

To: President Joe Oriti, The Lake Forest Caucus
From: The Lake Forest Caucus Ad Hoc Bylaw Committee
Date: January 31, 2025
Subject: **2025 Caucus Bylaw Revision Recommendations**

The Ad Hoc Bylaw Committee is pleased to submit its recommendations for changes to the Lake Forest Caucus Bylaws, as set forth in the attached redlined version. It has been almost five years since the Bylaws were last updated, and the seven-member committee approached its work with both a sensitivity to the past and eye toward the future. As directed, our principal objectives were to address the question of what happens when a no vote occurs at the Spring and/or Annual Meeting as well as modernizing the Bylaws. We believe that the proposed modifications meet both of those objectives.

Background

Following an upheaval at the 2022 Caucus Annual Meeting and 2023 Caucus Spring Meeting, the Caucus moved forward with creating an ad-hoc committee. The committee was directed to conduct an independent and objective review of the Bylaws and recommend revisions which could be voted on by the membership at the 2025 Spring Meeting. The overarching goal was to identify changes to the Bylaws that would “strengthen and enhance the mission of the Lake Forest Caucus.” Two central issues focused on what happens if a candidate for elected office does not receive a majority vote at the Annual Meeting, and how should the Bylaws address the question of when one or more officers of the Caucus do not receive a majority vote at the Spring Meeting. The committee was also asked to review a few other assorted sections of the Bylaws relating to indemnification, ward chairs, the meeting cadence and whether the Bylaws were binding.

The ad hoc committee was formed in late October of 2024 and met regularly for three months to review and discuss Bylaws modifications. Its work consisted of 1) examining the current language of the Bylaws, 2) reviewing historical documents and precedence, and 3) looking at other local caucus systems for governance ideas and practical applications. It also sought input from Caucus representatives and interested Lake Forest residents who served as a “Focus Group.”

The committee members embraced the significance of their task and were open-minded, curious and respectful of differing viewpoints. It occasionally disagreed, without being disagreeable. It explored multiple sides of an issue in an effort to fully comprehend the long-term ramifications of any revisions. In the course of its discussions and significant community engagement, other ancillary issues and opportunities were identified that were not part of its mission. Those issues were documented as “Parking Lot” issues that are attached and made a part of this report. During its deliberations, the committee received a number of thoughtful and insightful comments and ideas, reflecting the high regard residents have for the caucus system. A copy of the email comments received have also been attached to the record.

Recommendations

As requested, the specific recommendations are highlighted in the attached redlined version of the Bylaws. Some of the proposed amendments are self-evident, non-controversial and require little explanation. Others will be viewed by some as going too far or not far enough. On these issues the committee sought to find common ground which embraces direct community involvement while respecting the integrity and decades of success of the vetting/selection process and tremendous commitment by the Caucus Committee. The Ad-Hoc committee members will make themselves available to the Caucus Committee or community to answer any questions relating to the proposed recommendations.

Ad Hoc Committee

Katie Andersen
Susan Sailor Daly
Stewart Dixon
Geoffrey Hanson
Derek Johnson
Bob Kiely
Debbie Saran