



#### 2024 May Update

Dear Neighbors,

The Caucus Committee is pleased to continue to serve Lake Forest residents and fulfill the 90-year-old Caucus' mission in the upcoming 2024-25 Caucus year to find, vet, and recommend the best qualified, unbiased volunteers to serve in Lake Forest municipal government.

An Interim Public Meeting will be scheduled in the near future at which the Caucus Committee's recommended 2024-25 Officers shall be presented for election to Caucus membership. The date, time, location, and agenda of this meeting will be communicated soon. More information about the decision to hold this interim meeting is on the Caucus [Linking page](#) on the Caucus website [HERE](#). This page will be updated from time to time as needed, for your ongoing reference.

The Caucus Committee is pleased to welcome its recently elected 2024-25 Caucus Committee volunteers. We thank them for their willingness to serve the residents of our community. These recently elected members will be installed at the Caucus Meeting following the Interim Public Meeting.

Please contact the Caucus (either publicly or privately via a Private Public Sheet) if you are interested in being considered for District 6 or T15 School Board.

May we all continue to enjoy this wonderful spring weather in beautiful Lake Forest.

Regards,



**May 4, 2024**

Yesterday the Caucus Committee announced they would hold a second election seeking approval for the Officer slate. This was certainly encouraging news, since Lake Forest Caucus bylaws state that the Officers must be approved by the General Members who vote at the Spring Meeting. Also, a letter from Attorney Ed Mullen was referenced, written on behalf of a group of concerned General Caucus Members who asked that it be delivered to the Committee. How did we get here? Why is an attorney needed to goad the Committee into following the bylaws?

In 2011, the Lake Forest Caucus Committee changed its organizational status with the State of Illinois to become a Political Action Committee (PAC) after Illinois election laws changed. The registration as a PAC was not approved by the General Membership but did not seemingly affect the workings of the Committee. After the change took place, the Caucus Committee continued adhering to the bylaws, hence establishing reliance, or a legal contract, with the General Membership (the registered voters of Lake Forest). However, this did not stop the Committee from ignoring the majority vote and declaring two of three recent elections as advisory.

The trigger that set-in motion the uncovering of this organizational status change was the disenfranchisement of residents who attended the November 2022 Annual Meeting Election. It was then that the Caucus Committee first informed the residents who voted that the election was merely advisory. This decision spurred many residents in Lake Forest to ask: "How can they do that? How can they not honor their membership's vote?" As it turns out, the answer was simple. It's because since 2011, every bylaw is advisory and can supposedly be ignored under their status as a PAC. In a PAC, only the Chair (President) and Treasurer have decision-making powers. What is shocking is that the Caucus Committee neglected to tell us they were relying on their status as a PAC to decide the vote was advisory.

Did anyone know about this dramatic change designed to exclude every General Member's voice and vote? It would certainly be a surprise to anyone who voted against

the proposed bylaw amendment to eliminate our Caucus voting rights, the Caucus Preservation Act (CPA). If the CPA had passed, it would have closely aligned the bylaws with the Caucus's PAC status. There would have been no need to explain why the General Members' votes were advisory because they would have simply ceased to exist. As noted earlier, Caucus bylaws serve as an agreement or contract between the General Membership and the Caucus Committee. Unfortunately, the Committee has breached that contract twice by asserting election outcomes were "advisory". When an agreement is breached, notice must be given to the offending party.

Many concerned citizens have had conversations with Caucus Committee officers and members, urging them to follow bylaws and restore public confidence in the system. When the Committee ignored those requests and set about installing their Officer Slate without the approval required in the bylaws, the only recourse left was legal action. Thus, the need for an attorney.

Many of us hope to restore our Caucus Committee. We want it to act in accordance with the practices and traditions that have been in place for almost 70 years, and suggest it begins with:

- Filing the Lake Forest Caucus as an organization with legally binding bylaws.
- Put on the mail-in ballot for Caucus Committee Members all candidates who submit their names for consideration that year, taking away the Committee's control over who is on the ballot and enabling the General Members to select their representatives from all interested parties.
- Amend the bylaws to ensure all residents have a voice in the decision-making of the Lake Forest Caucus, by providing that:
  1. All ballots are presented with a Yes/No option for each candidate.
  2. Elections are held, honored and all results accepted.
  3. Criteria for what to do when NO votes occur, including:
    - i. Presenting new candidates and holding another election until all candidates are accepted.
    - ii. Presenting and promoting all candidates to the community, prior to the election for public acceptance.
  4. Third-party oversight is instituted for all Caucus elections.
- Adopt an oversight committee to ensure the Caucus Committee is acting in the best interests of the residents of Lake Forest in all practices and procedures.

Ultimately, the success of any system depends on the actions of its leaders. The Caucus Committee cannot keep us guessing. Will they adhere to the bylaws, or will they invoke their PAC status and ignore them? Is this the type of representation we want? We deserve? This isn't what we thought our Caucus Committee was or would

ever become.

Unless the Committee is willing to adopt changes necessary to restore trust and inclusion with their membership (us), we will have a disconnected government with residents becoming ever more resentful and distrustful of those who hold such unchecked and unilateral power in our community.

-LF4T