

Member Initiated Ballot Procedure and Petition Requirements 2005

I. Petition Process and Requirements

Members may submit an item for vote by the membership on the next ballot by using the following procedure.

Step 1: A proposal may be brought to the board by any member, clearly describing the issue(s) in question that he or she wants to see on the next ballot. At this time the board must do one of the following:

- a) Approve the proposal to move forward as a member-initiated ballot
- b) Agree to sponsor the member ballot and make it a board ballot
- c) Identify appropriate committee or staff to address the concern/idea
- d) Give feedback for possible reworking/rewording of the proposal
- e) Reject the proposal: The board may reject the proposal if it is illegal or deemed financially irresponsible or financially unfeasible. The board will provide a written statement to the authors of the proposal articulating its reasons for rejection.

Step 2: If the proposal is approved to move forward as a member-initiated ballot, the member(s) draft a petition to support conducting a vote on their issue(s) in the next ballot. The petition must be lawful, and must be reasonable based on financial feasibility. The petition must include provisions for the board or their designees to validate that the petition signatures are from active members. In addition, the petition must be clearly written so that the reader may be able to easily understand:

- Who wrote this petition
- What issue(s) are being addressed
- What is the proposed solution
- That signing the petition supports having the issue voted on in the next ballot and not implementation of the proposed change itself.

Step 3: The board reviews the petition to insure that it meets the requirements in Step 2. If the board finds that the petition meets the above requirements, the petitioners may proceed with signature gathering (Tabling Guidelines are still being drafted by the Board). In order for the issue to be included in the upcoming ballot. The petition must be signed by 1/2 of the average number of voting members from the previous three annual elections, or 300, whichever is greater, and the required number of valid member signatures must be submitted to the Board by August 1st.

Step 5: The Board or their designees will review the petitions to insure that the required number of signatures are from active members. The results of this review are presented to the board. If the required number of validated, signed petitions was collected, the issue will appear on the next ballot. If the requirements have not been met, the issue will not appear on the ballot, though members may start the process again if they wish.

II. Ballot Procedure

After successfully completing the above **Petition Process and Requirements**, the board or board committee (referred to as "The Committee") works with the petitioners to put together the member-initiated ballot.

Step 1: The Committee develops a voter pamphlet and educational materials that will be published in the October newsletter (September 1st submission deadline).

The voter pamphlet must include the following information about the ballot issue:

- Benefits (pros)
- Impacts (cons)
- Costs
- Legal aspects
- Purpose, vision

Step 2: Between September 1st and November 15th, at least two Member Forums will be held at which the member initiative will be the main topic. In addition, the member initiative must be included as an agenda item for the Annual Meeting. The Committee will also work with the petitioners to insure that the membership be given an opportunity to educate itself with regard to the issue during this period. Other methods of education that should be utilized are notebooks at stores with ballot and educational materials, the website, and tabling at the stores.

Step 3: The Election is held October 15th through November 15th. Unless otherwise specified by State law, a 60% majority of active Co-op members is required for a member-initiated ballot to pass.