

NOW Elections Committee Report March 13-14, 2021

The NOW Elections Committee met via Zoom on March 11, 2021 to discuss three items:

DISTRICT BOARD VACANCIES

We are assisting two NOW Districts in filling their vacant Board seats:

- The Eastern District is accepting candidate applications until Monday, March 15. An email notice was sent to all members of the District, inviting them to self-nominate for the position. (That notice is also posted on the NOW website [here](#).) The District leadership will meet to review applications and appoint their new Board member on Sunday, March 21.
- A State President in the Southern District has asked us to start the process to fill the vacancy created by Lakey Love's resignation. We will reach out to the other Southern District leaders to move forward on this request.

The Elections Committee is following the procedures outlined by the NOW Board policy adopted in 2016. That policy also states that "the vacancy shall be filled by a vote of two-thirds of the state presidents/coordinators and the remaining Board member(s) of the district."

CALIFORNIA NOW ELECTION

The NOW Board met in executive session in mid-February to review the previous Board's decision to conduct new California NOW elections in spring 2021. No action was taken to rescind the previous decision, so it appears that a new election must take place. The Elections Committee has been asked to oversee that process. The tentative election date had been set for April 10; however, since California NOW Bylaws require 90-days' notice of an election, that date will need to be revised. **We are seeking direction from the NOW Board on next steps.**

2021 OFFICER ELECTION

NOW elections traditionally take place in person during the national conference. Because of the COVID pandemic, however, the 2020 conference was shifted to a virtual format, and NOW held its first hybrid online/mail-in Board election separately. We discussed the pros and cons of our hybrid-voting experience to determine what options might work for this year's Officer election. A major concern is cost-effectiveness: Last year's mail-in ballots cost approximately \$1 per voter, while generating a lower return rate than electronic ballots.

Since the 2021 conference will also take place virtually, we discussed possible election scenarios that might work with this format. **We agreed on the following recommendations:**

- 1) **Hold the Candidate Forums on the first day of the national conference** (this would set the official start date of the 2021 election as **July 24**)
- 2) **Open the voting period immediately after the Candidate Forums for an extended period** (at least one and possibly two weeks, which allows announcement of the election results during the final weekend of the conference)

- 3) **Conduct voting with online ballots only** (and separately from the national conference)
- 4) **Research the feasibility and cost of sending out an all-member postcard notice to inform members of how to vote online**

There is still much to be determined regarding the structure and schedule of the 2021 virtual conference and Officer elections. **The Elections Committee asks the NOW Board to confirm the dates and format of the 2021 Officer elections as soon as possible so that we may start developing rules, procedures, and deadlines to govern the elections process.**

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Kim Villanueva, chair
Christine Chin Ryan
Hala Ayala
Gordy Gustafson
Judi Polson
Marion Wagner