

INC Executive Committee
John Riecke, Secretary
April 5, 2016

Report on the 2016 INC Presidential Election

Including Questions Raised by Delegates Regarding the Voting
System and Results

INC had its Annual Meeting on Saturday March 12th, at which elections for officers were held. A President, Secretary, and three At-Large members were elected but this report will focus exclusively on the election of the President, the form of the election, the counting of votes, and the result, as it was only this position's election for which questions were raised. The following facts are taken from the minutes of the March 14th, 2016 INC Executive Committee meeting, at which a detailed fact-finding session was held, with John Riecke presiding.

The Executive Committee meeting was called to order at 6:36 pm. In attendance were Ian Harwick, Jane Lorimer, Meg Schomp, Christine O'Connor, Maggie Price, Greg Kerwin, Lucia Brown, Margie Valdez, Joel Noble, Steve Nissen, Merce Lea, Bibi Alexander, John Riecke, and JJ Niemann. Of those in attendance, Ian, Maggie, Steve, Bibi, John, and JJ were voting board members.

Before any business began, Christine O'Connor, representing Lowry United Neighbors, requested that the matter of the Presidential Election be reviewed, as her membership and other delegates had questions regarding the election results and the methodology used to obtain them. She also noted at that time that she had researched the BIDs that had joined INC and confirmed that they were valid RNOs eligible for INC membership. Greg Kerwin offered to provide advice and assistance regarding an appropriate methodology for having the board review the election and its results, this to be in service of determining the validity of the outcome, in making sure that the board followed established and valid procedures for review, and in hopes of beginning a healing process for a divide that had opened between different factions of the delegation.

It was noted by JJ that he had spoken with Larry, and that Larry was not challenging the outcome but did want the election to be "[gone] over with a fine-tooth comb" to ensure all necessary steps were taken to produce a valid result. Christine also noted that the challenge to the result came from herself and not Larry. Greg stated that Article VIII of the INC Bylaws (2014) allows the board to run all affairs of the organization between delegate meetings, and that a quorum was present. He recommended that JJ should not participate in any review of the election due to his interest in the outcome and that JJ not preside over the portions of the meeting regarding those matters. JJ agreed that he would also like a review of the election. At this time a motion was made to have John Riecke conduct the meeting when the election was being discussed, which passed.

The first question went to Bibi, asking about her involvement. She said that she didn't tally the votes but was in possession of the ballots (kept in an envelope sealed since the election) and of the sign in sheets used on the day of the election. She also took checks for membership dues and applications from new members.

It came to be known through further discussion that Jane Lorimer, Merce Lea, Karen Taylor, and Jane Potts were in charge of the certification of eligible voters and of the counting of the ballots, as selected by Larry Ambrose acting as President in preparation for the meeting. Between Jane and Merce, they explained that they had people sign in next to their neighborhood association names and provided ballots to each signer. After all Delegates in attendance at the election were present they counted the number of names, which they believed totaled 94. They also recalled counting the ballots multiple times, including 45 for JJ, 42 for Larry, and 2 marked "Abstain". There was one claim that a Delegate lied in order to receive an extra set of ballots but it was confirmed that the extra set was not used and was returned after the meeting. It was noted by the body that some other delegates were said to have had two sets of ballots, but there was no suggestion offered that anyone voted twice.

At this point the matter of the roman numerals present on the cards was raised. JJ stated that acting as Secretary he had numbered the cards for the race prior to the election day in an effort to ensure validity of votes. Consensus was reached by the delegation that the idea did not work as intended, however that may have been, but that it was irrelevant to the outcome. The matter of a second packet of blue cards was raised. This second packet had been procured in case of a run off and JJ produced the second packet, unopened.

A motion was made to count the ballots, which passed. Ian, Margie, and Maggie agreed to count with Christine observing. The group left the meeting to do the count in another room. It was reported back that there were 45 ballots counted for JJ, 42 ballots counted for Larry, and 2 marked "Abstain". There were no blank ballots in the envelope kept by Bibi. All ballots were marked with the earlier noted roman numerals.

Christine requested for the record that it be noted that the 89 ballots counted by the Executive Committee presented a troubling question in regard to the 5 missing abstention ballots as verbally reported at the meeting. Jane stated that of the reported total of 94 votes announced at the meeting (45 JJ, 42, Larry, 7 Abstentions), the abstentions had been “backed into” based on the earlier count of sign ins, the 2 ballots marked “Abstention”, and that 5 votes were assumed to be abstentions (the difference between the number delegates signed in (94) and the number of vote cards turned in (89)).

Maggie moved that the sign in sheets should be reviewed and the valid signatures counted to determine if the number of delegates was or was not 94, which passed. Ian, Margie, and Maggie were joined by Steve, and left the room to review the sign in sheets and tally the valid signatures with Christine observing. It was reported back that there were 89 signatures but that of those 89, 3 were not valid voting Delegates, Greater Park Hill having signed in twice, and Jane Potts having signed in but having not been a voting Delegate. This reduced the number of valid voters to 86. It was postulated that Ray Ehrenstein may have voted but not had the opportunity to sign in, as he had arrived before the sign in sheet was setup in order to setup the meeting room. This was confirmed with Ray by phone, bringing the total number of valid voters to 87 (86 signatures plus Ray). At this point it was requested that JJ leave the room so that discussion could continue without fear of undue influence, and JJ respected this request and left the room.

At this time every question regarding the election has been put forward and the facts discovered. The matter of the BIDs has been resolved by Christine herself. The matter of the roman numerals has been determined to not affect the outcome, but did confirm that only valid ballots were used. The matter of the extra blue cards has been put to rest, as they were present and in an unopened package. The matter of the valid signatures has been reviewed and a revised total arrived at. The matter of the reported discrepancy between reported votes and ballots returned has been resolved, stemming from a miscount of the sign in sheets and an assumption that the difference should be assumed to be "abstain" votes. This leaves us with 87 valid voters and 87 ballots indicating a presidential candidate.

We therefore feel we can certify the results, and do so by unanimous vote.