

**CITY OF COLUMBUS UNIVERSITY AREA COMMISSION ELECTION RULES**  
**(Revised April 2011)**

**1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 1.1 "Board" shall mean the Board of Elections of the University Area Commission. Board membership shall consist of a minimum of five who shall be selected by the President and approved by the Commission at the regular Commission meeting in December. Board members may not be candidates for office in the same year. The Board members may elect the Board Chair from Board membership.
- 1.2 Where not otherwise specified, all filings or actions shall be done at the headquarters set by the Board under 3.1.
- 1.3 When a date is set as a deadline, and that date falls on a Saturday or a Sunday or a Monday Holiday, then the deadline shall be advanced to the next week day. In all cases the day shall end at 4:30 pm on such date.
- 1.4 The four districts shall be:
- 1.4.1 First (NE) north of 16th Ave. and east of High St., except that which is part of district 2.
- 1.4.2 Second (NW) north of Woodruff Ave. and west of High St. and a portion east of High St. west of Indianola south of Arcadia and north of Patterson.
- 1.4.3 Third (SE) south of 16th Ave. and east of High St.
- 1.4.4 Fourth (SW) south of Woodruff Ave. and west of High St.

**2. CALENDAR**

- 2.1 A Public announcement of the Elections shall be given within five days of April 1st of each year by the Board of elections and be available at the North side Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, in a paid newspaper of general circulation and via Internet.
- 2.2 Prior to April 1st, the Board shall prepare the following official documents:
- Petition forms;
  - Candidate's Biographical Sketch form;
  - Declaration of Write-in Candidate form;
  - Official Ballot forms;
  - Voter Register form;
  - City of Columbus Legistar form; and
  - City of Columbus Area Commissioner Profile.
- 2.3 All official board documents shall be made publicly available no later than 5 days after the public announcement of the election.
- 2.4 Petitions, City of Columbus Legistar form, City of Columbus Area Commissioner Profile and biographies shall be filed no later than 4:30 pm on the third Thursday before the election at a specified Board location.
- 2.5 An official declaration of write-in candidacy shall be filed in person at the specified board location with the Board no later than 4:30 pm the Monday prior to the election.
- 2.6 Candidates may withdraw from the ballot no later than 4:30 pm on the Thursday prior to the election. Upon notice of a candidate's death or disqualification, the Board shall remove the candidate's name from the ballot.
- 2.7 Advertising shall be taken down no later than the second day after the election.
- 2.8 Challenges to the election must be filed, in writing to the Headquarters, no later than 4:30 pm on the eighth day after the election.
- 2.9 The Board shall certify the results of all unchallenged seats no later than the tenth day after the election.
- 2.10 Ballots, registers and other papers are to be shredded after July 31<sup>st</sup> and no later than August 31<sup>st</sup> in the year of the election, unless there are challenges to be resolved and the ballots shall be destroyed after their resolution.

**3. ELECTION OFFICIALS**

- 3.1 Board of Elections shall:
- 3.1.1 Publicize 'Headquarters';
- 3.1.2 Make the final decision on voter challenges upon appeal from the Polling Place Officials, as set forth in Rule 8.3.5; and;

3.1.3 Resolve all election challenges and election rule violations. Resolutions shall be determined as one of the following:

1. No violation
2. A discrepancy with no penalty, to be in writing to all persons involved
3. A violation with penalties set forth in Rule 11, Penalties

### 3.2 Polling

3.2.1 Place Officials shall: Maintain order at the Poll;

3.2.2 Maintain the ballots and registers, secure and deliver them only to their proper successors at the Poll or the Board;

3.2.3 Initially determine the validation of voter challenges; and

3.2.4 Enforce the Rules at the Poll.

## 4. PETITIONS

4.1 The Board shall provide a copy of the official petition form to each person desiring to become a candidate.

4.2 Petition forms shall provide a space for the printed name and address of the signer, his or her signature, and the date. The name and address of the candidate shall appear prominently on the top along with a signed statement that the candidate will observe the Election Rules and the By Laws. The notarized affidavit set in Rule 4.6 shall be at the bottom. All petitions shall be on an official petition form.

4.3 The candidate's notarized official petition form and official biography form shall be filed by the date set in Rule 2.4.

4.4 A petition shall be signed by a minimum of 30 individuals who are qualified as set forth in 7.4.

4.5 The candidate shall circulate the petition in person. The Board upon written declaration may grant waivers by the candidate with a disability. Request for such waiver shall be acted upon by the Board within seven days.

4.6 Each petition shall contain the affidavit: "(candidate name), hereafter known as the candidate, states that the candidate is the circulator of the petition and that the candidate is a legal resident of the district in which the candidate is seeking election as of April 1st of the election year and is qualified to vote for him or herself. The candidate did witness each and every signature appearing hereon."

4.6.1 The notarized official petition form with original signatures completed notarized petition must be returned to headquarters by date set in 2.4.

4.6.2 Only petition forms with original signatures will be accepted.

4.6.3 A qualified voter may sign any number of official petitions, but only for candidates in the same district for which they are qualified to vote.

4.7 All candidates shall submit to the Board their biographical sketch form by the date set forth in Rule 2.4. The biographical sketch form shall be used by the Board for creation of a candidate profile sheet for use at polling places and on the official UAC website. The biographical sketch form shall be no more than 200 words.

4.8 Official declaration of write-in candidacy shall: State the person's name, address and phone number; be signed by the person; contain a statement that the person shall observe the Election Rules and the By Laws and shall be notarized by a legal notary of the State of Ohio; shall be filed at the Board by the date set in Rule 2.5.

## 5. CANDIDATES - CAMPAIGNING

5.1 No person shall campaign within 200 feet of any Poll during election hours. Amplified announcements shall not be audible within 200 feet of Poll.

5.2 All posters or other advertising shall be removed by the date set in Rule 2.7.

5.3 No voter shall be compensated in any manner in exchange for a vote or for refraining from voting by any candidate or representative thereof.

5.4 No candidate shall knowingly and with intent to affect the outcome, make or publish or allow to be made or published any material false statement.

## 6. **BALLOTS**

- 6.1 There shall be a separate Official Ballot form for each district. The district number shall be printed prominently on each. A sample ballot shall be posted prominently at each polling place.
- 6.2 Each ballot shall list all candidates who have filed valid petitions for that district followed by a line for voters to enter the name of a write-in candidate. A box or line shall precede each candidate name and the write-in candidate line.
  - 6.2.1 If there is more than one opening or vacancy in a district, the ballot shall clearly state the maximum number of votes that may be cast.
  - 6.2.2 The ballot shall clearly state that each person voting shall make an "x" beside the name of each candidate or write-in candidate they wish to vote for.
- 6.3 The candidates' positions on the ballot shall be alternated throughout the ballots.
- 6.4 Candidates may remove their names from the ballot by filing a letter with the Board before the time set in Rule 2.6.
- 6.5 No organization or party name shall appear on any ballot.
- 6.6 The Board shall ensure that all ballots are properly accounted for after printing: recording the total printed, used, spoiled, and remaining.

## 7. **VOTING**

- 7.1 The Polls shall be open from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm.
- 7.2 Each official Poll shall be supplied with a sealed Ballot Box and a Voter Register form for each district. A candidate profile sheet shall be available at each polling place. No list of write-in candidates is permitted at a polling place.
- 7.3 Persons shall vote by:
  - 7.3.1 Printing his or her name and address on the Voter Register form and signing it.
  - 7.3.2 Receiving a ballot for the district in which the voter resides.
  - 7.3.3 Placing a mark on the ballot in the box or line opposite the candidate(s) he or she supports.
  - 7.3.4 Placing the ballot into the Ballot Box.
- 7.4 The Poll officials shall require evidence of identity, age, and residency.
  - 7.4.1 All candidates and electors must provide identification and proof of residence in their district in which they intend to run or vote. Such identification may include, but is not limited to a valid driver's license, state-issued ID, or a university ID. Other identification may be accepted at the discretion of the majority vote of the board of elections, whose determination shall be final. Affidavits and other sworn statements, by themselves, shall never be sufficient. A statement of the identification provided by electors in instances in which the sufficiency is uncertain shall be written by the poll worker on the envelope in which the ballot is placed. The board shall determine the sufficiency of each identification before the envelope is opened. If it is the decision of the board that the identification is not sufficient, the envelope shall be retained unopened. Electors shall provide identification before they are permitted to vote. Successful candidates shall provide identification at the meeting of the commission in which the election results are reported and approved. Should it be determined by vote of the commission that the candidate has not established verification of residency, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes in that district shall be declared the winner.

At any time prior to the day of the election, any commissioner may dispute the residency of any candidate by so informing the board of elections. In such case, the board shall contact the candidate to verify residency.
- 7.5 No voter may cast more than one ballot. In such case, all ballots cast by that voter shall be disqualified.
- 7.6 Each table shall have no more than one qualified voter voting at one time.

## **8. CHALLENGES**

- 8.1 A Challenge shall be filed in writing by the date set in Rule 2.8.
- 8.2 The Challenge shall state the charge and the grounds. A demand for a recount shall be considered as a challenge, and shall be granted if the margin of victory is three votes or less than one percent, whichever is greater.
- 8.3 If a challenge at the poll is not to the satisfaction of all parties, then the polling place officials shall:
  - 8.3.1 Allow the voter to mark the ballot and seal the ballot inside a blank envelope.
  - 8.3.2 The sealed envelope is then placed in a second envelope and sealed.
  - 8.3.3 The facts of the challenge shall be written on the second envelope, together with the polling place officials' decision.
  - 8.3.4 The envelope containing the challenge ballot shall be deposited in the ballot box.
  - 8.3.5 Notation shall be made on the register that a challenge has been made. The board shall conduct a public hearing on all challenges in the shortest amount of time consistent with that required by law and the commission by-laws. At such hearing, witnesses and evidence may be introduced by the challenger and the voter or candidate challenged. The board shall reach a decision at the conclusion of such hearing and that decision shall be issued in writing.

## **9. COUNTING**

- 9.1 As soon as the polls have closed, the registers and sealed Ballot Boxes shall be delivered to the Board Headquarters.
- 9.2 The Board members shall then unseal the ballot boxes and count all ballots as follows:
  - 9.2.1 The Voter Register form shall be checked and the number voting in each district shall be recorded.
  - 9.2.2 Each ballot box shall then be opened, the ballots sorted by district counted, the number compared against the Voter Register form, and the votes counted.
- 9.3 No ballots cast for a person who was not listed on the ballot shall be counted unless they have filed an official Declaration of Candidacy with the Board as set forth in 2.5.
- 9.4 Ballots cast for those who are not valid and declared candidates shall be considered void ballots.
- 9.5 After the count has been completed, the Board shall maintain all ballots and Voter Register forms in a secure location until needed or until the date set forth in rule 2.10.

## **10. CERTIFICATION**

- 10.1 The Board shall certify the results and the names of the winning candidates to the Commission and to the Mayor by the day set forth in Rule 2.9.
- 10.2 A tie shall be broken by the flip of a coin, to be done by the Election Board Chairperson, in the presence of the candidates and two witnesses.
- 10.3 If there is more than one position to be filled in a district, the candidate with the largest numbers of votes shall receive the longest term of office. A tie shall be resolved by the flip of a coin.

## **11. PENALTIES**

- 11.1 The Board shall review all violations of these Rules and shall Report all violations to the Commission for determination of penalty.
- 11.2 A violation of these Rules results in either disqualification or the voiding of the election for that district and the scheduling of a new election at a time set by the Board. by vote of the full Commission, the disqualification of an otherwise successful candidate who has violated one or more of these rules may be held in abeyance until that candidate has come into compliance.
- 11.3 The Board may, at its discretion, refer any infraction to the City Attorney or the County Prosecutor.
- 11.4 Failure of the Board to comply with any Rules shall not, by itself, invalidate the Election.
- 11.5 Exemptions: Failure to comply with any Rules by any Election Board member or Commission member shall not invalidate any other part of these Election Rules.