



# UCWDC® ELECTORAL PRACTICES AND VOTING POLICY

**Version 2.0**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The United Country Western Dance Council® is an international organization which promotes country western dance by producing festivals and competitions across the world. We host the annual Country Dance World Championships® for couples and line dancers and we advocate country dancing as a social activity for people of all ages and abilities.

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for voting in Office elections and for sanctioning issues with regard to the decision-making authority of the UCWDC and its Committees.

For the purpose of this policy,

**Polling** is defined as “The collection of opinions on a subject.”

**Voting** is defined as “A formal expression of choice regarding approval of a motion or election of an individual.”

## 2. OFFICER ELECTION PRACTICES

**In accordance with Article 12.2 of the current UCWDC Bylaws** – “Staggered Elections. One half (1/2) of the members of the Board of Directors shall be elected at each fall election meeting.”

1. The Board of Directors consists of these elected Officer Positions:
  - a. President
  - b. Vice President
    - i. Vice President Judge Certification
    - ii. Vice President Rules
  - c. Treasurer
  - d. Secretary
2. The Call for Nominations and Election for the office of the President and Vice President Judge Certification will be held together.
3. The Call for Nominations and Election for the office of the Vice President Rules, Treasurer and Secretary will be held together.

### 2.1 Nomination of Officer Candidates

The following guidelines are intended to be used for the nomination and election of UCWDC Officer Candidates to for the position(s) identified in Article 16 – Officers under the current UCWDC Bylaws

1. Officer Candidate(s) to be considered for any open positions of UCWDC must be:
  - a. an Event Director, in good standing holding not less than 16% of their respected dance event, AND
  - b. have been in attendance at the immediate past four (4) out of five (5) sittings on the UCWDC General Council Meetings
2. Any Event Director in good standing may nominate any other Event Director candidate in good standing to be considered for the position identified in the Electoral Call.



3. Nominations for the position identified by the Electoral Call must be called one (1) year in advance of the expiration date of the current position.
4. Nominations will be accepted beginning from the floor of the Spring General Council Meeting and extend up to and including sixty (60) calendar days prior to the start of the Fall General Council Meeting. The date of closure will be identified during the sitting of the Spring General Council Meeting and minutes provided by the Secretary.
  - a. Nominations do not have to be seconded.
  - b. Once a nomination is announced from the floor, the President or meeting chair shall repeat the nomination and ask if that Nominee will allow their name to stand for that position. For example, "XXXX, you have been nominated for the position of YYYY. Do you accept this nomination and allow your name to stand?"
    - i. If the Nominee accepts - the Secretary will add their name to the official ballot for the position identified.
    - ii. If the Nominee rejects – the Secretary will strike their name off the official ballot for the position identified.
  - c. If a nomination is received after the closing of the Spring General Council Meeting, the Secretary will notify the Nominee and President, in writing of the nomination and ask if that Nominee will allow their name to stand for that position.
    - i. If the Nominee accepts - the Secretary will add their name to the official ballot for the position identified.
    - ii. If the Nominee rejects – the Secretary will strike their name off the official ballot for the position identified.
5. After the close of nominations, no new candidate nominations will be considered.
6. Ten (10) days following the close of nominations, all Officer Candidate(s) must provide to the Secretary the following package of information:
  - a. resume outlining their qualifications for the position;
  - b. proposals for their vision of their identified position inside the UCWDC, if successful.
7. Five (5) days after receiving all Officer Candidate(s) criteria, identified in Article 2.1.6 the Secretary will send the candidate packages to the General Council, for review and consideration.
8. All Officer Candidate(s) for the position identified in the Electoral Call **MUST** be present at the sitting of the Fall General Council Meeting, be able to present their proposals and answer any questions.



## 2.2 Officer Candidate Selection Criteria

The following guidelines are intended to be utilized by the General Council in evaluating potential Officer Candidates. The goal of the selection process is to garner, as a group, the most qualified and effective Officers possible. The following is a list of the criteria that will be considered by the General Council in determining potential candidate(s) to the position identified in the Electoral Call. Other or additional factors may also be considered, from time to time, as deemed appropriate by the General Council.

### A. Integrity, Maturity and Judgment

A candidate should possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the UCWDC and its Directors. A candidate should have demonstrated the ability to exercise mature judgment and common sense.

### B. Experience and Reputation

A candidate should have experience as an Event Director that is well managed, respected and possesses a history of achieving good results. Candidates should exhibit leadership qualities and diverse experience at policy-making levels. It is also important for a candidate to have developed a strong reputation in UCWDC dance community.

### C. Collegiality

It is important to preserve the collegiality of the UCWDC. Candidates must inspire trust and confidence in other Event Directors so that the General Council can discharge its duties smoothly and efficiently.

### D. Expertise

The candidate should encompass a range of talent, skill and expertise sufficient to provide sound and prudent guidance with respect to all aspects of the UCWDC's operations and interests. Candidates should exhibit prudent financial analytical management skills and expertise. It is important that a candidate understands the role of the UCWDC relating to its mission, bylaws rules and role in the community.

### E. Commitment

A candidate should be able and willing to devote the required amount of time to the UCWDC's affairs, including preparing for and attending meetings of the General Council and its committees and a willingness and understanding of the UCWDC, its competitive position in its industry and its business strategy. A candidate should be inquisitive and able to objectively appraise the organizations plans, programs, achievements, and shortcomings, and should possess a willingness to challenge and stimulate management.

### F. Independence

Candidates are expected to exhibit independence of thought and judgment. Therefore, candidates should not have a material conflict of interest with the UCWDC or other organization.

### G. Diversity

In addition to providing a range of talents and expertise, candidates should be sufficiently diverse to provide a range of perspectives of the interests of the constituencies served or to be considered from time to time by the UCWDC, including but not limited to our General Council, Event Directors, the communities and customers we serve.



### 2.3 Presentation Process

The following guidelines are intended to be utilized by the General Council to allow a fair and equitable allotment of time for each Officer Candidate(s) to present themselves, and their vision at the sitting of the Fall General Council Meeting.

1. Officer Candidate(s) will be given time to address the General Council during the sitting of the Fall General Council Meeting at which time they will be allowed to do a short presentation. The order of presentations shall be:
  - a. the Incumbent Officer will always present last.
  - b. in the case of three (3) or more Officer Candidates the remaining names of the Officer Candidates, not including the Incumbent Officer will be randomly chosen and the order they are chosen in, will be the order in which they will present.
2. Officer Candidate(s) will not be allowed in the General Council meeting during which time as other Officer Candidate(s) are presenting.
3. Addresses and presentations from each Officer Candidate(s) will be kept to a maximum length of ten to fifteen (10-15) minutes.
4. A question period will follow each Officer Candidate(s) presentation for a maximum of twenty (20) minutes.
5. Officer Candidate(s) will be dismissed from the meeting to allow open discussion, deliberation and call to vote in General Council and with Event Director's respected proxies.
6. Officer Candidate(s) may be called back into the meeting to answer further questions generated by the General Council and once answered the Officer Candidate(s) will be dismissed for further discussions, deliberation and vote.

### 2.4 Election Process

1. At the conclusion of the Presentation Process and once allowable time has been given to the Officer Candidate(s) discussion the President will call for a vote by Secret Ballot.
  - a. Secret Ballot is a voting method in which a Directors choice in the Approval Process is anonymous, forestalling attempts to influence the Director by intimidation, blackmailing, and potential vote buying.
2. Not all Directors in the room are able to cast a vote. ONLY Fully Sanctioned Events may vote.
  - a. Proxies from Events in attendance or not in attendance may also vote.
  - b. The Event must be present electronically during the time of the presentations and discussions in order to cast their vote via Electronic Voting.
  - c. If via Electronic Voting, as noted in Article 5 of this Policy.
3. Only the votes from the Fully Sanctioned Events in attendance, either in person or electronically will count in the vote tally.



4. Votes of 'Abstention' are counted and noted, but not as a "yes" or "no" vote. An abstention does not affect the voting result. A member has a right to abstain and cannot be compelled to vote
5. The votes will be tallied by two (2) representatives appointed by the President and ONLY the "Vote Result Tally" will be released to the General Council. Not the names of the Events that voted.
6. A Majority of votes cast is required. If no clear majority is revealed the top two (2) Officer Candidates will be brought back for a re-vote.
7. The President or designated appointee of the President will request that the Officer Candidate(s) re-join the General Meeting and the results will be delivered including the "Vote Result Tally".
8. The Secretary shall include in the meeting minutes noting the "Vote Result Tally" results only maintaining the confidence of all Member Events and their Directors.

## 2.5 Elections by Acclimation

In the event that an Officer Candidate stands unopposed for any position, they may be elected by acclimation.

Although unopposed in their position the President may call for a vote by Secret Ballot who favors and who opposes the proposed candidate in which case Member Events will cast a ballot with either the Candidates Name 'in Favor', the word NO 'in Opposition' or in Abstention as identified in Article 2.4.4 of this Policy. The votes will be tallied as identified in Article 2.4.5 of this Policy and the "Vote Result Tally" will be read and recorded by the Secretary into the meeting minutes.

## 3. ETHICS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

1. The Chairperson and the Members of the Ethics Committee are elected according to the UCWDC Electoral Practices and Voting Policy. The Ethics Committee will be comprised of seven (7) members including the Chairman and all six (6) members
2. All members of the Ethics Committee must be elected by means of "Secret Vote" (refer to Article 2.4.1 of this Policy) and must serve a minimum term of two (2) years.
3. When voting, each present Event Director shall cast votes for five (5) eligible members.
4. Eligible members are all active Event Directors with the exception of the President and must be:
  - a. an Event Director, in good standing holding not less than 16% of their respected dance event,  
AND
  - b. have been in attended at the immediate past six (6) out of nine (9) sittings on the UCWDC General Council Meetings
5. The seven (7) members that received the most votes shall be elected to the Ethics Committee.
6. The Chairperson and the Members of the Ethics Committee must have an impeccable reputation, a clear understanding of the English language and must be able to speak and write fluently in English.



7. In the event of death, resignation, incapacity or any other inability of a Member or the Chairperson to perform his/her functions, the UCWDC Board of Directors shall declare that he/she has ceased to hold office in the Ethics Committee and set the effective date. The Board of Directors shall then appoint a replacement to the Ethics Committee. If the Chairperson has to be replaced, the Board of Directors shall appoint one of the current ordinary Members to so serve his/her office until the day of the next General Meeting. The General Meeting then must confirm the replacing person in his/her office or elect a new Member or Chairperson for the remainder of the two (2) year term.

## 4. SANCTION VOTING

### 4.1 New Event Sanctioning Application

1. In the event of a New Event Sanctioning Application, the General Council will discuss each Sanctioning Applicant separately, identifying all positive and negative aspects of the event, its directors, the impact on surrounding events and the benefits to the events proposed growth of the UCWDC.
2. Once allowable time has been given to the Sanctioning Applicant discussion the President will call for a vote by Secret Ballot. An "Open Vote" will not be used for New Event Sanctioning Applications.
  - a. Secret Ballot is a voting method in which a Directors choice in the approval process is anonymous, forestalling attempts to influence the Director by intimidation, blackmailing, and potential vote buying.

Note: Not all Directors in the room are able to cast a vote. See Article 2.4.2 of this Policy

3. The votes will be tallied by two (2) representatives appointed by the President and ONLY the "Vote Result Tally" will be released to the General Council. Not the names of the Member Events that voted. This tally will be held in confidence by all Member Events and their Directors (in attendance or not) and will not be released to the Sanctioning Applicant nor the general public.
4. The President or designated appointee of the President will deliver the results of the vote to the Sanctioning Applicant of either a "YAY" or "NAY" only.
  - a. delivery of the decision will be made in private, AND
  - b. if the Sanctioning Applicant is successful they will then be invited into the General Council Meeting
5. If a "YAY" vote is disclosed the Sanctioning Applicant will be invited to enter into a UCWDC Member Event Agreement. Once the agreement is signed:
  - a. An Official Observer will be identified and assigned to the Event.
  - b. The successful Sanctioning Applicant will be invited to remain in the General Council meeting and reminded of their rights to participate and vote.
6. If a "NAY" vote is disclosed the Sanctioning Applicant will be offered primary reasons for the decision and invited to apply again, if applicable.
7. The Secretary shall include in the meeting minutes noting the "Vote Result Tally" results only maintaining the confidence of all Member Events and their Directors.





## 4.2 Changes to Existing Sanctioned Events

1. In all occurrences of changes to existing Sanctioned events the President will call for a vote by Open Vote. A "Secret Vote" may be requested by any Council Member prior to the vote being called in which time the President and General Council must adhere to this request and follow the procedure outlined under Article 2.4 of this Policy.
  - a. Open Vote is a voting method in which Directors vote openly by queuing or otherwise, indicating their choice. This is as opposed to a secret ballot, where a voter's choices are confidential.
2. The Secretary shall include in the meeting minutes noting the "Vote Result Tally" results only maintaining the confidence of all Member Events and their Directors.

## 5. EMAIL POLLING AND ELECTRONIC VOTING

It is the expectation of all Council Members that material presented at meetings will be clear, complete and understandable in terms of the requirements placed upon them for action/response. Therefore, the intent of this policy is to ensure that the same comfort level of a regular face-to-face meeting is maintained while providing a clear explanation as to why the mechanism of email polling or electronic voting is being invoked in lieu of a regular meeting.

Note: The current UCWDC Bylaws allow Directors to attend General Council meetings in person or by electronic means (teleconference) but there are currently no provisions in the Bylaws for email polling or electronic voting at those meetings.

This section will outline the circumstances where email polling and electronic voting are permitted and will detail the guidelines for their use.

**NOTE:** This Policy/Section is not meant to condone or encourage the use of email polling. This procedure should be used only in time-limited situations or exceptional circumstances. It is NOT acceptable for its use to become routine, usual or common practice.

1. Electronic voting is permitted at all General Council, Board of Director and Committee meetings either by
  - a. verbal response to the question via live teleconference or videoconference (where anonymity is not required, or where individually recorded votes are not required).
  - b. an email sent to the Secretary of the meeting or appointed designee by the UCWDC President (provides a written record of the vote if required or serves as the equivalent of a secret ballot for individuals not actually present in the meeting room).
2. Email polling is not permitted at any regular or special meeting of the General Council, Board of Directors or Committees.
3. At the discretion, or with the consent, of the UCWDC President, and for matters of an urgent nature, OR time-sensitive matters OR where it would be more expeditious to do so OR when it is not feasible for the General Council, Board of Directors or Committees to meet in person or via teleconference, email polling and/or electronic voting may be used to help facilitate decisions of the UCWDC in accordance with the following:



- a. In recognition that decisions are being made using email communication in lieu of a face-to-face meeting, extra effort will be made to ensure that members are provided with sufficient background materials and adequate documentation to support the request for a decision.
- b. All communication will be shared as a group email with all members copied on correspondence including questions, responses and general commentary. All members will select “reply all” when providing comments so that these will be shared simultaneously with all members and a record will be kept of the email exchange.
- c. If a resolution is required, the President or Committee Chair may authorize the Secretary or appointed designee of the President to conduct an electronic vote of the members. A clear rationale will be given to the members to explain why a motion is necessary. The question to be answered will be stated clearly in the form of a specific resolution provided for members’ consideration. Respondents will be asked to vote upon the resolution.
- d. In the event of an electronic vote, a reasonable and adequate time will be determined for members to respond to the request for a decision. Members will have the opportunity to declare a conflict and not participate in the vote. Every effort will be made to obtain a response from each member (i.e. allow each person to register their vote). The resolution shall be deemed to have been approved only if, by the end of the time period specified, the Secretary or appointed designee has received approval responses from a majority of the voting members.  
**Non-response to an electronic vote will be considered an abstention (see Article 2.4.4 of this policy). Voting records will be kept.**
- e. A resolution approved by email polling and electronic voting, permitted by the President or Committee Chair and passed by a majority of voting members, shall have the same force and effect as a resolution passed at a regularly constituted meeting of the General Council.
- f. The Secretary shall prepare a summary document noting the purpose of, and any decisions resulting from, the electronic exchange including any subsequent resolutions.

**END OF POLICY**