

## OPA Election Timeline and Reference Guide

### January 15 – February 15: Call for Nominations Period

- *Central Office:* OPA staff direct the solicitation of nominations for eligible elected offices (President-elect [annual], Finance Officer [every 3<sup>rd</sup> year], APA Council Representative [every 3<sup>rd</sup> year]) via blast email to full OPA members, messages to various OPA listservs, and OPA publications.
- *Candidates:* Individuals must receive a minimum 20 nominations from full OPA members to become a certified candidate. Individuals are permitted to solicit for nominations via OPA listservs. Nominations may be submitted to Central Office via email, phone, fax or mail and must be received by February 15.

#### February 15\*: Candidate platforms due

- *Candidates:* must submit a platform, biography and photo to Central Office by February 15. Platforms may be no longer than two pages, size ten font.

### February 15 – March 15: Election Preparation Period

- *Governance/Staff:* The OPA President, President-elect or Executive Director meet with candidates to review responsibilities to ensure the candidate feels comfortable fulfilling required duties.
- *Central Office:* OPA staff prepare a standard format mailer for full members who do not have e-mail addresses (approximately 75) and work with programmers to publish the online voting site which the majority of voters use to cast their ballot.

#### February 22\*: Candidate platforms available online

- *Central Office:* OPA staff send a blast email to full OPA members (approximately 1,300) announcing the availability of candidate platforms within their personal member accounts. This email includes the option to request a paper ballot on or before March 14.

#### February 22\*: Call for member questions on OPA-LINK and OPA-NEWS listservs

- Candidates may also submit questions.

**March 1\*:** Elections chair will select up to 5 member questions for candidates to provide written responses and distribute to candidates

**March 8\*:** Candidates will provide written answers to the member questions

**March 15\*:** *Central Office:* Candidates answers will be posted on the OPA website with their platforms. A reminder will be placed on the OPA-LINK and OPA-NEWS listservs that these are available.

#### March 15\*: Paper ballots mailed

- *Central Office:* OPA staff mail election packets (platform, bio, paper ballot, return ballot envelope and instructions) to full members who either do not have an email address or requested a paper ballot.

## **March 15 – April 15: Election Period**

*Online Voting opens at 12:00 a.m. on March 15 and closes at 11:59 p.m on April 14.*

*Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 15 to be counted.*

- *Central Office:* OPA staff receive paper ballots, monitor electronic voting progress and send blast emails accordingly reminding OPA members to vote. [Note: Voting results are confidential until the programmer delivers the final count to OPA staff. Staff are always able to view whether members have voted, but never have access to voting results.]
- *Candidates:* Individuals may campaign on their own time and using their own resources, but are NOT permitted to solicit votes via OPA listservs per OPA regulations. Candidates may purchase a list of postal addresses at a discounted rate from OPA for the purpose of campaigning. Email addresses are not available for purchase. Candidates may use their personal email lists to campaign and provide links to their website.

### **April 15\*: Online voting report**

- Online voting system programmers send the official electronic voting report to two different Central Office staff members.
- *Central Office:* OPA staff certify and tally paper ballots. Upon receipt, the Director of Operations certifies the paper ballots, which require both a printed name and a signature on the outside of the return envelope to be valid, by confirming the sender is a full OPA member in good standing. The unopened envelopes containing the certified ballots are then given to the Executive Director, who opens the envelopes and tallies the votes. This procedure ensures both redundancy and a separation of duties within the voting tabulation process. Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 15, so ballot counting typically continues for the following four business days after to ensure all votes are counted.
- *Governance:* The current OPA President notifies all candidates of the election results.

### **April 22\*: Election Results Announced**

- *Central Office:* Pending receipt of final paper ballots and notification of candidates, OPA staff sends a blast email notifying members of the election results.

*\*Some dates are subject to change if they fall on the weekend or a holiday.*