

Proposed Constitution Changes

IRTA CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE REPORT by Roger Hampton, IRTA Constitution Committee Chair

The Constitution Committee continues to be diligent in its efforts to communicate with all IRTA members the important proposed changes to the IRTA Constitution and the rationale for each proposal. Efforts have been made to be open and transparent, as well as inclusive. Throughout the year, the proposed changes have been distributed utilizing various resources such as the IRTA website, virtual conferences, videos, Constant Contact, Good Dog News, and IRTA Action. To help understand the proposals and rationales, opportunities for Q & A were available during conference break-out sessions.

Beginning with the first committee meeting on July 20, 2022, our focus has been on current realities and what is necessary to keep our Association relevant and growing. Our goal is to remain a premier, vital association for current and future members. The realities we addressed include, but were not limited to local units disbanding, vacant committee positions, changes in transmission of information, attitudes of next generation retirees regarding associations in general, assessment of an unfilled Regional Director position and status of IRTA Regions, percentage of members no longer living in Illinois, and the inequality of all members' right to vote. These observations dictated the committee's need to address imperative changes.

To accomplish this task, each committee member put aside personal reactions to "change," and embraced possibilities and opportunities that would evoke a positive result for IRTA's future. Not only did this exceptional team of committee members attend and participate in committee meetings, but they also spent hours on "homework" in preparation for each meeting. Each member had to discard their personal set of likes and dislikes, and now each IRTA member must do the same. We simply cannot consider just ourselves, or our own local, region, or area – we must focus on what is best for IRTA as a state organization. We must be inclusive by allowing all IRTA members to have the right to vote – including those living in counties that no longer have a local unit and the increasing membership of over 20% who reside outside Illinois.

You can be assured this committee took their task of proposing changes very seriously. Now, you are asked to take time to consider these proposed changes. Please take advantage of opportunities to learn more about the background, intent, development, outcome, and basic idea surrounding each proposal.

2023 PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Rationale for Constitution Committee's Amendment Recommendations:

With the ever-changing world, the Association is in need of change to best serve the IRTA membership. The need to make the Association more efficient and attractive to new members is important. Therefore, the Constitution Committee proposes the following Constitutional Amendments.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP – DUES

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: *Remove Article III, Section 4., it will be corrected and added to the IRTA Standing Rules at the Spring IRTA Board of Directors meeting.*

~~Section 4. Any proposal to increase the Annual, Dues Deduct, and Life Active membership dues and the Associate membership dues must be reviewed by the Membership Committee before it can be presented to the delegate assembly at the convention. The results of the Membership Committee review shall be presented to the delegate assembly with the proposed increase.~~

RATIONALE

The Constitution of an organization contains the fundamental operating principles that govern its operation. The Standing Rules establish specific rules by which the group is to function.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Wendy Wieggers, to support the proposed amendment to Article III – Membership – Dues. The motion passed.

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ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VI, Section 1., A.; Prior to the biennial convention, active members shall have the ability to: (1.) Elect Officers.

RATIONALE

Allowing ALL active state members the ability to vote for Officers provides inclusiveness for both in-state and out-of-state members. All members would have the ability to vote electronically or by paper ballot. Details of the election process would be added to the Standing Rules.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by John Flaherty, to support the proposed amendment to Article VI – Meetings, Section 1., A. The motion passed.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VI, Section 1., A.; Prior to the biennial convention, active members shall have the ability to: (2.) Elect Area Representatives in their respective Areas.

RATIONALE

Allowing ALL active state members in their respective Area the ability to vote for Area Representatives provides inclusiveness for both in-state and out-of-state members. All members in their respective Areas would have the ability to vote electronically or by paper ballot. Details of the elections process would be added to the Standing Rules.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Donna Sargent, to support the proposed amendment Article VI, Section 1., A. The motion passed.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VI, Section 1., A.; Prior to the biennial convention, active members shall have the ability to: (3.) Amend the Constitution

RATIONALE

Allowing ALL active state members the ability to vote for proposed constitutional amendments provides all in-state and out-of-state members the ability to determine how their Association is organized and operated. All members would have the ability to vote electronically or by paper ballot.

Information, both pro and con, would be provided to the membership to be used in each member's decision making. This information would be provided to the members in a like manner that the Secretary of State provides Illinois residents on proposed Illinois State Constitutional Amendments.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by John Flaherty, to support the proposed amendment Article VI, Section 1., A. The motion passed.

(If these proposed amendments pass, Article VI Meetings Section 1., B, C & D would be removed.)

ARTICLE VII – BOARD OF DIRECTORS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VII, Section 1., The Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers and Area Representatives. Immediate Past President, Regional Directors, and Chairs of standing committees

Remove Section 4. Executive Committee.

Remove Executive Committee from Article VII title.

RATIONALE

The current 33-member Board of Directors structure was reviewed by an outside consultant and was seen as largely titular with most consequential issues being decided at the Executive Committee level. Therefore, we propose a Board of Directors consisting of Officers and Area Representatives. Area Representatives would still provide area representation on the Board of Directors.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Donna Sargent, to support the proposed amendment Article VII Board of Directors and Executive Committee. The motion passed.

If this amendment should pass, the following amendment is proposed:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VII, Section 3., A.; The Board of Directors shall have a minimum of four (4) meetings annually.

The word "Reimagine" is written in a large, orange, cursive-style font.

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RATIONALE

The proposed amendment to have the Board of Directors meet a minimum of four (4) times per year instead of two (2), is to be more informed on a regular basis. Meeting only twice a year was not enough to keep up on what is happening in Springfield.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by John Flaherty, to support the proposed amendment Article VIII – Divisions. The motion passed.

ARTICLE VIII – DIVISIONS

If the proposed amendment to remove Regional Directors from the Board of Directors, the following amendments are proposed:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article VIII, Section 1., The divisions of the Association shall be areas, regions, and units.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by John Flaherty, to support the proposed amendment Article VIII – Divisions. The motion passed.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Remove Article VIII, Section 3. Regions., parts A, B, and C. Section 3. Regions: A. The Board of Directors shall divide the areas into sections of comparable size to be known as regions and shall determine regional boundaries. B. A Regional Director shall be selected from each region to serve a term of two (2) years and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. The position of Regional Director shall be rotated among the units within the region in alphabetical order. C. No region shall consist of a single unit.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Marjorie Sucansky, to support the proposed amendment Article VIII – Divisions. The motion passed.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article IX, Section 1. Standing committees shall be: Finance, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, and Leadership Development.

RATIONALE

Changing the Nominations committee to the Leadership Development committee is more descriptive of the committee's purpose.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Jo Anne Nelson, to support the proposed amendment Article IX – Committees. The motion passed.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT: Article IX, Section 3. A. The Finance Committee and the Leadership Development Committee shall consist of a chair and one (1) voting member from each area. The Legislative, Member Benefits, and Membership Committees shall consist of a chair, the corresponding local unit chair, and any active member who wishes to serve.

RATIONALE

By having a unit representative(s) on the Legislative, Member Benefits, and Membership committees, each unit will have representation on the committee. Communication to the unit will be immediate.

Using Zoom meeting technology, we can broaden involvement in the Legislative, Member Benefits, and Membership committees by including local unit chairpersons and other active members with an interest in the committee's work. This would promote more membership involvement, which is one of the overriding needs that have been identified by members of the Constitution Committee.

SUPPORTED BY IRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Motion by Roger Hampton, seconded by Jo Anne Nelson, to support the proposed amendment Article IX – Committees. The motion passed.

Editorial edits would be necessary if the proposed Constitutional changes are passed.

"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

- Charles Darwin