

Pine Ridge Election Committee Procedure Manual

Revised and adopted on February 28, 2018

General Guidelines:

The Election Committee is a Mandatory Committee as specified in the Bylaws (Article IV, Section 2B) of the Pine Ridge Property Owners Association (hereinafter referred to as the “PRPOA”). The Chairperson is appointed by the PRPOA President and approved by the majority Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the “PRBOD”). The Chairperson appoints additional Committee Members to a maximum of five (5) members. If necessary, the Chairperson can remove any Committee Member with just cause and appoint a replacement member.

1. A “Notice of Election Committee Meeting” must be posted on the Pine Ridge Community Center bulletin board at least 48 hours in advance.
2. All documents pertaining to elections must be approved by the Election Committee before mailing. The Election Committee, from time to time, may be asked to count votes for Annual Elections and Referendums. The Chairperson may recruit additional volunteers.

DEFINITIONS:

ELECTIONS – The selection of members to the PRBOD by votes of the members of the PRPOA.

REFERENDUMS – The legislative act(s) referred for final approval by votes of the members of the PRPOA.

LIMITED PROXY – The upper portion of the Limited Proxy/Ballot herein referred to as “Proxy” provides a place where Property Owner may indicate the physical description of the property. Failure to make this identification does not invalidate the proxy.

BALLOT –

1. **Elections** – The lower portion of the Proxy/Ballot herein referred to as “Ballot” consists of instructions on how to vote, how many candidates are to receive votes, and the names of the declared candidates.
2. **Referendum(s)** – The lower portion of the Proxy/Ballot herein referred to as “Ballot” consists of instructions on how to vote and the legislative act (which may include more than one question) to be voted upon.

BALLOT ENVELOPE – The official envelope provided with the Ballot. Plain Envelopes, receipt of a fax or email will be accepted.

MULTIPLE PROPERTY/LOT OWNERS – Each Property/Lot owner is only allowed one vote per property and will receive one ballot for each lot owned.

VALID BALLOT – For an election, a ballot where the appropriate number of candidates is indicated, i.e. if two candidates can be elected there can be no more than two names marked on the ballot. For both elections and referendums, the proxy must be signed and dated to be valid. Those voting in person by Ballot at an Annual Meeting or Referendum need to “show proper photo ID”, be validated on the Master List, and sign the official on-site voting list. Ballots should be returned in sealed official ballot envelope to the given address or in person at the meeting. Plain Envelopes, receipt of a fax or email will be accepted. Multiple lot owners may place more than one ballot in an envelope.

INVALID (Void) BALLOT – One in which either/or

1. more than the required number of candidates is indicated
2. a ballot other than the current year’s official ballot
3. one that cannot be checked against the master list
4. any alterations
5. does not meet above validation specifications

The reason(s) for invalidity must be recorded in the upper right corner of the ballot and initialed by only committee members declaring it invalid.

VALID PROXY – An official current year Proxy Form for Property Owners must be dated, signed and returned before an Annual Meeting or Referendum is adjourned to count the Ballots. Such a Proxy will count toward quorum, but if the Proxy is not signed and dated the Ballot will be declared invalid.

UN-VOTED BALLOTS – Valid Proxies with a blank Ballot will be counted toward a Quorum.

QUORUM – Twenty percent (20%) of the voting membership present in person or represented by proxy constitutes a quorum at an Annual Meeting or Referendum.

DISPUTED BALLOTS – If different co-owners of one lot submit a ballot voting for different candidates, one Proxy will be validated towards a quorum and both ballots will be invalidated unless there is on file with the Association a written designation signed by all co-owners authorizing one person to vote.

RESUME – The resume form is the format candidates are suggested to submit.

APPLICATION – The application is a source of information and acknowledgement as to the accuracy of the resume submitted and will not be included in the annual packet mailing

ADVISORS – Volunteers who have previously served on the Election Committee can be selected by the Chair to serve as advisors and can aid the Election Committee.

PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES:

PHASE I: PREPARE THE DOCUMENTS – By October

1. Review the language used in the following documents to determine consistency with current policy and Bylaws:
 - The Proxy/Ballot Form
 - The Application for Election

The Notice of Meeting (to Members)

2. Prepare a Budget, in cooperation with the Board.
3. Determine dates for the “Calendar of Events” which shall represent the intent to meet the following critical path factors:
 - A) End of January Receipt of candidates applications as per Bylaws
 - B) Early February Acceptance of the Slate by the Board of Directors
 - C) February/March Mail Ballots as per Bylaws “no later than twenty (20) days, nor sooner than sixty (60) days prior to 2nd Tuesday of April.”
 - D) March/April Check incoming Ballots against Master List of Property Owners
 - E) March/April Meet the Candidates will be required to be held in either March or April and will be moderated by the Election Committee, with the date to be determined by the Board of Directors.
 - F) 2nd Tuesday April Annual Meeting will be scheduled as stipulated in PRPOA Bylaws (Article VI, Section 2).
 - G) 2nd Wednesday April Announce Election results to BOD.
 or sooner
4. Submit the following for Board approval:
 - A) The Committee’s recommendations for the Budget
 - B) Committee’s recommendation regarding contracting out or in-house procedures for mailing;
 - C) Revisions to language for the “Proxy/Ballot Form”, the “Application for Elections”, the “Notice of Meeting” and the “Calendar of Events”.

PHASE II: IDENTIFY CANDIDATES – November/December/January

1. Publicize the Elections in local media: Pine Ridge Post, Civic web page, PRPOA web page and on the bulletin board.
2. Collect one page resumes and applications from the candidates and present the Slate of Candidates to the PRBOD Chairperson.
3. Due to costs associated with printing and mailing, any candidate(s) wishing to withdraw should do so before Proxy/Ballots are printed.

PHASE III: NOTIFICATION – February/March

1. The Election Committee chair or designee from the election committee will authorize the mailing of the Proxy/Ballots and will include each candidate’s resume if it meets the requirements as stated in the definitions of this manual. This mailing will be sent to all Property Owners as per the PRPOA Bylaws “not later than twenty (20) days, nor sooner

than, sixty (60) days prior to the meeting” It is not necessary to indicate the lot/block numbers on the outside of the envelopes for the purpose of validation.

PHASE IV: VALIDATE AGAINST MASTER LIST Late March/Early April

1. To maintain confidentiality of the Proxy/Ballots that are mailed or hand delivered directly to the Pine Ridge Office, they are checked in by two different systems.
 - A) Mail pieces are counted daily and by two staff members. Then they are checked in against the master list and kept locked down for safekeeping.
 - B) Drop off log pieces are counted the day after delivery and are verified by two staff members. Then they are checked in against the master list and kept locked down for safekeeping.
2. The office will accept proxy ballot envelopes. Property owner’s presenting in person at the meeting will be signed in by the Election Committee and/or volunteers assigned to the task. If they have sent a prior proxy ballot, the one received at the meeting will replace anything received prior.
3. The Proxy/Ballot(s) remain secured in the custody of the PRPOA Office until tabulation. The Election Committee will not disclose results until Candidates and Board of Directors are notified after the final count.
4. All Ballot envelopes submitted by owners of multiple properties need the vote count reaffirmed when actually opened.

PHASE V: ON-SITE VOTING: ANNUAL MEETING DAY OR REFERENDUM DAY

Before the meeting PRPOA staff, and committee members set up the voting table for on-site voters and prepare to receive Ballots.

1. As a Ballot is submitted, verify that no other Ballots from that Property Owner have been received. If a Property Owner has submitted more Ballots than their allocation allows the previously received Ballots are marked duplicate and set aside. The last Ballot received shall be the one counted.
2. Indicate on envelope the number of votes to which the Owner is entitled if the entitlement is more than one.
3. If the Owner fails to bring their envelope, they must provide identification with the correct address whereupon a new envelope is provided.
4. File alphabetically.
5. Ballots received at an Annual Meeting or Referendum are recorded by the PRPOA staff and reviewed by the Election Committee and are to be included in the count.

An Annual Meeting or Referendum starts with PRBOD Chairperson calling the meeting to order, and requesting a report from the Election Committee Chair on whether the tentative quorum has been met. Ballots are collected, and the meeting is adjourned. The adjourned meeting reconvenes the following day after the votes are tabulated and the new Directors are seated.

PHASE VI: VALIDATING

1. The Election Committee, volunteers and the PRPOA office staff will perform the following procedures:
 - A) If not previously validated the Proxy section is checked to see if it is valid per Florida Statute 720.306. If not signed and dated within the proxy period, the Proxy/Ballot is not valid. Also needed on the Proxy to be valid, “proxy must be dated, must state the date time and place of the meeting for which it was given and must be signed by the

authorized person who executed the Proxy. A Proxy is effective only for the specific meeting for which it was originally given, as the meeting may lawfully be adjourned and reconvened from time to time, and automatically expires 90 days after the date of the meeting for which it was originally given. A Proxy is revocable at any time at the pleasure of the person who executes it. If the Proxy form expressly so provides, any Proxy holder may appoint, in writing, a substitute to act in his or her place.

- B) The Ballot selection is verified by Volunteers under direct supervision of the Election Committee and PRPOA Management assuring that no more than the appropriate number of candidates were voted for. If more than the correct number of received votes is marked or if it is altered in any way, the Ballot is invalid. A Ballot is valid with less than the appropriate number of candidates voted for.
2. This process continues until all Ballots are validated.
3. Concurrently, Election Committee, volunteers and the PRPOA office staff will perform the following tasks:
 - A) The validated stacked Proxy/Ballot forms are counted into groups of 25 to be counted by the Volunteers under direct supervision of the Election Committee and PROPA Management. .
 - B) The Chairperson and/or PRPOA Management is given any questions that arise.

PHASE VII: ESTABLISHING QUORUM –

PRPOA Management will verify that a Quorum has been met and will convey the numbers to the Election Committee Chair.

PHASE VIII: TALLYING VOTES

Each Proxy/Ballot group of 25 is assigned to a (4) four member team who perform the following steps:

1. The reader calls out with a verifier to the two recorders the names of the candidates voted for on the Ballots.
2. If there is a lesser number of votes than those specified on the Ballot Form (for example, two votes rather than the required three), the missing votes will be entered under “no votes”.
3. Once the votes in that group of ballots are recorded, the number of the votes each candidate received is tallied and placed in the box at end of the candidate’s name.
4. Both recorders add up the votes in the boxes and indicate the total number votes cast on the Tally Form.
5. If there is a discrepancy, the process is repeated.
6. Groups of 25 Proxy/Ballots along with the Tally Sheets are bundled and stored securely. All Invalid Votes will be placed in its own bundle with a written description of the issues.

REFERENDUMS

Follow the steps in Phase VIII: Tallying Votes

PHASE IX: RESULTS

1. PRPOA Staff with the Election Committee as oversight will tabulate the final results by transferring the total votes of each candidate/Referendum on the individual Tally Sheets to a Master Tally Sheet to reach the total votes cast for that candidate.

2. The original Ballot/Proxy will not be separated, but it will be copied and separated so that the Ballot choices cannot be seen and matched to Property Owners' identification on the Proxy portion, should a request for records be made.
3. Each ballot Packet will be placed in boxes and sealed along with the envelopes and the Master List of Property Owners. The boxes will then be sealed with tape and signed and dated by the Committee Members and stored in the administrative offices within the PRPOA community center.
4. The Election Results Report is prepared.

PHASE X: ANNOUNCE ELECTION RETURNS – 2nd Wednesday of April or sooner

The Annual Meeting is adjourned and reconvened to the next business day and the Chairperson submits the results and final report to the PRBOD. Election Committee or PRPOA Management will not disclose results before the official announcement. As a courtesy, the Chairperson will notify all of the Board Members (and Candidates, when an Election has been held) prior to the official announcement of the results.

For a Referendum, the results are announced at the next PRBOD meeting, posted on the Pine Ridge web site and posted on the Pine Ridge Community Center official notification board.

PHASE XI: ELECTION DISPUTES

Election Disputes must follow FL Statutes Rules FS 720

PHASE X11: ELECTION MANUAL

Revisions to the Election Manual are prepared by the Election Committee and submitted to the PRBOD. Once approved, they will be time stamped, and a copy will be provided to all PRBOD and Election Committee members.

All samples included with this document may be updated and changed from time to time.