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Chapter Guide

SECTION II:

NOMINATION AND

ELECTION PROCEDURES

Nomination and election procedures vary depending upon the governance structure your chorus has selected. Before proceeding, you should refer to the *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws*, available on the Sweet Adelines website, and the Management Team portion of Section I of this *Chapter Guide*.

Election Timetable

- Set a date for the annual business/election meeting. The meeting must be held after January 1, but before April 30. Make sure the date you choose will not conflict with competition preparations.
- At least 30 days prior to the annual business/election meeting, the president/team coordinator appoints the nominating committee. These appointments must be ratified by the board/team. Please note that 30 days is the minimum time required in the chapter bylaws. You may appoint a nominating committee earlier, depending on your chapter's activity schedule. It is important that the committee has enough time to do a thoughtful, thorough job.
- At least 14 days prior to the annual business meeting, advance notice of the upcoming election should be announced to every member, including the date of the election and a reminder about absentee voting.
- At least 10 days before the annual business/election meeting, the slate and qualifications for each nominee should be distributed to the membership. Again, 10 days is only the minimum time required in the chapter bylaws. You may give members more time to study the slate and nominee qualifications.
- A tellers committee is appointed by the president/team coordinator as soon as the slate is ready. (The tellers committee is discussed later in this section.)
- If the president/team coordinator is a nominee, she appoints another member in good standing to chair the election meeting.

Appointing a Nominating Committee

Strong chapter administration begins with the appointment of a nominating committee. The president/team coordinator appoints a committee made up of members who are familiar with all chapter members and their capabilities, and with the duties of the board of directors/management team.

The committee must be objective, placing the good of the chapter before personal preferences. It must have the courage to exercise good judgment because strong leadership contributes to strong chapters.

The nominating committee is composed of three or more members. An odd, rather than even, number of members is recommended to avoid the possibility of a tie vote in the selection of a prospective nominee. A majority vote of the committee becomes the decision of the committee.

Appointments to the nominating committee, including the chair, made by the chapter president must be ratified by a majority vote of the board of directors. Appointments made by the team coordinator must be ratified by the team or by a majority vote of the chapter as determined in the chapter's standing rules. Chapter presidents may not serve on the nominating committee, per the *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws*, Article VI, Section 3. A.

Duties of the Nominating Committee

Members of the chapter are encouraged to share their ideas on prospective nominees with the nominating committee. While a chapter president/team coordinator may make recommendations to the committee regarding candidates' qualifications, she may not attend the nominating committee meeting.

The committee may wish to present an education class to the chapter membership that outlines the duties of the various offices and chairs, along with an explanation of how chapter government works. In many cases, members—especially newer ones—do not really understand what is expected of board/team members or of board/team officers.

A membership list should be on hand so that the nominating committee can look up who is eligible for nomination. A good tool to use when soliciting nominees is the "Potential Nominee Questionnaire" (sample at the end of this section). This questionnaire provides standard information on each potential nominee as well as her qualifications.

Check that each prospective nominee is in good standing (dues paid and attendance requirements fulfilled as stated in the chapter's standing rules) before she is invited to submit a "Potential Nominee Questionnaire." Be sure the potential nominee understands that submitting her name for consideration does not automatically ensure selection to the slate. Check your chapter's standing rules for special eligibility requirements for nominees such as length of membership or previous experience. Prospective nominees should never be disqualified because they are not in good standing or have not met requirements in the standing rules, as these requirements should be checked prior to inviting the prospective nominee to run for the slate.

Some people question if it is ethical for nominating committee members' names to appear on the slate. Since no rule prohibits this, it would be a waste of talent to insist that a qualified member choose between the nominating committee and the slate. If a member of the nominating committee wishes to have her name considered for the slate, it is best to ask her to leave the room while her qualifications are discussed by the rest of the committee. The committee might prefer to select its slate by secret ballot in such cases. Let common sense and diplomacy be the guide.

At this point, consider the qualifications of each nominee. Strive for a balance between experienced and newer members, while considering the strengths and weaknesses of the continuing board members. Remind the committee that it is endorsing, not electing, the slate of candidates it deems qualified. It requires courage to select a candidate who is good for the chapter as a whole, not just someone who is well liked. The final choice is up to the membership.

The slate should consist of at least twice the number of vacancies to be filled. Only when the nominating committee is unable to secure the consent of two qualified nominees for each vacant position is a single slate valid. The committee also must be satisfied that the nominee will, if elected, accept the position and perform the required duties to the best of her ability.

Once the slate is chosen, print the nominees' names and qualifications (use information from the "Potential Nominee Questionnaire") in alphabetical order and distribute this information to the membership at least 10 days prior to the election meeting. The qualifications should follow a standard format so all nominees receive equal treatment. Nominees and members should be reminded that international policy prohibits campaigning.

A report of the nominating committee is prepared for the membership and signed by all committee members if they are in agreement with the report. The chair signs the report first without listing her title. The chair then presents the report to the membership at the election meeting. Now, the duties of the nominating committee are complete. The nominating committee chair does not lead the election meeting. That is the duty of the retiring president/team coordinator. If the chapter president/team coordinator is a nominee, she appoints a chair for the meeting.

The Nominee

Although Sweet Adelines International is an organization of women who are interested primarily in music, many members also are highly qualified administrators, organizers and leaders. Fortunately, these talented women are willing to give their time and effort when possible, but it is up to the administration, the organization and the membership to seek out, nurture and develop them. The following points can aid you in identifying prospective nominees in your chapter:

A good leader:

- Is confident in her ability to do a job.
- Has past experience or past performance that indicates she is a leader.
- Has a good attendance record at meetings and rehearsals.
- Has special knowledge of leadership.
- Is liked well enough to enable her to work with others and have them work with her, but is not necessarily the "most popular" member.
- Is dependable, organized, adaptable to change, level-headed.
- Places the good of the chapter above all other considerations.

An alert nominating committee seeks out obvious leaders as well as potential ones who need only to be developed.

Tellers Committee

The president/team coordinator appoints a tellers committee as soon as the slate is presented to the membership. The tellers are chosen for accuracy, dependability, discretion and their knowledge of election procedures. Though the tellers have no personal involvement in the election, they are eligible to vote.

As soon as the slate is announced, printed ballots listing the names of all nominees in alphabetical order should be prepared, allowing room for the addition of floor nominees. The ballot should state the number of nominees to be selected.

All blank ballots should be ignored. Ballots that are not marked as instructed by the chair of the election meeting should be discarded as invalid.

After the balloting is complete, instruct members to fold their ballots in the manner announced in advance, or as stated on the ballot itself. The chair directs the tellers to collect the ballots. In collecting the ballots, it is the tellers' responsibility to see that no member votes more than once.

If unidentifiable ballots were cast by persons not entitled to vote, and if such ballots might affect the results of the election, the entire ballot vote is null and void and a new ballot must be taken.

A plurality vote elects. A plurality vote is the largest number of votes cast for any nominee.

If any absentee ballots are received by the president/team coordinator before the election meeting, the president/team coordinator should give the absentee ballots to the election meeting chair. It is the duty of the election meeting chair to give the ballots to the tellers committee before the tellers retire to another room to tally the ballots.

Four is the ideal number of volunteers for a tellers committee. Two tellers read the ballots, while two tellers mark the tally sheets that have been prepared in advance. The first teller opens the ballot, looks at the name, and passes it to the second teller. The second teller opens the ballot, reads the name out loud, then lays the ballot aside so it does not become mixed with uncounted ballots or lost. The other two tellers record the votes on the tally sheet by placing a vertical line to the right of the name of the nominee as it is read. The marks are made in groups of five, the fifth line being drawn diagonally across the four vertical ones. Whenever the fifth line is drawn, the recording teller calls "tally." If the other recorder is not also marking a fifth line for that vote, a recount becomes necessary.

The tellers report must be agreed upon by all committee members. The completed report is signed by all tellers and presented to the chair of the election meeting without announcing the results. The chair of the election meeting reads the report, declaring in turn each board member elected. If the voting results in a tie, the chair of the election meeting announces "no election" and calls for another ballot.

The actual number of votes cast for each nominee should not be listed on the tellers' report that is handed to the chair of the election meeting. The tellers committee is honor bound not to divulge this information. As soon as the election is declared final and official, the ballots and tally sheets are sealed in an envelope and destroyed. At this point, the tellers committee is dissolved.

The tellers report is recorded in the official minutes of the chapter.

Initial Election

Board of Directors

To facilitate the balloting process for the initial election of any board/management team, either of the following options can be followed.

Option 1 The nominating committee prepares a slate containing twice the number of nominees as there are vacancies to be filled, e.g. 12 nominees for six vacancies. Of those who are elected, the half that received the highest number of votes will serve two-year terms, and the other half will serve one-year terms.

Option 2 The nominating committee prepares separate slates for the positions to be elected to two-year terms and one-year terms. The membership votes on each slate. The nominees on each slate receiving the highest number of votes are elected for the specified term.

Management Team

The *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws* describe the composition of the management team. See Article V, Section 1 for this information. It is important that your chapter's standing rules define the length of the term of office for members of the management team, except the musical director whose relationship to the chapter is described in Section I of the guide.

Chapter Election Meeting

The retiring president/team coordinator chairs the election meeting; she does not turn the meeting over to the chair of the nominating committee. If the president/team coordinator has been nominated for election, she must appoint someone who is not a nominee to serve as chair of the election meeting.

The following order of business is in accordance with proper parliamentary procedure and with the *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws*. It is designed to guide the chair in conducting the chapter's election meeting. Even if a single slate is presented, voting must be by ballot, per the chapter bylaws.

- Call to order.
- Establish a quorum. Count the number of members present who are in good standing and eligible to vote.
- Advise the tellers committee chair of the number of eligible voters present, plus the number of absentee ballots received before the meeting. (If the president/team coordinator is not conducting the election meeting, she should present the absentee ballots to the chair before the meeting begins.)
- Introduce the tellers committee.

- The chair of the nominating committee announces the names and qualifications of each nominee. (Since the membership has had sufficient time to study the qualifications, the chair of the nominating committee or other chapter member may make a motion that the reading of the nominees' qualifications be waived. A majority vote of the membership will pass the motion.)
- The chair of the election meeting invites nominations from the floor. No second is required for a nomination. (Floor nominees must have given prior consent and have their "Potential Nominee Questionnaire" prepared for presentation to the membership at this time. Oral statements of qualifications are not permitted.)
- No motion is required to close nominations. The chair of the election meeting asks for any further nominations, pauses, and if there is no response, declares the nominations closed.
- The tellers committee distributes the prepared ballots, which list the original nominees in alphabetical order. The election meeting chair instructs the membership to write the names of any floor nominees on the bottom of the ballot.
- The membership is instructed at this time to vote for a specific number of nominees depending upon the number of positions to be filled—no more, no less. Voting for more or fewer than the announced number of nominees will disqualify the ballot. Instructions for folding the ballot in a uniform manner (in quarters, in half) also are given at this time. Correctly folded ballots assist the tellers and ensure a secret ballot for the membership. The chair of the election meeting and the tellers vote.
- The tellers collect the ballots. It is the responsibility of the tellers to see that no member votes more than once. The tellers receive the absentee ballots at this time.
- The tellers go to another room to tally the ballots. A tally sheet has been prepared ahead of time. A plurality vote elects.
- The chair of the tellers committee presents the tellers report to the chair of the election meeting without announcing the results.
- The chair of the election meeting reads the results of the election without announcing the number of votes received by any individual.
- If there is a tie for the final position to be filled, the chapter should revote for the nominees who are tied. Do not announce the results of the election until the tie is resolved.
- The chair of the election meeting presents the new board of directors/management team to the membership.
- Meeting is adjourned.

Though absentee voting is allowed, proxy voting (assigning voting rights to another) is prohibited.

Election of Officers

The *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws* and *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws – Management Team* describe the requirements for electing the officers. Refer to your chapter's own bylaws and standing rules regarding your chapter's process for election of officers.

Board of Directors

The elective officers of the chapter are: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Electing officers is the responsibility of the board members who take office on May 1. Board members whose terms expire on April 30 do not have the authority to vote. Because fewer people are involved, this election meeting is less formal than the election for members of the board of directors. Nevertheless, correct parliamentary procedure must be followed.

Management Team

The established positions (officers) of the management team are team coordinator, financial manager, secretary, and musical director. The position of musical director, even if a non-member, is exempt from the election process. See Section I of this guide for information about new director search, the relationship between chapter and musical director and how to prepare a letter of agreement between the director and the chapter.

Preparation for the Meeting to Elect Officers

Because there are options for electing officers of a chapter management team (described in the *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws*, Article VI, Section 1) the following information may or may not apply to your chapter. Refer to your chapter's own standing rules. If, however, your team's officers are chosen by the team the following should apply.

Distribute an "interest survey" to members of the new board of directors/management team. Ask them to indicate the office(s) for which they will accept nomination. Give a deadline date for the return of the "interest survey" to the presiding officer. After the surveys are returned, a list of the offices with the names of the board members willing to accept nomination is distributed to all members of the new board/team. Ideally, more than one name will be placed in nomination for each office. Nominations may be made from the floor provided prior consent is given by the nominee.

The presiding officer of the election meeting is the retiring president/team coordinator. The exception to this is if she is a member of the new board. The retiring president/team coordinator should then appoint another member who is not an incoming director to preside; a past president/team coordinator could serve in this capacity.

Before the election, the presiding officer appoints a secretary to record the minutes of the meeting as well as a tellers committee composed of two or three individuals. The tellers are members who have indicated they will not seek office, or are members of the retiring board/team. Their duties are the same as those listed under the tellers committee heading of this section. The tellers should read this outline and be thoroughly familiar with their duties before the meeting.

The Election Meeting

For the election meeting, the secretary records:

- Date, time and location of the meeting
- Attendance, including names of the presiding officer, board members present, the secretary, members of the tellers committee, any nonvoting members in the room
- Nominees for each office
- Newly elected officers

The secretary should not record any discussion that takes place during the meeting. Once the meeting is over, it is her responsibility to type the minutes. The minutes will be read at the next board/team meeting in order to be approved and/or corrected. The minutes of the election meeting become part of the official minutes of the chapter.

Upon calling the election meeting to order, the presiding officer establishes a quorum, informs the tellers committee that a quorum is present, and announces the number of votes needed to elect. Once she has introduced the appointed secretary and the tellers committee, the presiding officer reads the description of the duties of the president/team coordinator. At this point, she calls out, "Nominations are now open for the office of president." After recognizing each nominee, the presiding officer then asks, "Are there further nominations for the office of president?" If there are no further nominations, the presiding officer announces that the nominations for president/team coordinator are closed.

With the nominations for president/team coordinator closed, the nominees and nonvoting members are asked to leave the room. Board/team members are then able to freely discuss the qualifications of the nominees and share opinions. When the board/team members are ready to vote, the presiding officer asks the nominees to return to the room.

Upon return of the nominees, the tellers distribute ballots to all members of the new board/team. The secretary reads the names of each nominee for the office of president/team coordinator. When each nominee has been announced, the presiding officer instructs the board members to write the name of one nominee for the office of president/team coordinator on a ballot.

The tellers collect the ballots and go to another room to count the votes. The tellers present the tellers report to the presiding officer without announcing the vote. If one of the nominees received a majority vote, the presiding officer states the name of the newly elected president/team coordinator. If there is not a majority vote, or if the vote is tied, the presiding officer should announce: "No election." In the latter case, repeat the previous steps, beginning with a new vote. Continue the process until one of the nominees receives a majority vote. Follow this procedure for each of the other offices.

In order to become elected, a nominee must receive a majority of the votes cast. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised defines majority vote as "more than half."

Once the voting is finished and the officers are elected, the ballots are destroyed. The tellers committee should not divulge the results of the vote. With the election completed, the meeting should be adjourned and no further business should be brought before the board/team until a new meeting has been called.

Filling a Vacancy

In the event that a present board member is unable to complete her elected term on the board, the president shall appoint a member, in accordance with the *Standard Form Chapter Bylaws*, Article 5, Section 5.

If you have a management team form of governance, your chapter's standing rules should describe the procedure by which a vacancy should be filled.

Election Results

Immediately following the annual election of the chapter board/team and officers the secretary should log in to the Members Only section of the Sweet Adelines website and complete the online, automated Chapter Officer update form.

Installation of Officers

Examples of installation ceremonies are available on the Sweet Adelines International website.

(S A M P L E)

POTENTIAL NOMINEE
QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

Date joined Sweet Adelines International _____

Number of years as member of the _____ Chapter

Occupation: Present _____

Former _____

Skills (leadership ability, bookkeeping/accounting, parliamentary law, computer, etc.)

Membership in other Sweet Adelines International chapters: _____

Sweet Adelines International positions held (administrative and/or musical):

Chapter _____

Regional _____

International _____

Experience with other organizations (positions held) _____

In the event of nomination, I agree to have my name placed on the slate. If elected, I agree to comply with the chapter's bylaws and standing rules, the bylaws and standing rules of the region and the bylaws and policies of the international organization. I have read the job description, am aware of the duties and obligations of being a member of the board of directors/management team, and understand my responsibilities, if elected.

I understand that submitting this "Potential Nominee Questionnaire" to the nominating committee does not guarantee that my name will be on the slate.

Signature of Potential Nominee

(SAMPLE)
BALLOT

Four nominees will be elected to serve two-year terms on the chapter board/management team. Mark an "X" by the name of the four nominees for whom you wish to vote. A vote for more or less than four nominees will void this ballot.

- Nominee 1
- Nominee 2
- Nominee 3
- Nominee 4
- Nominee 5
- Nominee 6
- Nominee 7
- Nominee 8
- _____
- _____
- _____

After you mark your ballot with four nominees, fold the ballot in quarters. The ballot will be collected by the tellers committee.

(S A M P L E)
TALLY SHEET

NAME	TALLY	TOTAL	PLACE
Nominee 1			
Nominee 2			
Nominee 3			
Nominee 4			
Nominee 5			
Nominee 6			
Nominee 7			
Nominee 8			

(S A M P L E)
Tellers Report

Chapter _____ Region _____ Date _____

Number of members eligible to vote:

Number of votes cast:

The four nominees receiving the largest number of votes are:

Submitted by the tellers committee:

Signature _____

Signature _____

Signature _____

Signature _____

Online, Automated Chapter Officer Update Form Instructions

The **new online, automated Chapter Officer update form** is available in the Members Only section. All chapters are required to update its list of officers at the time of your charter renewal, during the month of May.

Accessing the new online, automated form:

1. Login to the Members Only section at www.sweetadelineintl.org, click on Member Login (top, right side of page)
2. Enter your Member Name or Username (last name first initial, ex: Jane Smith is smithj)
3. Enter your Member ID number in the Member Number or Password field and click Login
4. Find the new blue navigation bar under the main red navigation bar and click on More Member Options
5. Click on the link for Chapter Member Reports
6. You may be asked to login again, if so repeat Step 2. and 3.
7. Click on the link at the bottom of the page that says Charter Renewal & Officers
8. Make sure your chapter name is selected and click Select Chapter
9. Confirm that all chapter contact information is current and click Continue Update
10. Update your chapter officer records, click on Update All Records and click on the Officer Update Instructions link at the top of the form for detailed instructions on how to best utilize this page
11. Click Continue – your Chapter Officers have been updated!

Chapter Officers are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to make Chapter Officer updates through this online, automated form beginning on May 1, 2013. This page will be open for continuous updates throughout the year. Please feel free to log on, scan through the form pages and update your chapter officers as needed.