

Bylaw Change required by TFRW Convention

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Please note my new e-mail address above for TFRW business. Thanks.

With the campaign season already heating up, you need to refresh your awareness of the provisions in the TFRW Bylaws regarding campaigns and candidate endorsements in contested Republican Primary races.

Your club bylaws are required to state as policy that “the Local Club, its President and its Campaign Activities Chairman shall not endorse or work for any candidate for public office in contested Republican Primaries, Primary runoffs, and/or Special Elections.” I trust your club bylaws comply with this provision and that you will abide by it.

Further, Article IV, Section 9, A, Removal of Local Clubs states: “Causes for Removal: #1 Failure to comply with the bylaws of the Texas Federation of Republican Women and the National Federation of Republican Women; #4 Endorsing a candidate for public office in a contested Republican primary;” and “#7 Publicly endorsing or working for a known candidate of another party in a partisan or non-partisan race where one or more Republicans are in the race; or endorsing a candidate in a contested Republican Primary, runoff, or special election by the club, its President, or Campaign Activities Chairman. If the President or Campaign Activities chairman violates this policy, it shall fall to the Local Club to remove her from office. Failure to do so will result in the removal of the club from the Federation.”

Presidents, please remind your officers and members of these provisions and follow them.

At the TFRW Biennial Convention in El Paso in November, 2007, the following TFRW Bylaw change was adopted by the delegates and needs to be incorporated into your club’s Bylaws. The underlined portion is the new addition. The explanation is below with suggestions.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 2. A local unit shall include the following provisions in its bylaws:

G. A statement that defines the eligibility of a member in order to vote in the club officer elections.

In other words, you must put a provision in your club’s Bylaws that defines when a member is eligible to vote in your club’s election of officers. You may define that eligibility as you wish. It is up to your membership.

An example of wording you might use:

To be eligible to vote in club elections, a member must have paid her dues at least 30 days prior to the election and must have attended at least one meeting.

The explanation for requiring this provision is that the club itself needs to be aware of situations that can arise and should decide for itself what it considers reasonable. This decision stems from several clubs having had bad experiences for lack of provisions of eligibility.

For example, one long-time member decided that she didn't like the slate of officers nominated by her club's Nominating Committee and knew she couldn't change it from the floor by herself. So she gathered a group of her friends who were not members and took them to the meeting. They each joined that day and voted in the election, nominating and electing themselves from the floor, thus, taking over the club.

Another situation arose when several new people joined, participated in a contested election, and later were found to be ineligible to be voting members because they were already members of another Federated Republican Women's club.

A waiting period before eligibility to vote would have alleviated both of these problems.

Perhaps you are not concerned about either of these situations happening in your club. You can set the terms of eligibility however you wish. Whether or not you are concerned, you must put a provision for eligibility in your Bylaws as now required by the TFRW Bylaws.

Your second step, after your club makes this change, is to send your amended Bylaws to me for approval.

Also, the National Federation Convention delegates raised National dues for individual members to \$8. If the actual amount of club dues is in your Bylaws, you will have to change that amount or absorb the cost. Take this opportunity to remove the actual amount from your Bylaws and put it in your Standing Rules, which are much easier to change.

An example of wording you might use:

Primary membership dues shall include club dues, state dues, and national dues.

The club will be a member of the Texas Federation of Republican Women and the National Federation of Republican Women by paying the required dues for its members to each organization.

Suggestion: Since you will be voting on a Bylaws change, why not appoint a committee to read your Bylaws carefully, looking to see if you need to make any adjustments to them. Perhaps you are doing something differently now, but never took the time to change your Bylaws to reflect it. Take this opportunity to review your Bylaws and make sure they are a sound, working guide for your club.

Please call me if you have any questions.