

ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR THE LOCAL LITTLE LEAGUE



The groundwork for the success (or lack of it) of a season can often be found in how well (or how poorly) the league conducts its operations during this time of year. The keys, as with much of Little League, are proper communication and application of Rules, Regulations and policies.

Notice of Election

The league's constitution requires that a written notice of the election (Annual Meeting) is delivered to all Regular Members in good standing, at least 10 days before the election. The process is to be by mail, unless an alternate process has been approved by the membership (not the board) in advance of the Annual Meeting. The notice must include the date, time and place of the Annual Meeting.

Absentee Ballot

Because proxy voting is no longer recommended, the accepted practice is now absentee voting. If properly supervised, absentee voting affords far less chance of the election being "rigged." The absentee ballot is only distributed when requested by a Member. It must be obtained in PERSON from the league secretary, in a sealed envelope. The Member, in person, returns the ballot, in a sealed envelope, to the secretary.

Election Day

The day of the election is determined by each leagues constitution. The best time to hold the election is the last week of September. This is because the fiscal year for Little League, incorporated, starts on October 1 of each year. Electing a board in the spring or summer is allowed, but results in a "lame duck" board being in control legally for an extended period of time, until the fiscal year starts. Here is the sequence of events that should take place at the Annual Meeting for a well-run Little League:

Election Procedures for Little Leagues

- Determine if a quorum is present. The quorum at a well-run Little League is one-third, as listed in the constitution.
- If a quorum is not present, the election cannot be held. (Robert's Rules of Order.)
- Membership should be limited to those who qualify as volunteers. Leagues having difficulty obtaining a quorum usually consider all parents to be Members.
- Appoint an election Chairperson. (May or may not be the current president.)
- Ratify the Membership and Membership list for those present, by election. In other words, the Members elect new Members for the coming year. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.)
- Determine how many people will serve on the board of directors. The number must be at least the number listed in the constitution. Most well-run Little Leagues settle on about 15. They could settle on less than 15, but not less than six. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 b.)
- The nominating committee presents its report on those who have agreed to serve. Nominations are not by position.

- The nominating committee should begin its work in June. (Model Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.)
- Nominations are opened to the floor. Any Member is eligible for nomination. (Robert's Rules of Order.)
- Nominations are closed by vote of Membership.
- Every Regular Member receives one ballot.
- Voters list names of eligible candidates in the number previously determined. (Fifteen or less at most leagues.) Exception: Absentee ballots are voted according to preference and may list more than the pre-determined number.
- Nominees must receive at least 51 percent of the vote to be elected.
- New board is announced.
- Membership votes to approve the results of the election.
- New board meets to elect officers from among its number. At a minimum, the officers are: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, player agent, safety officer, league information officer, and coaching coordinator.
- Establish meeting dates for board.

First official responsibilities: Notify the district administrator, Regional Headquarters and International, by mail or through the data center, of the results of the election. (Must include proper addresses and telephone numbers of board officers.) If the league has a PO Box (recommended), supply headquarters with a physical address so packages can be shipped.

At this time, the Board of Directors should also appoint a committee to conduct the background checks of board members and other volunteers and/or hired workers who provide regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. (Regulation I (b) and I (c) 8 and 9). Little League International recommends the board of directors appoint the local league president and two other individuals to handle the background checks. These individuals may be from the board or individuals outside the board. For instance, the board of directors may appoint individuals who have significant professional background in this area, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background.

Membership

In Little League, there are two types of members: regular members and player members. This section deals with regular members — the people usually defined as eligible to vote at the annual meeting and other general membership meetings. Regular members of the local Little League include, by definition, all current managers, coaches, volunteer umpires, board members, officers of the board, "team moms/dads," volunteer maintenance workers, volunteer concession stand workers, etc. Just who exactly is a member? This should be defined in your League's Constitution.