

**Background Information – Discussion re WRAC Alternate Reps
(Item 7.1 on the 4/29/24 meeting agenda)**

1. Current Bylaws provisions (reps to the WRAC Board and Committees):

The WRAC Bylaws provide, in Art. II:

“Section 5. Representatives and Alternates.

Each Member Organization shall choose one Representative and one Alternate according to rules determined by each Member Organization. The Representative (or in the absence of the Representative, the Alternate) shall be empowered to cast a vote on behalf of the Member Organization at any WRAC Board Meeting. . . .”

“Section 6. Committee Representatives.

Each Member Organization shall choose one Committee Representative to any Standing WRAC Committee according to rules determined by each Member Organization. . . .”

See also Art. IV (“Board Representation”) and Art. VI (“Committees”), Sec. 2b (“Other Standing Committees”) – <https://westsidecouncils.com/bylaws/>.

2. Second Alternates.

As noted above, WRAC’s Bylaws currently allow for only one primary representative and one alternate to the WRAC Board; one representative is allowed for WRAC committees (consistent with the Bylaws, WRAC has for many years permitted an alternate, in addition to the primary, to be appointed to committees). Recently, two Member Councils (WWNC and WLASNC) have asked about the possibility of allowing additional *2nd alternates* to be appointed. This would require a Bylaws amendment. Factors that may be relevant include:

- Except for PPCC, no Member Councils allow for appointment of 2nd Alternate reps; very few even allow for *any* alternates (WNC and BCC allow for certain alternates; PPCC allows only for elected 1st and 2nd Alternate Area & At-large Reps but not for other appointed reps).
- Allowing Second Alternates to be appointed would increase the number of members entitled to participate at meetings (WRAC permits alternates to participate fully, except that they only vote if the primary rep is not present). Meetings of course would last longer if more reps were appointed and wanted to speak.
- If all 14 Member Councils each appointed a primary and two alternate reps, that would result in 42 reps who would be allowed to participate and “sit at the table” (both figuratively during Zoom meetings and literally during any future in-person meetings). It would be difficult if not impossible to find a venue large enough to accommodate this many WRAC reps, along with the government reps who normally attend WRAC meetings. This is something that PPCC has experienced at in-person meetings (2nd alternates and even 1st alternates often must sit in the audience as there is no room at the board table for so many representatives).
- Allowing appointment of so many additional representatives arguably places an additional burden on the minutes-taker and also on volunteers who handle WRAC administration and who must keep track of all representative appointments.

3. "Temporary / Substitute" Reps.

One Member Council (NWNC) advises that it has revised its own Bylaws to give its President discretion to appoint a substitute or temporary rep to organizations/alliances on which NWNC is a member (i.e., WRAC), when the NWNC's primary and alternate rep are both unable to attend a given meeting, i.e., this temporarily appointed rep would be similar to a 2nd alternate, except that the position would *last only for the one meeting*.

It does not appear that any other Member Council has such a Bylaws provision, or that any Member Council allows temporary/fleeting/"per-meeting" appointment of representatives to its own Board or committees.

WRAC's Bylaws also do not provide for or contemplate the possibility of ever-changing temporary reps. In effect, such reps would act as 2nd alternate reps, which the WRAC Bylaws do not allow. A WRAC Bylaws amendment would be needed to allow this additional, new category of rep. Other factors that may be relevant:

- Allowing a category of (essentially) fleeting reps may lead to confusion and uncertainty as to who, at any given time, in fact represents a Member Council and who has actual authority to vote on its behalf. It is also unfair to those Member Councils which do not have similar bylaws provisions and whose chairs/presidents are unable to make temporary rep appointments.
- Continuity may be lost with ever-changing temporary/substitute reps, who in most cases would presumably not be familiar with issues before the Board or committees and may require additional time during meetings for "catch-up" or clarification.
- Allowing appointment of ever-changing reps arguably places an additional burden on the minutes-taker and also on volunteers who handle WRAC administration and who must keep track of all representative appointments. All Member Council reps are listed publicly on the WRAC website (maintained by WRAC volunteers, currently the WRAC Vice-chair and Secretary) and reflect the names of those reps to WRAC who have been appointed and are expected to serve for more than one meeting (i.e., relatively permanent positions); it is impossible for WRAC's administrative volunteers to list ever-changing reps.

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