Official Call to Meeting

2017 Business Meeting of the New York State Nurses Association
New York City
Wednesday, Oct. 11 – Thursday, Oct. 12, 2017
Anne Bové, RN, Secretary, New York State Nurses Association

RECOMMENDATION #1 – CREATE DELEGATE CONVENTION, EXPAND CONGRESS AND MAKE IT WITH VOTING BODY, REMOVE STAGGERED ELECTIONS FOR STATEWIDE OFFICES AND ALIGN THEM WITH DELEGATE ELECTIONS. SHORTEN CERTAIN OFFICER AND BOARD MEMBER TERMS AND EXTEND TERM LIMITS FOR THOSE AFFECTED.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERS, DUES, AND AFFILIATES

Section 1. Members and Dues
A. Membership
1. Any nurse is eligible to become a member provided the nurse has paid annual dues for the three preceding years or is a new graduate student member of the state association representing a student chapter.
2. Members of the state association shall be entitled to vote in all elections and shall receive the periodicals of the state association.
3. Members shall be entitled to a specific number of delegates and endorsements based on the number of members in their local bargaining unit.
4. Members of the state association shall be entitled to a specific number of delegates and endorsements based on the number of members in their local bargaining unit.

B. Dues
1. The annual dues for members shall be $50.00.
2. The annual dues for life members shall be $100.00.

C. Affiliates
1. Organizational Affiliates shall be entitled to:
   a. One (1) delegate for every 50 members of the organization.
   b. One (1) delegate for every 100 members of the organization.
2. The annual dues for organizational affiliates shall be $100.00.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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   b. One (1) delegate for every 100 members of the organization.
2. The annual dues for organizational affiliates shall be $100.00.
members or portion thereof over 200.

2. Retired members shall be entitled to a specific number of delegates, calculated as follows:
   a. One (1) delegate for every 50 retired members from each region or portion thereof up to the first 200 members.
   b. One (1) delegate for every 100 retired members from each region or portion thereof over 200 members.

3. Individual members not part of a Local Bargaining Unit (LBU) shall be entitled to a specific number of delegates, calculated as follows:
   a. One (1) delegate for every 50 members up to the first 200 members or portion thereof over 200 members.
   b. One (1) delegate for every 100 members or portion thereof over 200 members.

C. Alternate Delegates

Alternate delegates may be elected in accordance with procedures developed by the Board of Directors. Alternate delegates who attend convention in the place of an elected delegate will have all the rights and responsibilities of elected delegates.

D. Nomination and Election Procedures

Delegates shall be nominated and elected in accordance with procedures developed by the Board of Directors.

E. Delegate Credentialing Procedures

The Board of Directors shall establish policies and procedures governing the credentialing of delegates and alternate delegates.

F. Term of Office for Delegates

The term of office for delegates shall be three (3) years, commencing upon their election at the annual Convention in August of 2018, delegates will be elected at the annual Convention or special meeting, as the case may be, and shall be appointed to the call of any properly submitted proposed bylaws amendments.

ARTICLE XVI – QUORUM

Section 1.

Five members of the Board of Directors, one of whom shall be the president or first vice president, and not less than 200 delegates or members representative of designated geographic regions shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any annual Convention membership meeting of this association.

Section 2.

Seven members of the Board of Directors, one of whom shall be the president or first vice president, and not less than 250 delegates or members representative of designated geographic regions shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any special Convention meeting of this association.

ARTICLE XVII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

These bylaws may be amended at any annual Convention membership meeting or special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the delegates or members present and voting.

All proposed amendments shall be in the possession of the secretary of this association at least seventy-five days before the date of the annual Convention membership meeting or special meeting, as the case may be, and shall be appended to the call for such meeting.

Section 2.

These bylaws may be amended without previous notice at any meeting by 99% of the Convention voting body present and voting.

RATIONAL: This proposal creates a more unified, democratic structure of governance for NYSNA. It expands the representative nature of Congress, and invests it with the authority of Voting Body. Staying in the summer of 2018, delegates will be elected to represent their Local Bargaining Units (as well as retired and non-represented members) at the NYSNA Convention for a three-year term. The proposal protects principles of proportionate representation for the larger LBUs and also ensures that smaller facilities will have an important voice at Convention. This proposal will eliminate the current practice of having staggered elections for statewide offices. Although sitting Board members elected in 2016 will have their term of office cut short by one year in order to run all delegate and statewide elections at the same time in 2018, this abbreviated term will not count towards existing term limits. Thus, if adopted, this means that there will be an election in 2018 for every Officer and Board of Directors seat. Those elected in 2016, whose terms were set to expire in 2019 will be allowed to run for one additional term in the same office in 2018. If they are re-elected in 2018, they will be allowed to serve one additional full term in the same position and one additional full term on the Board.

RECOMMENDATION #2 – ELIMINATE ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR PRACTICE FOCUS GROUPS

ARTICLE VIII – PRACTICE FOCUS GROUPS

Section 6.

Each practice focus group shall have an executive committee composed of a chairperson, vice chairperson, and at least one member at large. The chairperson and one member at large shall be elected at the annual meeting in the odd year to serve for one year. The other two members shall be elected at the annual meeting in the even year to serve for two years.

Section 7.

a) Each executive committee shall be responsible for the business of the group.

b) Executive committee members will serve as the group’s representative on the NYSNA Council on Nursing Practice.

Section 6 – Terms

No member of the executive committee of a practice focus group shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office or a total of more than eight consecutive years.

Section 7 – Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of chairperson of a practice focus group, such vacancy shall be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors.

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of vice chairperson or member at large, the vacancy will be filled by appointment of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XII – NOMINATIONS

Section 8.

a) Officers do not have a real organizational role in the association and do not have a real organizational role in the association.

b) The committee shall be composed of five members.

c) The committee shall:

RATIONAL: The committee shall be composed of five members.

ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 3. Functions

a) Assume responsibility with regard to the association’s issues.

b) Review the bylaws of a nurses association concerning bylaws and proposed amendments.

c) The committee shall be composed of five members.

ARTICLE VI – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 4. Committee on Bylaws

a) The committee shall be composed of five members.

b) The committee shall:

RATIONAL: The committee shall be composed of five members.
Proposed amendments to NYSNA's bylaws

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serve as consultants to the Board of Directors in defining and interpreting the purposes of the NYSNA, as well as to
provide suggestions and recommendations in the areas of management, health care, and organizational issues.

b) consider issues referred by the Board of Directors or the Voting Body to constituents' distinctive nurses associations and to the Constituent District Nurses Association Assembly, and advise the NYSNA president and Board of Directors on those issues.

c) identify issues of concern to distinctive nurses associations.

d) identify mechanisms for strengthened district nurses associations.

e) communications between NYSNA and district nurses associations;

f) collaborative efforts of NYSNA and district nurses associations.

ARTICLE XII - NOMINATIONS

Section 3.

On or before February 1 of each year, the Nominating Committee shall distribute a Notice of Nominations to the members and the constituent district nurses associations, notifying them of the offices to be filled and the requirement that a candidate be willing to serve if elected. A Notice of Nominations shall also be carried in an official NYSNA publication.

ARTICLE XV - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 4.

Special meetings of this association may be called by the Board of Directors and shall be called by the president upon the written request of a majority of the constituent district nurses associations or not less than 100 members.

Section 5.

Notices of all annual and special membership meetings of this association shall be sent to each constituent district nurses association and to all members of this association at least thirty days before the first day of the meeting.

ARTICLE XVII - CONSTITUENT DISTRICT NURSES ASSOCIATIONS

Section 4.

The association, shall be recognized as constituent district nurses associations and to all members of this association at least thirty days before the first day of the meeting.

Section 5.

Notices of all annual and special membership meetings of this association shall be sent to the Board of Directors and the Board of Directors shall be called by the president upon the written request of a majority of the constituent district nurses associations or not less than 100 members.

Section 6.

A Notice of Nominations shall also be submitted to the Board of Directors.

Section 7.

Any constituent district nurses association which has been disqualified may be reinstated by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

RATIONALE: Under federal labor law, the autonomous nature of the separately incorporated Constituent District Nurses Associations, which appear in our bylaws as subordinate bodies of NYSNA, exposes NYSNA to legal liability. On the advice of our General Counsel, we recommend eliminating this potential liability by amending our bylaws to provide an alternative way for the CDNAs to work with NYSNA, if they elect to do so, as organizational affiliates in accordance with Article II, Section 2 of the bylaws.

Making NYSNA a stronger union

By Judy Sheridan-Gonzalez, RN
NYSNA President

From Buffalo to Brooklyn, the influence of corporations and profit takers is spreading across our healthcare system. NYSNA members are on the frontlines, protecting our patients, our profession, and the public’s access to care. Over the past five years we’ve made major changes to the way the union functions, improving our structure and activating thousands of nurses for the first time. But we have to do more.

As employers try to roll back hard-won job standards, as Congress’ right-wing moves to dismantle health insurance for millions, and while the Supreme Court threatens union stability, our biggest battles lie ahead of us. If nurses and health care workers are going to secure our own futures—and those of our communities—we’ll need the power that only a strong union can provide. This requires moving even more members into action and developing thousands more leaders.

Meeting the challenges

How can our organization become equipped to meet these challenges? In response to members’ needs and the reality that confronts us, our Board of Directors is recommending three important changes to the bylaws to ensure that NYSNA’s structure can rise to confront the tasks ahead.

The first, and most important, is creating a broad, democratic and transparent decision-making structure at the top of our union. We are proposing that, starting in 2018, members elect representatives from our local bargaining units to represent us in NYSNA’s highest governing body, our Convention. Every local bargaining unit will be guaranteed at least one delegate, with additional delegates elected, based on size.

To guarantee representation, delegates would be elected as follows: 1 delegate for every 50 LBU members up to 200, and 1 delegate for every 100 members over 200. So a facility with 120 members would elect three delegates; an LBU with 330 members, would elect six delegates, and so on.

This formula ensures universal representation, but allows smaller facilities to maintain an important voice in NYSNA. Active members not in an LBU would elect representatives based on this formula, as would retirees members within each region.

Recognizing that situations emerge that might create obstacles to attendance, alternate provisions are included to address this. The proposal also includes stipulations that would allow for adequate preparation, discussion and oversight of resolutions, motions and issues.

To avoid the cumbersome, confusing and costly practice of staggered elections, NYSNA delegates would be elected for three-year terms at the same time that Board offices would be filled. Thus, there would be an election for all Board of Directors seats and statewide officers, along with Convention delegates, in 2018. This practice would enhance voter turnout as members would be voting for people they know on a day-to-day level, along with Board members they may only have read or heard about.

Bylaw changes

This Bylaws proposal is similar to the way almost every union—including nurses unions—conducts business. Recommendations were formulated after years of studying other unions’ structures, talking with nurses from many states, and consultation with, suggestions by and support from LBU leaders throughout NYSNA, including officers from the Congress of Local Bargaining Unit Leaders. The Congress itself would be expanded and merged with the Voting Body under the proposal. Clearly, drawing hundreds more elected leaders into decision-making is an important step to strengthening NYSNA and building our collective power.

Two other important bylaw changes are being proposed. Responding to member concerns that PFGs need more time for discussion and less time for unnecessary bureaucracy, the Board recommends the elimination of officer elections in these groups. This would allow for the entire meeting to take on substantive practice issues.

The other measure proposed is a housekeeping one: to eliminate the Constituent District Nurse Associations (CDNAs) from our bylaws, as they are independent, autonomous organizations—and have been for a while. Their presence in our bylaws—a leftover from years past—exposes NYSNA to legal liability under federal labor law. This would allow the CDNAs—should they desire—to continue working with NYSNA as organizational affiliates.

We encourage you all to discuss these changes with your coworkers: at work, at LBU meetings and at inter-regionals as you prepare for this year’s meeting at the Javits Center—the place where NYSNA members overwhelmingly voted in the historic changes that moved us into the 21st century and made our union a name in the labor movement, in health care and among nurses throughout the world.