

Report of the Ethics and Elections Committee for the January 2008 meeting of the ARRL Board

The pace of activity on the Ethics and Elections Committee during the second half of 2007 was a big step up from the busy first half of the year. My e-mail folder shows more than 560 regarding various E&E issues since mid-July.

At the July Board meeting, two items were addressed regarding ARRL elections. One was to clarify the language regarding electronics communications in elections. Secretary Sumner included the revised language in the elections packages sent out to anyone requesting nomination forms for the five Divisions where Director/Vice Director elections were being conducted. The second was a review of a March 10th appeal of the E&E Committee decisions in the North Texas Section Manager election, which was upheld by the Board.

At the July Board meeting, the Committee also said it would work to review election rules for both Section Manager and Board elections. For a variety of reasons, this work was not significantly advanced, as other pressing matters took a great deal of the Committee's time and attention.

A number of items came to or were referred to the Committee for comment, including questions about the revised electronic communications policies, particularly the use of arrl.org and arrl.net addresses, the new conflict of interest policy, and questions about how to separate campaigning from duties as ARRL elected officials. Suggestions were received about modernizing ARRL procedures for elections, on some issues involving recall elections, and how to deal with elections where there was only one candidate.

The majority of our attention involved the elections for Director and Vice Director in the Pacific, Rocky Mountain, Southeastern, Southwestern, and West Gulf Divisions. There were complaints raised in each one of them, though the Southwestern and West Gulf Division elections commanded the majority of time. The Committee made a number of requests of candidates regarding the use of electronic communications (e-mail and web sites), which were all handled promptly, except for one. A couple of complaints arrived before the official campaign period started – before nominations were made, before candidates were certified.

We had one candidate that was certified as qualified that may not have qualified under our older rules (Article 11) regarding conflicts of interest. This brought up some administrative and operational questions regarding how we would have to handle those conflicts, should the individual be elected.

The one complaint that was not satisfactorily handled by a candidate was in the Southwestern Division, and in September, the committee reluctantly disqualified Carl Gardinas, WU6D, as a result. He appealed the Committee's decision to the Executive Committee, and in October they upheld the E&E action.

Ballot counting took place in Newington on November 16th, with E&E Committee members Frenaye and Leggette present to help and oversee the process. The process went very smoothly (considering there were contested elections in all five Divisions) with the assistance of our auditors and about dozen ARRL employees. After candidates were contacted by ARRL President Harrison, the election results were reported to the Board that day, and distributed through ARRL bulletins, the web site and QST.

Late in the year there was a complaint regarding a Section Manager election. A nomination petition was sent to ARRL six days before the deadline, and did not arrive until six days after the deadline. This was not a pleasant situation, but our rules clearly say it has to arrive by a certain date/time. We currently require nominations with original signatures to be submitted, no e-mail, PDF or FAX copies.

The report from CEO Sumner (Doc #8) contains a summary of elections issues as well, and a recommendation that a comprehensive review of elections policies and procedures be assigned to the Executive Committee. I know the members of the E&E Committee will support this review, and would be happy to provide input.

Special thanks to my fellow committee members for their help and input during the past year, and also to ARRL Secretary, Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, and General Counsel Chris Imlay, W3KD, for their advice and help.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Frenaye". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

E&E Committee
Tom Frenaye, K1KI, Chairman
Bruce Frahm, K0BJ
Henry Leggette, WD4Q

13 January 2008