

AAFP Election Nomination Process: Good, Bad, or Indifferent

Background – What Was Approved

- 2023 Congress of Delegates adopted a new process for elections.
- Nominating Committee created and charged with identifying annual leadership needs of the AAFP, potential candidates, soliciting applications and providing a slate of qualified candidates by March 31.
- Nominating Committee composed of a chair (appointed by Speaker and Board chair), 3 non-voting ex-officio members (Board Chair, Resident Board Member and Chair of Commission on DEI); 3 voting members selected from past and current COD Delegates and Alternates; 3 members selected from past AAFP Directors; 3 members at large, directly nominated by the Chapters; 3 members from the past three years of NCCL Advisory Group members. (Staggered terms). No nominating committee member shall run for office for at least 2 years after their service on the committee.
- Chapter can nominate someone who was submitted but not included in the slate, but at expense of nominating chapter.
- Any member can self-nominate or be nominated from the floor of the COD.
- No candidate activities shall be permitted prior to the release of the Nominating Committee Slate.
- AAFP provides the following support for all candidates nominated by the Nominating Committee other support by AAFP entities (chapters, MIGs, etc.) is discouraged:
 - Candidate orientation and development program
 - Candidate website
 - Campaign email to all Delegates/Alternates
 - Online Q&A session for any announced candidates
 - Meet the Candidates session at the COD
 - Candidate hospitality event at the COD
 - Candidate form at the COD
 - Reimbursement for travel to AAFP Leadership Conference and COD.
- Much of this now included in Standing Rules of the Congress.

Candidate Campaign Activities and Rules (Approved by Board in Feb. 2024)

- Campaign website available in late May includes: photo, personal statement, bio, CV, listing of candidates' social media (if desired), and a link to a virtual Candidate Q&A forum
- AAFP facilitates one mass email from each candidate to all delegates/alternates.
- Candidates will also receive contact list for all delegates/alternates but are limited to **one** unsolicited outreach per delegate/alternate via **each** modality (direct mail, email, and phone call.) NOTE: most candidates did a mailing, but I am not sure if they used other modalities at all. AAFP did not allow them to get the chapter presidents' list or the chapter executives' list, which you were able to do in the past.
- Candidate hospitality event funded entirely by AAFP. Any gifts or handouts must be of a trivial expense.
- Candidates can attend caucus meetings and reference committee meetings and discuss issues but must refrain from campaigning or soliciting votes.
- No chapter or individual outside of the candidate themselves may provide direct or financial support to a candidate beyond what is described in campaign rules and includes making available resources for speech writing/coaching, meeting attendance, mailings, giveaways, etc.
- Attendance at chapter or regional meetings should be for the sole purpose of participating in the meeting and should not entail any campaign activities.

Other Developments

- At some point, each candidate was given a budget of \$1,000 from AAFP for their campaign activities, including giveaways at hospitality booth, any mailings they did, signage at hospitality booth, etc. This is all a candidate could spend on the campaign. AAFP did pay for candidates to go to Annual Leadership meeting and COD separate from this.

- For candidate hospitality event:
 - Any candidate gifts, giveaways, or handouts may not be made available until the Candidate's Hospitality Event.
 - Giveaways must be of a trivial expense, purchased solely with funding provided by AAFP.
 - Any booth décor had to come out of AAFP funding.
 - Additionally, candidates are allowed to purchase an individually customized banner with their name, chapter, and desired office from a standardized offering of options (cost also comes from AAFP funding).

Overall Results

- Generally positive.
- Had six candidates for the first time in a very long time (close to a decade). And had a competitive election for the first time in at least three years. Note: Some candidates were not moved forward by Nominating Committee so more than six candidates applied for the Board.
- It was clear that some candidates did not truly know AAFP COD processes, etc.
- One non-delegate/alternate did win.

Chapter Perspective

- AAFP allowed chapter staff to go to a candidate orientation at ACLF/NCCL this year. Do not think they will in the future. Some chapters did, and some did not.
- Chapters did not get information about rules of engagement, etc. That only went to candidates directly.
- Odd position this year, particularly for President-Elect candidates, because chapters had been involved with them throughout the process in the past.
- There were some things that the Nominating Committee and the Board probably just had not considered going into this. As a result, there were some things that were decided on the fly.
- The change also impacted regional meetings – two of the three were before nominees were named.
- At times, I wondered if it would be good to have a one-pager indicating whether the chapter knows the person, etc., like they do for a commission candidate, but that too could put chapters in a tough position.
- It is fairly clear that chapters will still be involved in some way in certain circumstances. But it does cut down on the cost pretty extensively. However, if a chapter has a leader that they want to run, it is hard to imagine the chapter not providing any guidance at all.