

Butler By-Law Subcommittee – Summary of Proposals

7/14/2008
Butler Committee
Meeting

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Outline

- Schedule for Proposed Amendments
- Elections
 - Timeline & Overview
 - Eligibility
 - Logistics
- Procedures
 - Removal of Committee Members
 - Vacancies
 - By-Law Amendments
- The Committee
 - Officers & Duties
 - Assistants, Interim Officers
 - Residents

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Schedule for Proposed Amendments

- July 14: Discussion of concepts at Committee meeting (residents notified July 7)
- End of July: Draft of new by-laws sent to Committee
- Aug meeting: Discussion of submitted by-law text at Committee meeting (residents to be notified)
- Mid-Aug: Text of by-law amendments e-mailed to residents and notice of upcoming vote
- Sept meeting: Committee votes to approve/disapprove by-law amendments

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Elections: Timeline

- Annual general elections at December meeting
 - Held before end of Fall semester, after Tuesday after Thanksgiving (while everyone is still here)
 - New residents have moved-in and have time to attend Committee meetings
 - Serve about half of the term before housing priority is determined
 - Term extends into the next year to use the housing priority and cover move-in/Fall activities
- Special election for Chair at November meeting
 - Enables existing Committee members to run & compete for chair without losing the chance to re-run (and campaign) for another position (and we don't lose experienced members)
 - Takes office at the end of December meeting with other newly elected officers
- Ad-hoc elections to fill vacancies as needed

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Elections: Overview

- In-person elections at a monthly committee meeting
 - Ensures voters are more informed
 - All candidates can present campaign statements to the voters
 - Residents provided advanced notice (3 weeks in advance)
 - Can maintain tiered eligibility rules for candidates to fill positions
- A single secret ballot for all Offices (except Chair)
 - Can only be a candidate for one office
- Candidates
 - Can declare candidacy in advance (to get publicity) or at the election meeting
 - Can change position at the meeting before voting begins (if present)
 - Need not be present at the election meeting
 - Advanced notice to residents of incumbents and other candidates who have declared in advance

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Elections: Eligibility – Voters

- Voter eligibility
 - Residence: Must be a Butler resident
 - Experience: Attended at least one monthly meeting in the previous 12 month period
 - Includes previous year's general election but not the current election meeting
 - Ensures that voters have shown some minimal interest in the committee, yet all residents have the opportunity to vote with little burden
 - Prevents candidates from simply bringing all of their friends to the election meeting to outvote other residents
 - Attendance: Must be present at the election meeting
- Applies to all elections
 - General election, Special election for Chair, Ad-hoc elections

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Elections: Eligibility – Candidates

- Tiered eligibility (for most Officer positions)
 1. Resident having experience of attending 2 meetings in past year
 2. Resident without experience
 3. Non-resident having experience of attending 2 meetings in past year
 4. Non-resident without experience
- Tiers for External Relations Rep.
 - Within each tier, students have priority over others
- Tiers for Chair
 1. Resident who served on the committee for the past full term
 2. Resident who served on the committee for any 6 month period
 3. Resident with any past experience serving on the committee
 4. Residents who have attended 2 meetings since last Chair special election
 5. Non-resident with any or no experience

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Elections: Logistics

- Outgoing Chair presides unless running themselves
 - Select an additional Election Proctors to count votes
 - All candidates may observe the counting
- Balloting with Instant Runoff Voting
 - Makes elections with >2 candidates more fair
 - Voters rank all candidates by preference or choose to "Disapprove of All Candidates"
 - Candidate must have a majority to win, and must have more votes than "Disapprove of All Candidates"
 - If no single candidate gets a majority of 1st preferences, the candidate with least votes is eliminated and their ballots go to the voter's next preference
- Selecting multiple winners (for garden co-coordinators)
 - Run IRV once for 1st winner
 - Run IRV again for 2nd winner using the same ballots/votes, with the first winner eliminated in the preference list

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Removal of Committee Members

- Stage 1: Impeachment motion
 - Committee member(s) can motion at any regular meeting, with specific charges
 - Accused Officer can defend himself/herself
 - Committee votes by secret ballot and requires a majority of Officers present to pass impeachment
 - If impeached, accused and all committee members notified within 1 week and an eviction vote held at next meeting
- Stage 2: Eviction vote
 - Reminder of charges, and impeached Officer can speak
 - Vote to evict by secret ballot; requires 2/3 majority of ALL Officers to pass (regardless of those present)
 - If successful, there is a vacancy and ad-hoc election occurs

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Vacancies

- Created when an Officer
 - Resigns, moves-out, or graduates
 - Or in advance in anticipation of the change
 - Is not replaced in an election (e.g. no one runs/wins)
 - Is removed from office
- Chair can immediately appoint an Interim Officer
- Ad-hoc election scheduled for the next monthly meeting
 - With at least three weeks notice to residents

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Amending the By-Laws (in progress)

- Submitted in writing by majority of the Committee or by a petition of 10% of residents
- Voted on at the next meeting (twice)
 - Publicized to residents at least 1 week in advance
 - 1st vote: Committee votes (requires 2/3 vote of ALL officers)
 - 2nd vote: All residents present at the meeting vote
- Committee-submitted amendments
 - If both votes pass – approved
 - Otherwise – fails.
 - Should committee be allowed to put it to a referendum?
- Petition-submitted amendments
 - If both pass – approved
 - If any fail – referendum (committee may also include 1 or more modified versions to be voted on in parallel)
- Amendment/modifications made after initial submission?

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The Committee: Officers

- Merged 12 positions into 8 to even-out workloads yet keep a full committee:
 - Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Applies for GSG and other funding (from GSG rep)
 - External Relations Representative
 - Attends GSG meetings (from GSG rep)
 - Attends Housing/Shuttle meetings (from Housing rep)
 - Communications Secretary
 - Takes meeting minutes (from Secretary)
 - Maintains website & e-mail lists (from Webmaster)
 - Produces move-in Bugle newsletter (from Bugle Editor)
 - Garden Co-coordinator (2 positions)
 - Reservations Coordinator
 - Manages Community Room, dollies, ladder, etc (from Community Room Coordinator and Dolly Coordinator)
 - Social Chair
 - Assist Treasurer in applying for funding (from GSG rep)

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The Committee: Others

- Formal Assistants
 - Appointed by Chair with specific duties and a title. May report to a Committee member.
 - Serves until removed by Chair or next general election
 - Included in Committee communications
 - Has no vote on Committee and is not a Committee member
- Interim Officers
 - Appointed by Chair until an ad-hoc election can be held
 - Fills vacancies and performs duties of the Office
 - Has no vote on Committee and is not a Committee member
- Residents
 - Not part of the Committee
 - Lives in Butler and has name on the lease
 - Is a graduate student or spouse/DP
 - 18 years of age or older

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The Committee: Duties – General Duties

- Attend each monthly Committee meeting and help with all social events
 - Unless a valid conflict arises
- Complete your term of office
 - Or give 3 months notice
- Maintain detailed written instructions on how to best complete the position's duties
 - How to replicate your work
 - Archival information of past activities
 - Reviewed by the Chair for completeness
- Train your successor
- Encouraged to recruit others to assist you informally

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The Committee: Duties – Chair

- Organize and oversee meetings
 - Scheduling, notification, set agenda
 - Run meeting & break ties
- Act as a spokesperson for the Committee
- Respond to residents concerns & discuss with Committee
- Oversee Committee members and Committee business
- Manage elections
- Fill in as needed (including unforeseen issues)
- Review by-laws annually

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The Committee: Duties – Treasurer

- Prepare annual budget & confirm University funding
- Apply for external funding
- Manage University and outside bank accounts
 - Monitor & review accounts/balances
 - Written report at each meeting
 - Maintain sub-accounts for Committee & Garden
 - Process reimbursements (with receipts)

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The Committee: Duties – External Relations Representative

- Liaison with external bodies
 - E.g. GSG, Facilities, Housing, Transportation, Grad School, Public Safety, OIT
- Attend meetings and report back to Committee
- Present Committee/resident concerns
- Write and submit annual Major Maintenance requests
- Regularly observe community facilities
 - E.g. laundry room, computer clusters, playgrounds, picnic areas

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The Committee: Duties – Communications Secretary

- Communicate information to residents
 - Basic information and Committee activities
- Maintain the website & e-mail lists
- Take minutes at meetings
 - Post on website and in community room
- Publish & distribute move-in newsletter
- Help social chair publicize events
- Annually solicit & collect feedback from residents

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The Committee: Duties – Garden Co-coordinators

- Organize & distribute garden spaces and collect fees
- Work with Facilities on garden maintenance
- Maintain & replace tools & equipment
- Oversee composters
- Co-coordinators should each have a plot in the Butler Community Garden and be active in gardening

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The Committee: Duties – Reservations Coordinator

- Coordinate use of the Community Room, dollies, ladder, and any other committee-owned equipment
- Keep reservations calendars
- Take reservations & coordinate keys
- Check equipment and room condition
- Maintain the equipment

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The Committee: Duties – Social Chair

- Organize and coordinate all social events sponsored & organized by the Committee
 - Register events with the Grad School
 - Assist Treasurer to apply for funding
 - Procure food, drinks, supplies
 - Setup, run event, cleanup (recruiting help from Committee and residents)
- Liaison with residents who organize events for the community

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