

# South Robertson Neighborhoods Council (SoRo)

## Election Procedures

### **1. ARTICLE I - ELECTION COMMITTEE**

#### Introduction

**All of the subsequent information pertains to the August 10, 2004 SoRo Election.**

The election committee (the "committee") shall be established at least 150 calendar days prior to the election.

SoRo shall hold its election every two years (2) for one-half (1/2) of the elected seats on the board. In no event shall any board member serve on the board for more than eight (8) consecutive years. Individual terms shall be no more than four (4) years. The initial board will choose even and odd numbers by lot. The seats of those who draw even numbers shall serve a term of two (2) years. The odd shall serve the full four (4) year term.

Election procedures shall be reviewed prior to each scheduled election by the election committee and submitted to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) for approval no later than 60 days prior to the election.

#### Election Day

The date of the upcoming election is **August 10, 2004**. The election will take place at Hamilton High School, during the hours of 3 pm through 8 pm. Hamilton High School is located on 2955 S. Robertson Blvd. between National Blvd. and Cattaraugus Ave.

#### Composition

The election committee shall be comprised of at least three stakeholders who are not applying as candidates for the board.

#### Responsibilities

This committee shall be responsible for establishing, overseeing, and implementing all activities related to the SoRo election including but not limited to the following:

- Designating the date, time and location of the election in compliance with the SoRo Bylaws.
- Preparing and distributing candidate information.
- Overseeing eligibility and verification of stakeholders and candidates.
- Overseeing notification and outreach of the election and processes

- connected with the election to the community.
- Coordinating third party administration of the election as necessary and ensuring the third party's work is complete.
- Preparing, or working with DONE to prepare, all materials needed for the election.
- Following up upon the conclusion of the election (e.g. announcement of results, storage of election records, post election evaluation of the election process.)
- Training volunteers

### Contacts

For information on the current SoRo election:

- Call 310-836-7979
- E-mail [soroelection@soro.org](mailto:soroelection@soro.org)
- Visit [www.soro.org](http://www.soro.org)

## **2. ARTICLE II - NEUTRAL THIRD PARTY**

The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles (LWVLA) shall be selected as the Election Administrator by the elections committee and approved by DONE. The Election Administrator shall be used to assist with the election process.

The Election Administrator shall be responsible for overseeing the administration of the election process, the facilitation of any candidate forums, monitoring the election process on election day, tallying votes, recounting votes if necessary, and verifying election results.

Contact information:

Jerry Kvasnicka  
League of Women Voters of Los Angeles  
RE: SoRo Election  
3250 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1005  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(818) 269-7759  
Fax: (213) 368-1615  
[jkvas@earthlink.net](mailto:jkvas@earthlink.net)

The City of Los Angeles Human Relations Commission (LAHRC) shall be the arbitrator in the event of challenges to the election.

Contact information:

Victoria Minetta  
Human Relations Commission  
RE: SoRo Election  
200 N. Spring Street  
City Hall, Room 1625  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 978-1660  
Fax: (213) 978-1668  
vminetta@mailbox.lacity.org

### **3. ARTICLE III - SoRo STAKEHOLDERS**

#### Stakeholder Definition

Membership in SoRo is defined as all individuals who live, work, own property, attend school and/or is members of congregations within the boundaries of this council (SoRo Bylaws 2.3). The Board may request reasonable proof and make reasonable inquiries to verify eligibility.

Members shall be eligible to vote at community meetings where a vote from the general members is needed. Only SoRo members are eligible to be elected to the SoRo Board of Directors.

#### Outreach to Stakeholders

To be fair and inclusive, efforts will be made to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the election proceedings and, to the best extent possible, have an opportunity to participate.

To the extent possible, materials will be produced and distributed in English and Spanish.

Outreach efforts shall be made to inform and solicit participation via the following methods at a minimum:

- Election notices will be placed at each of the SoRo designated posting locations at least 14 calendar days (**July 28**) prior to the election. At a minimum, these posting location include the following:
  - Malcolm Brown Insurance  
2861 S. Robertson. Blvd., LA 90034  
Contact: Malcolm Brown, (310) 280-0946
  - Robertson Recreation Center  
1641 Preuss Rd.

Los Angeles, CA 90035  
(310) 278-5383

- DeMers & Associates  
1836 ½ S. Robertson Blvd. LA 90035  
Contact: Laurence DeMers, (310) 836-0340
- Cosmos Upholstery  
1633 S. La Cienega Blvd. LA 90035  
Contact: Brian Wonderman, (310) 271-1280
- Horizon Showroom of Furniture  
8600 W. Pico Blvd. LA 90035  
Contact: Don Behrstock, (310) 652-7400

- Two mass distributions, provided by DONE, will be made to addresses within the SoRo boundary area using a walking distribution service. The first distribution at least 60 calendar days (**June 1**) prior to the election will seek candidate nominations. The second distribution, at least 7 calendar days (**August 3**) prior to the election, will be an election-day reminder.
- Announcements and flyers printed by DONE and/or SoRo, will be provided and packaged to be distributed BY SORO to media, schools, senior centers, religious congregations, businesses, libraries, non-profits, neighborhood groups, and city service agencies.
- E-mail blast distribution
- SoRo website: [www.SoRo.org](http://www.SoRo.org)
- Neighborhood signs

#### **4. ARTICLE IV - CANDIDACY**

##### Candidacy Requirements

Candidates are restricted from:

- Distributing ballots
- Counting ballots
- Monitoring the ballot box
- Voter registration
- Assisting voters engaged in the act of voting

The SoRo Board of Directors consists of 25 elected positions. The election committee must aim to achieve the following composition of the Board of Directors:

1. One resident from each of the nine zones within the SoRo area

- (9 seats)
2. Individuals who work at, manage, or own businesses in the SoRo area (6 seats)
  3. Members of congregations in the SoRo area (4 seats)
  4. Individuals who attend or work at schools in the SoRo area (2seats)
  5. At-large – individuals who live, work, own property, attend school and/or are members of congregations within the SoRo area (4 seats)

A candidate may not run for more than one seat on the SoRo Board

All stakeholders who wish to run for a position on the board must complete a Board of Directors Candidate Application. Only candidates who submit a Board of Directors Candidate Application shall be eligible to run, subject to verification of the submitted information.

The Board of Directors Candidate Application shall serve as written acceptance of stakeholder desire to run for a position on the board. See below for verifying candidate eligibility.

At a minimum, Board of Directors Applications and other election information may be obtained from the following:

- SoRo website: [www.soro.org](http://www.soro.org)
- E-mail distribution
- Los Angeles Public Library: 1719 S. Robertson Blvd. 310-840-2147
- Malcolm Brown Insurance (Mon. – Sat. 9am-5pm)  
2861 S. Robertson. Blvd., LA 90034  
Contact: Malcolm Brown, (310) 280-0946
- LA City Council District 5 (Councilmember Jack Weiss)  
822 S. Robertson Blvd. LA, 90035  
Contact: Susan Bursk, (310) 289-0353 (9am-5pm)
- LA City Council District 10 (Councilmember Martin Ludlow)  
1819 S. Western Ave., LA 90006  
Contact: Patty Anciano, (323) 733-8233 (9am – 5pm)

### Candidate Recruitment

The Board shall direct that a system of outreach be instituted to find and obtain nominees for the board. The purpose of this outreach is to put forth a reasonable effort to inform and give every member desiring to participate on the board an opportunity to become a board member. To that end, a period of at least 60 days prior to the election shall be given to find prospective board members.

The Elections Committee shall work with the Outreach Committee to assure that elections information is distributed throughout SoRo and, to the best of its ability, recruit candidates that qualify for all positions listed in the

### Candidate Information

Upon verification of the Board of Directors Application, all candidates shall receive the following information:

- Description of SoRo (info on SoRo history, mission statement, description of functions)
- *Requirements of Members of the Board of Directors*
- *Rules of the Road* (expected conduct at board meetings)
- SoRo Neighborhood Council Bylaws (certified by the City of LA)
- Map of SoRo boundaries and zones
- SoRo Election Procedures once approved by DONE
- Los Angeles City Charter Section 900
- Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils
- Any additional information that the election committee deems pertinent to the election process

The election committee will have copies of all the above information in a binder that is made available for any potential candidate to read at SoRo Board or election committee meetings, and pre-election candidate informational meetings. Candidates may review any or all of the available information prior to completing a Board of Directors Application.

The Board will include officer positions entitled: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Other officer positions shall be determined by the Board. Officer positions shall be filled by a majority vote of the board. Terms of the officers shall be two (2) years and subject to other terms in the bylaws.

### Verification

The elections committee shall review each and every Board of Directors Application before his/her name is placed on the ballot to verify that the individual meets the stakeholder and position qualification.

Board of Directors Candidate Applications shall include a line that requires the stakeholder to verify that all information is true and correct under penalty of perjury.

Upon receipt of a Board of Directors Candidate Application, the elections committee shall verify that the prospective candidate is a stakeholder by all of the following:

1. Use of a map to check that the individual's claim as a stakeholder falls within the SoRo boundaries or specific candidate geographic areas.
2. Use the Board of Directors Applications as written verification of eligibility to run for a board of director's position. And verify that the

candidate qualifies for the seat for which he or she has applied.

3. Make sure that the verification process used is simple and practical and that the same verification method is used consistently for all candidates regardless of how familiar a stakeholder may appear to be to the reviewer. (See Stakeholder Verification)

#### Disqualification

Candidates who do not meet eligibility requirements shall be disqualified. Candidates who are disqualified will be notified by way of phone or e-mail within 2 calendar days (no later than **July 23**) after the election committee receives his/her the Board of Directors Application. Notification shall include the specific reason why the candidate has been disqualified.

Candidates who are disqualified may submit a letter, fax, or e-mail received no later than **July 28** to the following address:

Jerry Kvasnicka  
League of Women Voters of Los Angeles  
RE: SoRo Election  
3250 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1005  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
818.269.7759  
Fax: (213) 368-1615  
[jkvas@earthlink.net](mailto:jkvas@earthlink.net)

Correspondence must include a specific rationale of why the stakeholder feels they have been disqualified in error along with any other pertinent information that will be of assistance in reconsideration of the matter.

#### Reconsideration

The League of Women Voters shall reconsider the candidate's request. A decision shall be made within **3 calendar days** of the receipt of the reconsideration letter (no later than **July 31**). The candidate and election committee shall be notified immediately by way of phone or e-mail of the decision.

The election committee shall complete the verification of all candidates by **July 31**.

### **5. ARTICLE V - APPLICATIONS**

Applications shall be accepted for at least 60 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the election.

Stakeholders may be self-nominated or nominated by other stakeholders.

Nominations shall be in writing in the form of a Board of Directors Application and shall be accepted beginning at least 60 calendar days **(June 10)** prior to the election.

All candidates must indicate in writing a willingness to accept the responsibilities of the position they wish to hold, their ability to conform to the SoRo Bylaws, their ability to adhere to all City requirements, their willingness to disclose personal interests, and to serve their designated term. The Board of Directors Application shall serve as sufficient written acceptance of the responsibilities of a board member.

Board of Directors Candidate Applications must be completed and submitted to the Election Committee no later than 21 calendar days **(July 21)** prior to the election.

## **6. ARTICLE VI - CAMPAIGNING**

Stakeholders who complete Board of Directors Application and have their eligibility verified by the election committee may officially begin campaigning.

### Candidate Materials/Contributions

Although no maximum or minimum amount will be set, it should be understood that all campaign costs should be reasonable.

### Candidate Statements

Each candidate shall be given the opportunity to write a 100 word or less statement that lists their attributes and explains to other stakeholders their reason(s) for wishing to serve as a SoRo board member.

Candidate statements submitted by e-mail to [soroelection@soro.org](mailto:soroelection@soro.org) at least 7 calendar days **(August 3)** prior to the election shall be made available for stakeholders to view at [www.soro.org](http://www.soro.org)

Candidate statements will be available to view at the polling location on election day.

### Campaign Tactics

Candidates may not use the City of Los Angeles Seal, City logo or letterhead on any campaign materials.

Candidates may not use the DONE logo or letterhead on any campaign materials.

Candidates may not use the SoRo logo on any campaign materials they produce.



Persons violating the above requirements will be asked to remove the SoRo logo, the DONE logo, and/or City Seal from their campaign materials.

Candidates should not engage in any type of character defamation (i.e. mud slinging), assault, or attack of any other candidate, nominee or stakeholder. Proof of the use of character defamation, assault or attack by a candidate can result in a challenge to their candidacy.

Other than casting a personal vote or attending the candidate forum, no stakeholder who is not working as a volunteer may loiter within 100 feet of the polling location. Persons violating this requirement will be asked to leave the polling site/area.

#### Candidate Information Session

An information session discussing candidacy protocol and SoRo Board of Directors information shall be held on **June 22** at Hamilton High School (2955 S. Robertson Blvd) from 7p.m. until 8p.m. It is encouraged that all prospective candidates for the Board attend.

#### Candidate Forum

At some point during the election, an informal candidate networking session will be held where candidates shall have the opportunity to informally interact with stakeholders and answer-questions.

## **7. ARTICLE VII - STAKEHOLDER REGISTRATION**

### Voter Eligibility

Stakeholders who meet the criteria defined in the SoRo Certified Bylaws (Article III) shall be eligible to vote on the day of the election.

Voting stakeholders must register on the day of the election by completing a stakeholder registration form prior to receiving a ballot.

To assure stakeholder status, all addresses related to the claimed stakeholder status shall be checked with a map to assure that the address is within SoRo boundaries.

### Voter Verification

Stakeholder registration forms shall include a line that requires the stakeholder to verify that all submitted information is true and correct under penalty of perjury.

## **8. ARTICLE VIII - ELECTION DAY**

### Non-Brown Act

SoRo will use a written, secret ballot to conduct the Board of Directors election. NO OTHER BUSINESS OTHER THAN THE ELECTION will be conducted at the election meeting.

### Polling Location

Hamilton High School shall be open for voting on the day of the election from 3 pm to 8pm. The following location criteria must be considered:

- Sufficient parking
- Easy access to SoRo stakeholders
- Disability access

### Voting

Each registered voting stakeholder will be given one ballot and clear voting instructions. Each voter may cast one ballot only. Voters may vote for only one candidate for each of the 25 positions. Voting for all 25 positions is not mandatory.

Absentee ballots, proxy voting, and pre-registration shall not be accepted.

### Ballots

Candidates shall be listed in alphabetical order.

### Provisional Ballot

If the status of a stakeholder cannot be verified or raises reasonable doubt, the stakeholder will be given a provisional ballot. The provisional ballot will be counted pending verification. Provisional voters will be given instructions to qualify their ballot. The Election Administrator must verify provisional ballots within 3 calendar days to qualify.

### Void Ballots

In the event that a stakeholder spoils a ballot, the election administrator shall write "void" on the ballot, initial the ballot, and provide the stakeholder another ballot.

### Tallying Votes

All votes shall be counted immediately following the close of election poll location.

A ballot tally area will be established by a perimeter wherein ballots will be counted.

The Election Administrator shall oversee the tallying of ballots.

The number of ballots and registration forms will be reported in the Election Administrator's final report.

Staff members of the Election Administrator and acceptable volunteers will tally the votes in teams.

One person will take the ballots, one at a time, and read the voted names on the ballot. Should any ballot have been marked incorrectly, the one section of the specific candidate position that has been marked incorrectly will not be counted (e.g. the directions say to vote for one candidate only, and a mark has been made for more than one candidate). The section on the ballot marked incorrectly shall be voided and marked "VOID". One person will check off the valid votes received on a tally sheet.

No candidates may assist with this process.

Any stakeholder may observe the tally process from outside the ballot tally area or in a designated area.

Volunteers tallying ballots will sign the tally sheets to affirm the validity of the count.

The candidate who receives the highest number of votes for each position shall be declared the winner.

Winning candidates shall take office at the first regularly scheduled board meeting following the election, after the resolution of challenges.

#### Tie Votes

In case of a tie, the winner will be selected by a coin toss at the first regularly scheduled board meeting following the election.

#### Preliminary Results

Preliminary election results will be posted at [www.soro.org](http://www.soro.org) and other posting locations.

## **9. ARTICLE IX - CHALLENGES**

### Contesting the Election

Stakeholders who wish to contest the election or some part of the election process (for example, candidate eligibility, recounts, stakeholder status) may submit a letter, fax or e-mail to the LAHRC. Correspondence must be

received no later than **August 14**. Letters, faxes or e-mails must include why the stakeholder feels the election process has been tainted along with any other pertinent information that will be of assistance.

Contact information:

Victoria Minetta  
Human Relations Commission  
RE: SoRo Election  
200 N. Spring Street  
City Hall, Room 1625  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 978-1660  
Fax: (213) 978-1668  
vminetta@mailbox.lacity.org

The LAHRC shall review and investigate all submitted challenges. The arbiter shall have the authority to interpret these procedures and to act as arbiter to resolve any disputes or challenges which may arise.

#### Ruling

The LAHRC shall send an acknowledgement letter within seven calendar days of receiving the dispute. This letter shall state the stakeholder will be notified once a final decision is made after an investigation.

A ruling shall be made within 14 calendar days of receipt of the request. Decisions of the LAHRC will be made by **August 31**. Decisions of the LAHRC are final.

### **10. ARTICLE X – CANDIDATE NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS**

Within four calendar days following the election (**August 14**) the election committee shall notify all candidates via e-mail or phone of the preliminary results.

### **11. ARTICLE XI - CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION**

The LAHRC shall certify the election as officially valid within seven calendar days (**August 17**) following the election if no written requests to contest the election have been received.

If a written request to contest the election is received, the LAHRC shall certify the election upon the resolution of all challenges.

### **12. ARTICLE XII—ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS**

The election committee shall post the final certified results within 14 calendar days (**August 24**) following the election at all posting locations if a written request to contest the election is pending.

If a written request to contest the election is received, the election committee shall post the final certified election results upon the resolution of all challenges by the LAHRC.

At a minimum, the final certified election results shall be made public through the following media:

- E-mail
- [www.soro.org](http://www.soro.org)
- Postings at designated posting locations

### **13. ARTICLE XIII - RECORD RETENTION**

SoRo shall keep all election records for at least two years following the date of the scheduled election.

The Board shall identify a location and responsible party to store all materials.

### **14. ARTICLE XIV - TIMELINE**

In addition to the election procedures, an outline showing each item and its deadline or a calendar showing key dates shall be created to keep track of key election responsibilities. This timeline can be viewed on pages 14 to 15.

### **15. ARTICLE XV - FOLLOW UP**

The election committee shall provide DONE with a copy of the election results within 30 calendar days (**September 10**) from the election. The election committee will also ensure that the newly elected board's contact information will be forwarded to the DONE.

The election committee shall hold a debriefing meeting within seven calendar days (**August 17**) following the election to evaluate the proceedings. The evaluation shall be written and presented as a committee report at the first Board meeting.

The election committee shall work with the newly elected Board to prepare for the first meeting. This will be coordinated with the SoRo Certification organizing committee.

The election committee shall compose and send any and all thank you

letters within seven calendar days (**August 17**) following the election. For example, thank you letters may be sent for the use of the facility or to the neutral third party, to each of the volunteers, etc...

## **XVI. ARTICLE 16 - ELECTION CHECK LIST**

### **Election Day**

- Polling Location(s)
- Election Polling Hours
- Civic Center Permit (LAUSD Location)
- Map Layout of Room Set Up
- Set Up Crew
- Clean Up Crew
- Directional/Parking Signs
- Tables
- Chairs
- Microphones
- Ballots
- Ballot Box(es)
- Ballot Box Lock(s)
- Tally Sheets
- Election Booth(s) or Equivalent

### **Supplies**

- Masking Tape
- Push Pins
- Paper Clips
- Rubber Bands
- Paper Tablet(s)
- Stapler/Staples
- Scissors
- Pens
- Golf Pencils/Pencils
- Clip Boards
- Markers
- Dry Erase Markers
- Sharpies
- Scotch Tape
- Easel(s)
- Butcher Paper

### **Provided by SoRo**

- SoRo Bylaws (multiple copies)
- SoRo Election Procedures (multiple copies)
- Requirements of Members of the Board
- Rules of the Road
- Description of SoRo (multiple copies)

- SoRo Maps (multiple copies)
- SoRo Map(s) (On Poster board 36 x 47)
- List of Candidates/Candidate Statements (multiple copies)
- Written Out Volunteer Instructions (multiple copies)
- Volunteer Shift Designations
- Stakeholder Registration Forms
- Refreshments for volunteers
- Volunteer name tags

### **Provided by DONE**

- Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils (Multiple Copies)
- Los Angeles City Charter Section 900
- Voting booths
- Ballot boxes
- Standard election supplies
- Ballots

### **Volunteers**

- League of Women Voters staff will be present at all times
- Majority will be members of SoRo

### **Forms Provided by LWV**

- Volunteer Sign In Sheet
- Volunteer Instructions

### **Miscellaneous**

- Translator
- Translation Equipment
- Translation Equipment Check Out Sheets
- PowerPoint Projector
- Projection Screen
- Laptop
- Extension Cord

## TIMELINE

- **June 1** - First Walking Man distribution to seek candidate nominations (*Page 3, Outreach to Stakeholders*)
- **June 10** – Begin acceptance of Board of Directors Candidate Applications (*Page 7, Applications*)
- **June 22** – Candidate Information Session at HHS from 7p.m. – 8p.m. (*Page 8, Candidate Information Session*)
- **July 21** – Deadline for Board of Directors Candidate Applications to be completed and submitted (*Page 7, Applications*)
- **July 23** – Deadline to disqualify candidates by phone or e-mail (*Page 6, Disqualification*)
- **July 28** - Candidates who are disqualified may submit a letter, fax, or e-mail received no later than this date to the LWVLA (*Page 6, Disqualification*)
- **July 28** - Election notices placed at each of the SoRo designated posting locations (*Page 3, Outreach to Stakeholders*)
- **July 31** - The LWVLA shall reconsider the candidate’s request. A decision shall be made within **3 calendar days** of the receipt of the reconsideration letter. This is the final day for reconsideration (*Page 6, Reconsideration*)
- **July 31** - Complete the verification of all candidates (*Page 6, Reconsideration*)
- **August 3** – Deadline to submit candidate statements to [soroelection@soro.org](mailto:soroelection@soro.org) (*Page 7, Candidate Statements*)
- **August 3** – An election day reminder courtesy of Walking Man (*Page 3, Outreach to Stakeholders*)
- **August 10** – Election Day from 3p.m. – 8p.m. (*Page 1, Election Day*)
- **August 14** – Challenges to the election or some part of the election process received by the LAHRC no later than this date (*Page 10-11, Contesting the Election*)
- **August 14** – Deadline notify all candidates of preliminary election results. (*Page 11, Candidate Notification of Election Results*)
- **August 17** – Deadline for the election committee to hold a debriefing meeting to evaluate the proceedings (*Page 12, Follow Up*)
- **August 17** – Deadline for the election committee to compose and send any and all thank you letters (*Page 12, Follow Up*)
- **August 17** – Deadline for the LAHRC to certify the election as officially valid if no written requests to contest the election have been received (*Page 11, Certification of Election*)



- **August 24** – Deadline to post the final certified election results at all posting locations if a written request to contest the election is pending (*Page 11, Announcement of Results*)
- **August 31** – Deadline for contest decisions by the LAHRC (*Page 11, Ruling*)
- **September 10** – Deadline for the election committee to provide DONE with a copy of the election results (*Page 12, Follow Up*)