



Lakewood
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Policies & Committees

TRANSPARENCY REPORT

General Manager: Mark Reid
Date: June 21, 2017
April 8, 2024
Topic: LPOA ELECTION PROCEDURES & HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered how the ballots get counted in our LPOA Board elections every year? The Election Committee has worked diligently with the Board and Staff over the past few years to make updates that continue to ensure our voting system is fair and secure.

Over the past 43 years, there have been 14 different General Managers overseeing this process, and the Election Committee is a standing committee of volunteers that continues to recommend policy updates as needed.

There are 2 Policies that provide instructions on the Election system:

Go to: <https://lpoa.com/about-us/governing-documents/>

LPOA Policies >

Policy #3 | Committees

Policy #21 | Election and Balloting Procedures

No changes can be made to processes without Board updates to these policies. Please read below to enjoy a summary of the history of our Election Process over the last 43 years.

In summary, the LPOA election process has now evolved into a secure, private and reliable system. This is to assure ease of customer access, increased voter participation and total voter privacy. In today's media driven information world, it's all too easy for someone to baselessly state that a voting process is rigged. The system we use with VoteNow.com has the technology in place to assure an accurate and untainted as well as totally secure election result.

HISTORY OF UPDATES IN A TIMELINE:

THE FIRST 39 YEARS OF CONSISTENT POLICY (1973-2012):

The Election Process was consistent for the first 39 years at Lakewood. Prior to 2012, essentially, **the General Manager(s) sorted and validated paper proxies and ballots from their desk by hand**, and then presented them to the Election Committee for counting.

About the Voting Paperwork:

The voting paperwork was sent to members via mail, and there were always 2 pieces of paper attached, needed from residents to cast a vote:

- 1) **Proxy** - name/address to prove residency and good standing, counting only toward attendance at Annual Meeting.
- 2) **Ballot** - their votes for candidacy.

These 2 paper attachments were then dropped off in the LPOA Office, and the General Manager would sort paper ballots on his or her desk - and detach the proxy from the ballot. She would individually check each member's proxy to confirm that they were in good standing. If they were in good standing, she would then sort the ballot as valid.

About Proxy:

If the resident did not sign the "proxy", then the ballot was considered invalid, per the language, and was not counted. It was still produced to the Election Committee so they could include in their reports, but it did not count toward a vote.

Counting and Sorting:

- The piles would be separated on the GM's desk, between the proxy (permission slip), and the ballots.
- The Valid Ballots would then go into a Lock-Box in the GM's office, and would lock every night.
- The Proxies would go into a file folder.
- The Invalid Proxies (and their ballots) would stay out separate, in another file folder.
- After all packets had been counted and sorted by the GM by the deadline, he or she would submit the pile of ballots to the Election Committee.

Announcements:

Voting ended at 5pm on the DAY BEFORE the Annual Meeting. The Election Committee would meet that night, would be present when the polls closed, and would go right into a meeting to count the ballots. The GM would also be in attendance to unlock the box and present the ballots. She would also present the final ballots and sort the last group for valid proxies.

The Election Committee would stay until all ballots had been counted; Results would be announced at 7pm on the following night at the Annual Meeting.

Costs:

Most recent cost of election at this point was approximately \$3500.00, growing annually from 1973-2012.

CHANGES TO THE ELECTION PROCESS FROM 2012-2017:

June 2011

Mark Reid was hired as GM of Lakewood Holding Company. Kathy Howe was the GM of the LPOA. Then Kathy Howe gave 18 months notice that she would finish her contract and then retire in Jan 2013. In Jan 2013, Kathy Howe retired and Mark Reid became the GM for both LHC and LPOA. Kathy Howe oversaw the election process through April 2012.

Jan 2013

Policy #21 | Election and Balloting Procedures - was brought to the Board table (as it is annually) for updates, per Standard Procedure. Due to recent feedback from membership, the Election Committee made recommendations to increase security around the election process. For 2013, the changes made to Policy 21 were:

- 1) A new ballot box was purchased, and was to remain locked between the date the polls opened, and the date that ballots were opened and counted. The Box had two (2) separately keyed locks. The CPA kept one key to Lock 'A' and the Chairman of the Election Committee kept one key to Lock 'B'. At 5pm the day before the Annual Meeting, when the polls closed, the Election Committee was present to place security tape over the slot at the top of the ballot box. This special tape was signed by both the GM and the Election Committee Chairperson. Any tampering with the tape would have been evident.
- 2) The key to the padlocks on the box, once locked, were transported offsite to the LPOA CPA's office by the Election Committee and kept there until close of polls.
- 3) The LPOA CPA firm was contracted to count the ballots in the presence of the LPOA Election Committee the day of the Annual Meeting. The CPA and Election Committee Chairperson would unlock their respective locks. The CPA's would remove ballots and proxies, handing the proxy to the LPOA Accounting Supervisor to confirm it was from a member in good standing. Once the proxy was certified, the CPA would count the ballot as valid.

- 4) Results were then tallied by the Election Committee and CPA's and reported at that night's Annual Meeting.

Costs:

Cost of this 2013 year was approximately \$4800.00.

Jan 2015

Due to a recommendation from the Election Committee, Policy 21 was changed again in order to use **Electronic Voting**. After research, Vote-now.com was contracted to handle the LPOA election. For 2015, the changes made to Policy 21 were:

- 1) All votes and proxies would be cast and counted electronically.
- 2) Voters would vote using an access code that was sent by both postal and email. The access code would be entered in the vote-now.com website, or by using a phone in option.
- 3) Voting would end at 5pm the day of the Annual Meeting, results emailed by 6:30pm, then announced by the Election Committee during the Annual Meeting.

Jan 2017

Most recent change to election procedure - Voting ends 2 days before Annual Meeting and results are no longer emailed at close of polls. At close of polls, vote-now.com staff overnight ships the results in a sealed envelope, which is opened by the Election Committee during the Annual Meeting, in front of membership.

Costs:

Current cost of Election is approximately \$5700.00

April 2024

Since 2015, the Election Policy #21 has been amended 5 times. As of 2024, the voting is still done through [Vote-Now.com](https://lpoa.com/about-us/governing-documents/), who have hosted 9 years of successful elections on our behalf. The current policy can always be found online at <https://lpoa.com/about-us/governing-documents/>.

Some Current FAQs

Method:

- All Residents get a paper notification in the UPS mail with a link and passcode for their household.
- Residents will also get an email notification to their email address on file, giving them a link to the website.
- Residents login online and vote one time.

Safety: The Vote-Now.com company is not allowed to speak directly to residents regarding the current election. If there are questions about the account, residents should always contact the front office.

Eligibility: All members in good standing are eligible to vote. This means if you are not suspended (for having 12 points or more in a year), or 60 days in arrears on your HOA dues, then you are eligible. The list of members is sent to the Vote-Now at the beginning of the voting period. Data for ineligible voters is sent from the LPOA Accounting Manager to Vote-Now.com, on the last day of voting, to ensure the data is as up to date as possible.

Election Results:

Vote-Now will tabulate the results 2 days prior to the Annual Meeting, and they are overnighted in a FedEx package to the office, to be received the day before the Annual Meeting. The Package will be opened in public view of the crowd.

OTHER NOTES:

EXISTING LPOA POLICIES REGARDING ELECTIONS

POLICY NO. 3: COMMITTEES

4. Election Committee:

The Board shall appoint an Elections Committee no later than three (3) months prior to the Annual Meeting. The Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, who may not be a Director, and members, none of whom shall be candidates for office. It shall be the duty of the Committee to:

- (a) provide supervision of the nomination and election of Directors in accordance with procedures adopted by the Board;*
- (b) assure timely announcement of election date to membership;*
- (c) ensure at least one candidate has been nominated for each expiring seat on the Board;*
- (d) ensure distribution of absentee ballots;*
- (e) certify all ballots and proxies;*
- (f) certify and announce election results to membership.*

POLICY NO. 21: ELECTION & BALLOTING PROCEDURES

RECORDS RETENTION

Prior to the Association contracting the Electronic Voting Process (2015), all ballots and proxies were stored in a manilla envelope inside the ballot box for one year, or until the completion of the next election cycle. Then the documents were shredded.

Currently, all electronic data is stored for 12 months in the servers of Vote-Now.com, starting with the end of the voting period date.

PRIVACY

The Association Voting Process for Directors of the Board is a private and confidential process. The Association assures all our members that no member or group of members will gain access to the electronic data.

Who voted and how they voted is not any member's concern other than the member that voted.

No member will have the right to access these records for any reason. Vote-Now.com by contract and by professional standards is not authorized to communicate with or disclose data to any member of the Association.

The only electronic data that anyone will ever see is the actual final results of the election which is sent to the Chairperson of the Election Committee via Fed-Ex in a sealed envelope which is immediately shared with the entire Association at the Annual Meeting and Social Media.