

## **Board Outreach and Education Committee 2022 Election Report**

This Report is submitted by the Board Outreach and Education Committee (the BOEC) as part of its obligation under its Charter to report to the Board after each election with respect to recommendations based on observations from the election. This report covers the 2022 Board election. The Committee consisted of Brad McIlvain, Chair, and Kelly Bragg, Cynthea Riesenber, Paul Nelson, Frances Boyd and Gaye Stathis, Members.

The BOEC is the successor to the former Nominating Committee. The Board established the BOEC specifically to eliminate the recommendation function of the prior Nominating Committee. The Board no longer wanted to be seen as trying to influence the results of the elections.

### **The 2022 Board Election**

There were eight candidates for the Board. We were pleased with the number of candidates as it showed continued strong interest in the Board after what had been a challenging year for the Board. Lisa Mascolo was elected and David DeStefano was reelected to the Board.

### **KICA Forums and Materials**

The Committee saw great benefit to the written and video statements assembled by KICA and encouraged their continued use.

The BOEC sought out a neutral moderator for the KICA-run Candidates' Forum. Everyone was pleased that our new Municipal Judge, Sandy Ain, agreed to be the moderator. All thought he did a wonderful job. What criticism there was derived from problems with the format used for those types of forums. The Committee was concerned that it allowed candidates to avoid answering certain questions and did not allow for any real interaction between the candidates and the members.

Three of the candidates had Zoom forums, which the Committee members thought provided great insight into those candidates. Two forums were run by someone other than the candidate and one run by the candidate. The Committee thought having the forum run by a separate person provided for a better experience because it allowed the candidate to focus on the discussion with members and not be bogged down in the mechanics of the forum. The Committee recommends going forward that KICA sponsor and run a Zoom forum for each candidate. The Committee was undecided as to whether the traditional Candidates' Forum should remain. However, if the choice was between either the traditional Candidates' Forum or the Zoom forums, they believe the Zoom forums would be preferable.

### **Neutrality of BOEC Members**

The BOEC Charter notes that the Committee should remain neutral with respect to the candidates. It is, however, silent as to whether the individual committee members should be neutral. This issue arose because a couple of members were not neutral with respect to the

individual candidates. The Committee decided not to change the rules during the election but address the issue after the conclusion of the election. The Committee did that and recommends that the Goal paragraph of the BOEC Charter be changed as noted below to require that all Committee members be neutral as to the individual candidates and not take positions supporting or opposing any particular candidate.

*Goal: To encourage potential KICA Board candidates to run, to respond to questions those candidates may have, to assist in the collection of information from candidates and to provide the means to disseminate that information to all KICA members. As part of these activities, neither the Committee nor its members will publicly vet the candidates or make any candidate recommendations.*

### Concerns About Election Tone

The Committee was concerned about the tone of the election. The Committee takes no issue with members supporting their preferred candidate. However, this year there seemed to be a very negative tone by certain members.

One candidate expressed the belief that the Board had contributed to this negative tone. It was thought that the Board's decision to release the Jimmy Bailey April 2021 memo in January 2022 for the express purpose of affecting the election was improper and set a poor standard. The Committee agreed and recommends that the KICA Board not release any information during the election period that could impact the election unless there are exigent circumstances that justified its release during the election period. The Committee did not believe exigent circumstances existed here and questioned why human relations communications should be used to influence the election.

The Committee also reviewed the Fair Election Pledge and expects the Board will make clear that each candidate has an obligation to make sure that his/her materials and materials from his/her supporters are fair and uphold the goals we have as a community. Where that standard is not met, the candidate, as a potential community leader, should expressly disavow such communications. The Committee also hopes all of our members make clear that the negative and sometimes defamatory or misleading statements that were made by other members are not acceptable.

Finally, the Committee was concerned about the email from the Kiawah Island Club suggesting that Club members consider voting for only Club members. Emails like that only seem to fuel the perceived divide between the Club and non-Club members. As such, we hope the Club will refrain from sending such an email in the future.

### Release of Election Results

Going forward, the election will close as of noon the last day rather than 5 p.m. This will allow the voting contractor to provide the actual number of votes as compared to the number of voters (they are not necessarily the same given that cumulative voting is allowed under the governing documents) by the close of business that day. Voting results will not be released until the number of votes have been tabulated. The Committee recommended continuing the practice instituted this year of calling all candidates once the actual vote numbers are provided.