

B-2 Informed Choices in WSMA Elections

Sponsor: Kay Funk, MD, Yakima

WHEREAS, the current procedure for election of WSMA officers does not adequately inform WSMA delegates of the candidate's program priorities, and

WHEREAS, in response to WSMA 2017 *Resolution B-1: Informed Choices in WSMA Elections*, the WSMA convened a task force to ensure "that the process followed by the WSMA Nominating Committee is transparent, fair and responsive to issues of diversity, including, but not limited to, medical specialty, geography by congressional district, age, gender, culture and practice setting"¹, and

WHEREAS, that Nominating Committee Task Force recognized the importance of delegate choice and recommended that:

*...One way in which this transparency could be demonstrated, **without changes in our current bylaws [Emphasis added]**, would be for the NC to identify recommended candidates for each elected position, together with an associated list all qualified candidates who were considered by the NC for each specific position. The HOD would be presented with a transparent list of candidates vying for each position together with... NC guidance identifying those candidates representing particularly high value to the Association. It is our understanding that this type of process will already be implemented with the NC's report to the 2018 HOD and that candidates have been asked on the nomination form to give their consent to having their name included in the NC's report as having been vetted whether or not they are included on the recommended slate of candidates.² And*

WHEREAS, physicians who do not do patient care, but who manage the patient care of other physicians, cannot be fully empathic with the chronic stress and burnout experienced by working physicians. Therefore, be it...

RESOLVED, the WSMA Nominating Committee's process for election of Trustees, AMA Representatives, Assistant Secretary - Treasurer, and any Executive Committee vacancies will allow the House of Delegate to make informed **choices** on the program priorities and economic interests of candidates for elected office. (New WSMA policy), and be it further

RESOLVED, that the WSMA Nominating Committee will continue open, responsible, and standardized vetting, which will include recognition of diversity in traditional categories, but will also specifically include:

1. A statement of the candidate's program priorities - what is most important for WSMA to do for its members?

¹ WSMA 2017 House of Delegates Actions

² This quotation references the Nominating Committee Task Force Report, which appears below. It might be better to use a link to the full report on the WSMA website, but I don't have that available - KF

2. A statement of what percentage of the physicians income from the professional practice of medicine derives from direct patient care. (Directive to take Action), and be it further

RESOLVED, that all WSMA members qualified for election as Trustees, AMA Representatives, Assistant Secretary - Treasurer, and any Executive Committee vacancies, will be placed on a ballot for vote by the House of Delegates. Ranked-ballot voting may be used when appropriate. (Directive to take Action)

WASHINGTON STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

May 15, 2018

MEMO TO: WSMA Board of Trustees

FROM: John Bramhall, MD, PhD
Nominating Committee Task Force Chair

SUBJECT: REPORT FROM NOMINATING COMMITTEE TASK FORCE

At the 2017 House of Delegates meeting, Resolution B-1 was passed by a majority of the Delegates requesting that a task force be formed with the objective of determining if the current structure and operation of the WSMA Nominating Committee (NC) ensures adherence to general principles of transparency, fairness and responsiveness to issues of diversity (specialty affiliation, geographic area, age, gender etc.) in making its recommendations to the HOD for composition of the EC, BOT and AMA Delegation. The HOD required that a report be prepared for discussion at the May 2018 WSMA BOT.

A task force (NC-TF) was duly assembled, consisting of 5 WSMA members including some not currently engaged in leadership positions:

John Bramhall, MD, Chair
Jill Bross, MD
Roy Gondo, MD
Alex Hamling, MD
Brian Wicks, MD

NC-TF members sought input from various interested parties, exchanged opinions and observations via virtual meetings, conference call and messaging. The group researched the current composition of the Nominating Committee, the Bylaws governing its operation, the information made available to the Nominating Committee and the manner by which the Committee communicated with the HOD.

The Nominating Committee itself is primarily governed by Article V, Section 3 of the WSMA Bylaws which require that, annually, a committee be assembled with the approval of the BOT consisting of representatives from each State Congressional District, chaired by the Immediate Past President with the President Elect serving as a non-voting member. The Committee is required to nominate at least one candidate for each WSMA office, including one elected finance committee member, and is explicitly required, also, to consider current demographics of the Association including such elements as age, gender, geographic area and practice type in order to achieve a Board that reflects the diversity of the membership of the WSMA. In addition, the Committee is requested to review records of service to the Association, and to evaluate annual reviews of incumbent EC and BOT members together with candidates for these offices. Your task force found no issues with the current mechanism by which the NC is constructed - the constraints seem designed to ensure representation from each geographic element of the

state. The TF also felt that the rubric of the Bylaws would tend to push the NC in the direction of increasing diversity when constructing a list of preferred candidates for WSMA office.

Upon review of the materials typically processed by the NC it was clear that candidates are being evaluated both on the basis of their self-submitted paperwork and CV materials, and also on the basis of (more objective) assessments (tables and charts) showing the extent of their involvement in WSMA affairs. In addition, the 2017 NC had clearly reviewed tabulated data showing the current composition of WSMA elected positions with respect to geography, practice type and gender. It was apparent that the NC invests a substantial amount of hard work and expertise in order to generate a slate of candidates that would be likely to serve the Association well.

Thus, the NC, over the years, has consistently produced a roster of candidates for WSMA office in the form of a slate of uncontested candidates – i.e. a single nomination for each elected position available.

The NC deals with confidential information and generates recommendations without overt explanation; the majority of the Membership is likely to be quite unaware of the impressively large amount of work involved in the NC annual activity. Contested elections are rare in the recent history of the WSMA HOD; nominations from the floor of the House are in order, but the HOD generally does not have available time for full review of all the materials available to the NC.

Continued delegation of this work, by the HOD to the NC thus has advantages, however it would be prudent for the NC to take notice of the strongly-worded request from the 2017 HOD for an increase in transparency in the process of vetting and recommendation of candidates for consideration by the House.

One way in which this transparency could be demonstrated, without changes in our current bylaws, would be for the NC to identify *recommended* candidates for each elected position, together with an associated list all *qualified* candidates who were considered by the NC for each specific position. The HOD would be presented with a transparent list of candidates vying for each position together with NC guidance identifying those candidates representing particularly high value to the Association. It is our understanding that this type of process will already be implemented with the NC's report to the 2018 HOD and that candidates have been asked on the nomination form to give their consent to having their name included in the NC's report as having been vetted whether or not they are included on the recommended slate of candidates.

This approach would seem to be responsive to the issues of transparency, fairness and responsiveness to diversity requested by a majority of the 2017 HOD Delegates.

WSMA 2017 House of Delegates Actions

RESOLUTIONS

B-1 – Informed Choices In WSMA Elections (ADOPTED AS AMENDED)

RESOLVED, that the WSMA convene a task force to ensure that the process followed by the WSMA Nominating Committee is transparent, fair and responsive to issues of diversity, including, but not limited to, medical specialty, geography by congressional district, age, gender, culture and practice setting (Directive to Take Action); and BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED, that the task force be comprised of WSMA members at large, to include individuals not currently in a WSMA leadership position (Directive to Take Action); and BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED, that the task force prepare a report on its findings for the May 2018 WSMA Board of Trustees meeting. (Directive to Take Action)