



A culture of recognition and mutual respect where the MRSA is an equal and valued partner in the MRU community.

Voting Policy	
First draft: August 26, 2020	Sponsor: Governance Committee
Current Version: 4.1	
Last Amended: Winter 2024	Approved by: MRSA Executive Board
Next Review:	

Overview

This policy covers voting for elections, amendments to the Constitution, proposed dues changes, special levy recommendations, ratification votes for the Collective Agreement, resolutions and any other such items deemed necessary by the MRSA Executive Board.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair, accessible, transparent and timely framework for governance continuity.

Definitions:

Constitutional Vote - a vote that is called by the MRSA Executive Board to bring changes or amendments to the MRSA Constitution.

Elections & Voting Chair (EVC) - this role will support the operational procedures of elections and voting. The MRSA Operations Administrator fills this role.

MRSA Members - as defined in Article 4 of the MRSA Constitution.

MRSA Executive Board - shall include the Officers, the Board of Governors Representative, and a minimum of eight (8) Directors at Large elected or appointed from the membership.

MRSA Executive Officers - shall include the President, the two (2) Vice-Presidents and the Treasurer

Plurality - the process in which a proposition pulls more votes than any other proposition but does not need to receive a majority.

Ratification Vote - a vote that is called by the MRSA Negotiations Committee for the membership to accept or reject the terms of a new Collective Agreement.

Returning Officer - provides oversight to the electoral process to ensure it is fair, unbiased and according to requirements of the MRSA Constitution, policies and procedures. This role shall be a member appointed from the MRSA Executive Board whose term is not open for the current election

period.

Week Day - Monday to Friday, exclusive of paid holidays.

1.0 Eligibility to Vote

All members are eligible to vote as per the Constitution. The list of dues-paying members is provided by MRU, as per the MRSA/MRU Collective Agreement, Article 36.

2.0 Constitutional Vote: Notification

Members shall be given the opportunity to review the information on the subject of the vote. Written notice of a Membership Meeting for the purpose of voting on proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be provided to the membership with no less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to such a meeting. Such notice must contain the proposed amendment(s) and a rationale for the proposal(s).

Notice shall include the following:

- a. posting on the MRSA website
- b. a direct email to all members

3.0 Ratification Votes: Notification

The purpose, information, and the subject of the vote must be announced formally and be made available to all members. Members shall be given the opportunity to review the information on the subject of the vote. Notice and presentation of the proposed Collective Agreement must be given to the membership at least ten (10) week days prior to the vote.

Notice shall include the following:

- a. posting on the MRSA website
- b. a direct email to all members

4.0 Other Types of Votes

Constitutional votes, including but not limited to dues changes or special levies, will be conducted in accordance with the Constitution.

Strike votes will be processed as per the Alberta Labour Relations Code and requirements.

Election votes will be outlined as per the MRSA Nominations and Election Policy and Procedures.

5.0 Requirements of the Electronic Voting System

The EVC will use the MRSA member list into the electronic voting software prior to the elections.

The electronic voting software that is selected shall:

- a. ensure that only members are able to vote;
- b. ensure that members are only able to vote once;
- c. ensure there is no connection between the voter's name and their choice; and
- d. have a function to clearly define the voting date(s) and time(s).



6.0 Balloting Process

- a. An email with a link to a ballot shall be sent to each member on the day of the vote. If a member does not receive the ballot electronically, it is the obligation of that member to contact the MRSA office to request a ballot be sent.
- b. The Returning Officer shall not vote in any current election through the electronic voting process. The Returning Officer shall have a paper ballot for the current election, which shall be sealed and held by the EVC. The Returning Officer's paper ballot will be kept on file for 12 week days after the results have been announced.
- c. A reminder email, generated from the electronic voting program, will be sent to each member that has not yet voted to encourage participation in the vote.
- d. Ballots will not be nullified. Once a vote has been cast, it is final.

7.0 Counting the Ballots

The voting program will generate the results of the vote. The following process shall be observed:

- a. All results will be determined by the particular voting requirements as per the Constitution or Policy that applies;
- b. Should there be a tie of any election outcome, the Returning Officer's ballot will be counted and will provide the deciding vote for any election tie.
- c. For ratification votes, if a simple majority plus one vote is not achieved this would be a failed ratification based on the *Labour Relations Code* requirements.

8.0 Communication of Results to Members

- a. The Returning Officer will confirm election results. The EVC will then be responsible for the release of the results of the vote regardless of the purpose of the ballot;
- b. The notification shall include the particulars of what was voted on and the results of that vote;
- c. Notice shall include the following:
 - i. posting on the MRSA website; and
 - ii. a direct email to all members.
- d. Results must be released within two (2) working days of the vote.

9.0 Communication of Results to External Stakeholders

Any changes to the MRSA Executive Board or other elected positions must be reported as per the Collective Agreement.

Any changes to the MRSA Executive Board, the Collective Agreement, and the Constitution must be reported to the Alberta Labour Relations Board.

The Alberta Minister in charge of post-secondary education must be informed by the MRSA office of a change in the Board of Governors position, with a copy to the MRU President's Office.

10.0 Challenge to the Vote Procedure

Any member may submit a Challenge to a Vote through the Challenge to the Vote Procedure.



Related Policies:

Nominations and Elections Policy and Procedures

Campaign Policy

Challenge to the Vote Procedure

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Description
1.01	August 26, 2020	MRSA Executive Board	Creation of MRSA Voting Policy
2.01	February 9, 2022	MRSA Executive Board	Revisions applied; Challenges to the Vote section added
3.0	April 12, 2023	MRSA Executive Board	Revisions applied to EVC; edits made to align with amended Constitution.
4.0	January 31, 2024	MRSA Executive Board	Revisions. Inclusion of Returning Officer
4.1	May 24, 2024		Procedural addition: The Returning Officer's paper ballot will be kept on file for 12 week days after the results have been announced.

