures?

- The Area adopted the Election Procedures (almost word for word) that are outlined in our *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2022-2025, V-2*, p. 154-157.

- The Group Representatives passed a motion in 1996 regarding election of the Delegate/Alternate Delegate:
  - "That if after balloting a 2/3 majority has not been reached, that the choice be made by lot between the two highest-vote candidates."

8

Concept Five

"The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard."

- A few members brought their concern forward to the Area Officers regarding the wording of the last bullet point of our Delegate's election procedures regarding selection by lot.

- There is another option mentioned in the *Service Manual* that they would like the Assembly to consider. It is the last sentence in ***SM*** as shown on next slide.

9

Election of Delegate, continued.

- (*2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, p. 156-157)

  8. If still no election occurs, the Chairman asks for a motion to close the balloting and that the choice be made by lot between the two with the highest number of votes. The first one selected becomes the Delegate. Alternatively, some Assemblies prefer to have a final ballot taken, in which case the candidate with the most votes becomes the Delegate.

- A few SCWS Area members have proposed to change the 5th bullet point under SCWS voting procedures "2. Election of Delegate" to read: *If 2/3 vote still not reached, the Delegate is elected by a 4th ballot by receiving the majority vote (50% + 1).*

10

Additional *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* ***(SM)*** references

Suggested Procedures (p. 139-140)

"While the procedures outlined in the "World Service Handbook" are suggestions, they have been found by Al-Anon and Alateen members who have followed them to be a simple and direct method of selecting Delegates for the Conference and for conducting Assembly and Conference affairs free of political friction."

(SCWS has developed and approved Election Procedures based on ***SM*** and our own experience, which we've been using every 3 years since 1996/revised in 2017.)

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual continued…

p. 199

"The World Service Handbook or Third Legacy method of naming Delegates by a two-thirds vote or by lot greatly reduces political friction; it makes each Delegate feel that he or she is truly a world servant rather than merely the winner of a contest. Thus far, our Third Legacy methods have produced DRs and Delegates of a high level of dedication and competence. Our Area Assemblies need only to continue to act with care and in a selfless spirit."

12

p. 199 (cont)

"Some members, still doubtful whether choice by lot is a good idea, feel that the best person does not always win. It must be pointed out that each time we have disregarded the two-thirds vote or lot in naming Delegates, there has been a sense of defeat and disturbance in the minority camp, which is not offset by naming the supposedly best person. Indeed the second-best person can often be as good a Delegate as the Assembly's first choice and may even be a better Delegate."

*Paths to Recovery**

p. 303

"In the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, the suggested election procedures for our trusted servants are outlined. Experience and careful thought have produced these procedures which are seen by many to be spiritual in direction. Guided by the principles found in all of our three legacies– the Steps, Traditions and Concepts – leaders are selected on the basis of Al-Anon membership, eligibility, special skills and willingness to serve. Selecting a delegate by a two-thirds vote or by lot reduces the possibility of personalities interfering with principles and assures the newly elected delegate of member support."

**Paths to Recovery-Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts* (B-24)

14

SCWS History of Delegate Elections: Results

- Area records do not indicate how the Delegate was selected before 1979.
- From 1979 until 2020 there have been 15 Delegate elections (15 Panels)
- Out of the **15** Panels…

  9 Delegates were elected “by lot” (because 2/3 was not reached)

  4 Delegates were elected by 2/3 majority (“lot” was not needed),

  2 Delegates elected were the only candidate standing

15

Delegate Elections in other Areas

- A survey was sent to other Areas. The majority of other Areas use "by lot" if there is not a 2/3 majority after several ballots.

- **2** Areas use a different procedure.
  At the Election Assembly, a presentation is given that explains what procedures could be used if no candidate for Delegate receives 2/3 majority after several ballots. The two different choices of "by lot" or majority (50% + 1) are discussed. The GRs vote that day to choose (with 2/3 majority) either the "by lot' or "majority" procedure.

16

What are we asking our GRs to discuss/decide today?

There are two different options mentioned in the ***SM*** regarding the election of our Delegate. (Note: Alternate Delegate uses the same procedure)

Do we want to…

1. Accept the proposed SCWS Election Procedures as it currently is? As in…

   In the event that there is not a ⅔ majority reached between the top two candidates, we use the "hat"/ "by lot" method to select the Delegate.

OR

2. Vote to change the Election Procedures?

   In the event that there is not a ⅔ majority reached between the top two candidates, a fourth ballot is taken.
   The candidate with the most votes (50% +1) is elected

What's Next?

- **First**, we will answer **questions** about the Election Procedures & this presentation.
- **Second**, we will take **comments** regarding the potential change: "If 2/3 vote still not reached after 3 ballots, the Delegate is elected (from the top 2) by a 4th ballot by receiving the majority vote (50% + 1)."
- We will allow up to 2 minutes per comment. A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for comments.

When the Group Representatives are ready to vote, what will they be voting on?

1. Acceptance of proposed method, as per the SCWS Election Procedures. It will continue to read ….

"If still no election occurs, a third ballot is taken between the two candidates receiving the most votes. If 2/3 vote still is not reached, the Delegate is selected by lot. The first name drawn becomes the Delegate."

OR

2. Change the wording of the election procedures to read…

"If 2/3 vote still not reached after 3 ballots, the Delegate is elected from the top 2 on a 4th ballot by receiving the majority vote (50% + 1)."

19

Let's start with ONLY **Questions** first, then **Comments**

Reminder:

- Only "members" of the Assembly have "voice" (and when we're ready, only GRs will vote)
- 1 minute at the "mic" for Questions; then later 2 minutes for Comments
- Please lower your hand if another member asks your question or makes your comment.
- We want as many members to participate as possible, so only 1 question and/or comment per member.

20