

Mission and Bylaws

Riverside Community Caucus

WHAT IS THE CAUCUS

The Riverside Community Caucus (Caucus) is a diverse non-partisan group of registered voters, residing in the Village of Riverside, Illinois, convened to identify and endorse qualified candidates for local elective offices. The Caucus has existed for over ninety (90) years and has been known variously as the Riverside Caucus, the Caucus, or the Riverside Community Caucus, among other names, over this period.

I. MISSION OF THE CAUCUS

The mission of The Riverside Community Caucus is to encourage and facilitate a stable village government. We strive for a politically and geographically diverse membership and adhere to the following principles: a village government free from partisan politics and special interests; term limits for elected officials; and an open and transparent assessment of the leadership qualities of potential candidates. Village leadership is a responsibility shared across the community, rather than controlled by a minority. Prior to village elections, members gather to identify, qualify, and endorse those in our community who would make the best candidates to meet the needs of our village and its residents.

II. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CAUCUS

A. The Caucus. The Caucus shall consist of:

1. An unlimited number of resident voters who meet the qualifications of membership and demonstrate a commitment to the caucus process.

B. Membership

1. Qualifications
 - a. Resident of Riverside.
 - b. Registered Voter.
 - c. Payment of dues.
 - d. Commitment to the mission of the Caucus by attending meetings, supporting public forums and being engaged in the election process.

C. Area Members

The Caucus strives towards equitable member representation from each of the geographical areas hereinafter described. The Caucus Chairperson, with the

advice and consent of the Caucus Board, shall appoint a member in each area to the position of Area Coordinator.

D. Support of Candidates

Caucus members are encouraged to support the Caucus-endorsed candidates by gathering petition signatures, displaying yard signs or hosting meet-and-greets, among other possible activities.

III. CAUCUS BOARD, OFFICERS, COORDINATORS AND COMMITTEES

A. Composition

The Caucus Board shall be seven (7) in number and will include as Officers a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer (these comprise the Executive Committee). Additionally, the Community Events Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, and Membership Coordinator will serve on the Board. No current local, county or state-wide elected government official shall serve on the board. The Executive Committee shall oversee all Caucus activities and represent the organization as required; ensure the organization operates within the Bylaws and other governance policies as well as any federal and state requirements; and collect and maintain all critical records of the organization.

B. Selection

The Officers will be current members of the Caucus and shall be elected by the Caucus.

C. Term

The Officers and Coordinators will serve in office for terms of four (4) years. Board members shall be limited to two (2) consecutive terms in any given office.

D. Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy on the board, the membership shall be immediately informed, and actions shall be made to fill the position as soon as possible.

E. Duties

The duties of the Officers follow:

1. **Chairperson** (Executive Committee). The Chairperson shall:
 - a. Call any meeting of the Caucus at least twice a year and others as needed.
 - b. Call any meeting of the Caucus Board as is necessary.
 - c. Conduct all duties necessary to carry out the functions of the Office and the Caucus as specified herein.

- d. Call meetings of the Recruiting Committee and the Caucus to recommend candidates for the village Board.
 - e. Be a signer on the bank account.
- 2. Vice Chairperson** (Executive Committee). The Vice Chairperson shall:
- a. Assist in carrying out the duties of the Chairperson, including conducting any meeting or business as requested by the Chairperson.
 - b. Act as a liaison to the civic organizations regarding Caucus activities.
 - c. In the event of the Chairperson vacating the office, the Vice Chairperson will fulfill the remainder of the term, with approval of the Caucus.
- 3. Treasurer** (Executive Committee). The Treasurer shall:
- a. Be responsible for maintaining the financial accounts for the Caucus.
 - b. Provide financial reporting to the Caucus quarterly.
 - c. Pay any bills within the course of normal Caucus business. Any bills outside of the normal course of business, shall be paid with the approval of the Chairperson.
 - d. Collect dues from the members of the Caucus.
 - e. Work with the Membership Coordinator to maintain a list of paid members in good standing. The list will be shared with Chairperson and the Caucus.
- 4. Secretary** (Executive Committee). The Secretary shall:
- a. Record the minutes of Caucus and Board meetings.
 - b. Maintain and preserve all previous recorded minutes of the Caucus and Board meetings and any such information as requested by the Chairperson. Minutes of the general Caucus meetings will be made available to membership upon request.
 - c. Send cards/flowers as appropriate.
- 5. Community Events Coordinator.** The Community Events Coordinator shall:
- a. Coordinate Caucus civic activities as directed by the Board.
 - b. Plan and execute the Caucus Candidate Forum in the fall of even-numbered years, with input from the Recruiting Committee and the Board.
 - c. Plan and execute other public events or meetings, at least quarterly.
 - d. Coordinate Caucus participation at village community events to solicit new members and build visibility for the mission and work of the caucus, with input from the Membership Coordinator.
- 6. Communications Coordinator.** The Communications Coordinator shall:
- a. Coordinate the Caucus communications, including all social media.
 - b. Submit announcements (to the media) seeking prospective names from the community and the Caucus for review to fill village offices.

- c. Submit for general dissemination in a local newspaper publication or elsewhere other Caucus related information as directed by the Caucus Chairperson.
- d. Prepare newsletter to membership and other communications as needed.

8. Membership Coordinator. The Membership Coordinator shall:

- a. Monitor the membership of the Caucus.
- b. Maintain the membership data base.
- c. Distribute information concerning Caucus Membership as directed.
- d. Record attendance at Caucus meetings, maintain attendance records and report attendance issues to Area Coordinators.
- e. Recommend new qualified area residents to the Caucus as members.
- f. Oversee the Area Coordinators.
- g. Area Coordinators shall:
 - i. Coordinate Caucus activities in their area.
 - ii. Assure that there are sufficient members in good standing from their area.
 - iii. Contact their area members regarding Caucus meetings and participation.
 - iv. Contact area members with attendance issues. Should issues not be resolved, matter will be elevated to the Board.
 - v. Recommend new qualified area residents to the Caucus as members.
 - vi. Assist Membership Coordinator in any updates for area members.

F. Committees:

The Board may establish ad hoc committees to help accomplish any purpose established by the Caucus Board and inform the membership of its composition and purpose (e.g. Strategy Committee, Bylaws Committee).

IV. GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

A. Village Officers:

The elected offices in the village consist of the President and six (6) Trustees.

B. Representation:

It is the intent of the Caucus that each geographical area of the village be represented by a Trustee insofar as is practical. However, this intention shall not be construed to require candidate selection be dictated by geography.

C. It is the intent of the Caucus that the President shall be selected, insofar as is practical, from among the active or past members of the Board of Trustees to insure that this important office is filled by an experienced individual with adequate knowledge of village laws and regulations, as well as administrative practices and procedures.

D. Term Limits:

It is the intent of the Caucus that maximum terms for each Office shall be:

- Village President – Two (2) consecutive full 4 year elected terms.
- Trustees – Two (2) consecutive full 4 years elected terms.

V. GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

A. Areas

The Village of Riverside will be divided into six (6) areas to help achieve and maintain geographical representation on the Board and Caucus. Village voting precincts within the Township, as determined by Cook County, will be combined to make up the six geographical areas.

B. Composition

The following six geographical areas are identified on the attached map:

1. Area 1 – precinct 1
2. Area 2 – precincts 3 and 4
3. Area 3 – precincts 5 and 7
4. Area 4 – precinct 8
5. Area 5 – precinct 9
6. Area 6 – precinct 10

VI. RECRUITING COMMITTEE

A. Committee

A Recruiting Committee shall be selected by the majority of the membership for the purpose of recruiting and interviewing candidates to the Caucus for elected village offices. No more than 2 members of the Recruiting Committee shall have joined the Caucus after the prior Consolidated Election. Ideally this committee will form in the late spring or early summer prior to the Consolidated Election.

B. Composition

The Recruiting Committee will consist of eight (8) to fourteen (14) Caucus members as follows:

1. One (1) non-voting, rotating member of the Caucus Board, appointed by the Executive Committee.

2. No more than two (2) members from each of the six (6) geographical areas, unless as needed for a quorum. Area chairs shall have first consideration; other members shall be drawn randomly from a list of volunteers for each area.

3. One (1) former elected Village Board of Trustees official, previously supported by the Caucus and not seeking election, selected by the Recruiting Committee Chairperson, to serve as an advisor to the Committee.

4. No active Village Board of Trustees member shall serve on the Recruiting Committee.

5. Recruiting Committee members shall serve for no more than two (2) consecutive elections.

C. The Recruiting Committee Chairperson

The Recruiting Committee shall choose its own chairperson.

D. Duties

The Recruiting Committee will adopt its own rules and procedures, and receive, consider, and interview prospective candidates for village office.

E. Disclosure/Conflicts

Recruiting Committee members must disclose any family or financial relationships with a prospective candidate and step down from the committee for the remainder of the process. If membership drops below the minimum number, the Caucus Chairperson shall appoint additional members.

F. Interviews and Public Forums

The Recruiting Committee shall encourage residents in their areas to consider running for office, interview with the committee and submit a candidate sheet/application. All candidates shall be invited to participate in a public forum (see VIII C).

VII. VOTING PROCEDURES

The following voting procedures shall be in effect for the Caucus meetings:

A. General Voting Requirements and Procedures

Except where otherwise provided in these Bylaws, a quorum (being 30% of Caucus members) shall be necessary for the conduct of any general meeting provided for herein, and a majority vote of those members present at any meeting shall be required for the acceptance or approval of any action taken at said vote. For Caucus Board meetings, a quorum shall be a majority of the board and shall be necessary for the conduct of any such meeting.

B. Online Voting

To conduct necessary business when no general meeting is forthcoming, an online voting procedure can be used if called by the majority of the Caucus Board. Voting rules as stated above in article A. will apply. The majority of those members who have voted shall be required for the acceptance or approval of any proposed action. Online voting may not be used for Caucus Board elections, Recruiting Committee membership, dissolution of the Caucus or Village Board candidate endorsement voting.

For those without access to online voting, a paper ballot will be provided.

C. Voting for Village Office Candidates

1. One week after the public forum or as soon thereafter and in closed session, the Caucus will meet to discuss the candidates. To be able to vote for candidates to endorse, a member must have joined the Caucus at least one year prior to the next Consolidated Election. For the vote to be held, either 30% of the membership or 50%+1 of the members attending the public forum, whichever is greater, must be at this meeting. Members will vote to endorse the number of candidates for which there will be open positions (e.g. if there will be three Trustee positions open, the membership will vote for three candidates).

2. Voting will proceed following ranked-choice voting methods. This voting system is designed to achieve proportional representation in a multi-seat race.

a. Members will be provided with a printed ballot bearing the name of each candidate. They will rank their preference for the candidates, submitting one ballot which will be counted multiple times.

b. In the event that the Recruiting Committee presents a group of prospective candidates equal to the number of open Board positions, the Caucus may, at its discretion, elect to approve the candidates by a straight yea or nay vote.

c. Voting shall be by secret ballot (unless the candidates are selected as provided by VII C2 (b), above). After the voting begins, no more ballots will be given to latecomers.

d. If a complete group of candidates is not selected at the first voting meeting of the Caucus, and the Recruiting Committee is directed by the Caucus Chairperson to reconvene, then all prospective candidates will be presented again simultaneously with new recommendations to the Caucus.

e. In the event that the group of candidates submitted to vote is not approved by a vote of the Caucus, the matter shall be referred back to the Recruiting Committee for further consideration and recommendation to the Caucus.

Thereafter, a new meeting of the Caucus shall convene to receive and act upon a new group of candidates.

f. There will be no nominations from the floor.

D. Other Voting Situations

1. Removal of Caucus Members

The Caucus Board, via 2/3 majority vote, may remove any Caucus member for conduct that is detrimental to the mission of the organization.

VIII. CAUCUS MEETINGS

A. Overview

When the Caucus Chairperson calls a general Caucus meeting, the agenda for it will be provided in advance. Notification of any meeting will be provided to all members at least one week prior to such meetings.

B. Meeting Rules

The Caucus Chairperson will preside at and monitor Caucus meetings. The Caucus Chairperson will be guided by Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised), except where they are inconsistent with these Bylaws and any other rules of procedure adopted by the Caucus.

C. Public Forum

In even years, the Community Events Coordinator in conjunction with the Recruiting Committee and the Caucus Chairperson shall convene a Caucus public forum. All candidates interviewed by the Recruiting Committee, qualified pursuant to the Caucus bylaws (e.g. Riverside resident, registered voter), will be asked questions by a moderator from a list generated by Caucus members and members of the public.

IX. Dissolution of the Caucus

1. Should there be reason or cause to dissolve the Caucus, a meeting of the current Caucus membership shall be necessary and require a quorum of 50% + 1 of current membership to convene; such meeting may not be conducted electronically; and any motion to dissolve the Caucus will require a majority of those present to vote for approval.

2. In the event that a quorum cannot be achieved at such meeting, the Board may elect to conduct this dissolution process by mailing a request to each current Caucus member. A majority of current members (50% + 1) will be required to authorize dissolution.

X. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by the Caucus in accordance with Article VII. A.

Revised: 10/22/2019