



Summary Proposed 2023 Amendments to the Bylaws of the Alaska Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America

The Alaska Chapter (Chapter) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) adopted its current bylaws in 2011. Since that time, PRSA has amended its bylaws several times, most recently in November 2022. These revisions reflect PRSA's efforts to streamline its governance processes and become a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community for public relations professionals. As a division of PRSA, the Chapter is proposing amendments to its bylaws to align and comply with these national changes.

The most significant proposed amendment addresses two conflicting rules regarding when the Chapter may amend its bylaws. Currently one section states amendments must be voted on during the Chapter's annual meeting, while another section states amendments may be voted on at any membership meeting. The Chapter board aims to retain the latter provision, allowing leadership to respond more quickly to any changes to the Society's bylaws, rather than being restricted to only one amendment period per year.

The Chapter is also updating its bylaws related to management of the board of directors. These proposed amendments create and empower an executive committee, allowing senior leadership to respond more nimbly to issues that arise between board meetings. In addition, the ethics officer position is included as a member of the executive committee, demonstrating the Chapter's commitment to ethical practices and behavior. This management structure has been used for a while and the proposed changes to the bylaws make the Chapter's current practices official.

One amendment improves the process for nominating board candidates, making it more equitable for candidates and voters. Under current bylaws, 30 days before the annual meeting, the Nominating Committee announces the slate of candidates and electronic voting opens, with an option to offer write-in candidates. Members may also wait to vote in person at the meeting. During the meeting, members may nominate other candidates and those names are added to the ballot. This presents a disadvantage both to the newly nominated candidates and to the voting members. Specifically, new nominees are only subject to a vote by those at the meeting who have not already voted, while members who voted electronically prior to the meeting do not have an opportunity to vote on any write-ins or newly nominated candidates.

Bylaws should define the governing rules of an organization while policies and procedures guide the day-to-day operations. Several proposed amendments involve relocating any operational activities from the bylaws into policies and procedures. The goal of the Chapter leadership in the coming year will be creating new, or consolidate existing, policies and procedures into a single, concise document.

Finally, the proposed amendments include housekeeping changes to clarify board membership and length of service; correct spelling, grammar and typos; standardize style, formatting, capitalization and punctuation; and incorporate neutral, inclusive language. The Chapter uses the AP Stylebook as a writing and editing guide.