



Summary of Bylaws Discussion at River Valleys Delegate Dialogues October 2011

The following is a summary of the feedback and questions regarding the Bylaws raised at the October delegate dialogue meetings. Also included is feedback the Bylaws Revision Task Group has received through the feedback email box at delegates@girlscoutsrv.org. The Task Group encourages you to send in your feedback by October 31, 2011. During November the Task Group will complete its draft, submit the draft to the legal counsel for review and submit the final document to the Board Executive Committee at the end of the month. The full Board will review the document in December and a final proposal will be prepared for consideration by the delegates at the Annual Meeting in January.

Section 2.28 - Voting Member List

Email seems the most practical for discussion of issues between voting members, but there was concern about improper usage of emails. Discussion of a policy/procedure (blind copied to prevent reply-all messages, define proper use, etc.) surrounding the use of email list seemed to rest most concerns; overall there was fairly strong support for email being shared and no clear objections to it.

We need to check state law to see if disclosure of private information of girls is prohibited.

It is okay to give the list out throughout the year for any council purpose if a delegate asks but each delegate should be allowed to state her/his preferred communication method. Some seem to prefer not to receive council messages via email. There was a comment that email boxes can reach capacity as well as important messages should come by US mail.

Delegates need to have the opportunity to opt out of their email being disclosed to other delegate.

Delegates should be given River Valley email addresses.

Sect. 3.3 - Delegate Age

There was strong general support for increasing the age to 14. Two girls in attendance were quite outspoken about how they struggled to understand what was happening at even 14 and that they saw younger girls playing or sleeping during the meeting.

Some feel strongly that 12 is a good age and suggested it might be good for retention. It was suggested that wording be adjusted to grandfather 12 and 13 year-old delegates who were elected under previous bylaws.

The group strongly supported raising girl delegate age to 14.

Are girls 12 and 13 mature enough to fully participate?

A 13 year old girl delegate who attended the last annual meeting stated she understood what was going on.

I can understand the reasoning behind this change since it is age 14 for National Delegates and wanting to be consistent on a National level. However, I believe by keeping it at age 12 that will allow girls to get a closer look at being a delegate and those responsibilities before applying to be a National Delegate. Kind of like being an "apprentice" delegate.

What will happen to the current Girl Delegates that fall below that age limit of 14? Would they be grandfathered in under the old bylaws or would they be terminated? Most Service Units will select their Girl Delegates prior to the adoption of the new Bylaws and so there is a good chance that there will be Girl Delegates that are age 12 and 13 from now until Dec. 2012. For many service units, it is difficult to get girl delegates so by raising the age limit; it will most likely become even more difficult. I see by keeping the girl delegates at age 12 a wonderful opportunity to give them additional leadership skills and showing them what national opportunities await when they turn 14.

Bylaw Amendment Voting – Article XIV

Amendment (annual meeting/written ballot vs. any meeting)—members could see the advantages to either and disadvantages, too; the group was divided about whether the "annual meeting or written ballot" or the "any meeting" wording should be used, but the group in general was pretty strongly opposed to the written ballot for amendment as they highly valued the discussion and conversation (hearing pro/con arguments, etc.) that a meeting provided; there was talk of having dialogues before meetings and how advantageous that would be.

There was a suggestion to lower the threshold for passing an amendment when a written ballot is used. Concern was raised over the 30% being high; there was general

agreement that bylaw amendments should require significant effort—but not be next-to-impossible, either; people seemed to like an idea that was thrown out to call a "delegate dialogue" before any amendment voting meetings are held. This would provide an opportunity for delegates to discuss and consider amendments in a less formal manner than the meeting will provide.

There was an underlying desire for delegate to have the benefit of hearing discussion before any bylaw changes were voted upon. We should not limit our options and include all meetings of the members and written ballot. Too many things come up.

Does how the vote is taken impact the 30% 2/3?

50 members/30% of service units is too low to propose an amendment to the Bylaws

50 members/30% service units is too high to propose an amendment to the Bylaws

Delegate Year

Section 3.3 "If I am reading the proposed bylaws correctly, the Service Unit Delegate numbers will go according to the previous years girl count, ex: 2013 delegate numbers will be according to the 2012 girl numbers. If this is the case, why can't the delegate year follow the Girl Scout year-October 1-Sept 30? If it followed the Girl Scout year, there will be less chance of having to re-elect a delegate if a delegate resigns."

Section 3.5 -- "registered in that service unit as of September 30 one (1) calendar year preceding the start of the term..." -- this timeline is too tight.

Other Comments

Section 5.3 Term limits for the board were supported but the wording in this section is confusing.

Section 5.3 & 6.3 Why do the Directors-at-Large assume their positions at the END of the meeting at which they're elected, and the Officers assume their position AT the Annual Meeting at which they are elected?

Article II Why can the Board control their own election?

Do we need to identify/limit the number of board members (Officers) in Article II or limit amendments of that section to the members?

Section 2.3 The wording "work with the Board of Directors" is ambiguous.

Section 3.6 Delegate Engagement—Could we have two dialogues each year? One follow-up from the annual meeting, and one fall meeting to prepare for the annual meeting?