

**ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO**  
**FIFTY FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONVENTION**  
**MAY 20-22, 2024**  
**ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

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**SUBJECT:** Direct Membership Election (DME) of MEC Officers (Article VII.D.5.a., Article VIII.B; Article IX.B, Section IX.H.4, Section IX.O, Section X.E.1.b, and new paragraph Section IX.P)

**STATEMENT OF QUESTION:**

Should the various Articles & Sections of the AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws be amended so that MEC Officers will be elected directly by the members?

**SOURCE AND DATE SUBMITTED:** International President – January 30, 2024

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In our union we have reviewed Direct Membership Elections (DME) for all officers of the union at 21 of the 50 meetings of the AFA Board of Directors. Both members and leaders have brought the issue forward for consideration many times in our union's history. While DME was often a popular idea among members and leaders, after careful review by the voting delegates of the AFA Board of Directors, real concerns over cost and equal access for all candidates to share their platform prevented passage. Delegates ultimately determined in each case that Local Councils should continue to be where DME takes place. But conditions have changed. Technology advancements have made it possible to provide an equal platform for all candidates. Technology coupled with thoughtful provisions for nomination of candidates can mitigate cost concerns. These modern realities make it possible to seriously reconsider DME for passage this year.

Direct membership elections can increase the level of democracy and member participation within AFA-CWA. DME would ensure that every member has an equal say in who leads our union and would help to create a more inclusive and representative organization. It can also solve recent issues with decision-making to ensure our union can act efficiently with membership mandates. For example, directly elected MEC and International Officers would be empowered under the law to break tie votes because they are elected by the members. Further, DME would help to increase member participation and engagement. When members feel that they have a real stake in the direction of our union, they are more likely to get involved in union activities and campaigns. This, in turn, can lead to greater solidarity and better outcomes for Flight Attendants as we build power together. DME can be conducted efficiently and quickly using modern technology, leading to more streamlined decision-making processes in the long run.

The issue of Direct Membership Elections (DME) for International Unions is a current hot topic as the Labor Movement overall is back on attack for working people and unions are at the center of the discussion about making democracy work for the people, not just the corporations and Wall Street. Without a direct membership election at a union like UAW, we wouldn't have seen the successful Stand Up Strike with big demands and big gains for working people. UAW traditionally set the standard for workers across the country but its 40 year decline along with the rest of the labor movement hurt all of us. The only way that changed was introducing DME for international and regional representatives so their members had the vote in who their leadership would be at every level of the union. Across the country, DME is considered an attribute of a truly democratic and fighting union. AFA has a proud history as a democratic, fighting union. Our policies and procedures should reflect that and ensure we continue to build power to win with our democracy in the hands of the rank and file at every turn.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

WHEREAS, at 21 of the 50 AFA-CWA Board of Directors Meetings there has been discussion of Direct Membership Election (DME) of MEC Officers; and,

WHEREAS, there is leader and membership interest in a process whereby members elect their MEC officers through direct membership election; and,

WHEREAS, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has undertaken an extensive review of implementation concerns as identified by Board Members at previous Board Meetings;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following information and prospective changes to the C&B be presented to the 2024 AFA Board of Directors for their review and consideration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article VII.D.5.a. be amended as follows:

5. Voting

a. A majority vote shall be required for election of ~~Officers~~, System Board members and elected Master Executive Council committees with each member of the Master Executive Council having one (1) vote.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Article VIII.B be amended as follows:

## ARTICLE VIII.B – NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF MEC OFFICERS

### B. Master Executive Council Officers

#### 1. Nomination Procedures

**a. No later than one hundred eighty (180) days prior to the new term of MEC Officers, a notification of open positions including instructions for nominations, shall be mailed to all members and posted on the Union's website.**

**b. ~~The representative of each Local Council on the Master Executive Council shall have the privilege of nominating one (1) candidate for the office of President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Master Executive Council. In order to appear on the ballot, a candidate must be nominated by at least thirty (30%) percent of the Local Presidents of the Master Executive Council. Alternatively, a member may be placed on the ballot after properly registering a petition and obtaining signatures from five (5%) of active members in good standing of their airline, pursuant to Article III.D.10.~~**

**c. All nomination petitions must be submitted to the Ballot Certification Committee no later than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the start of the term.**

**d. The Ballot Certification Committee shall certify the properly nominated candidates as soon as practicable and no later than (100) days prior to the start of the term of office.**

**e. In the event there is only one candidate nominated for a position, the nominee shall be deemed elected.**

#### 2. Election Procedures

~~A majority vote shall be required for the election of Officers with each member of the Master Executive Council having one (1) vote. The Secretary-Treasurer of the Master Executive Council shall notify the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union of the names of newly elected Officers and the date upon which their terms of office commenced.~~

**a. For regular Category Elections only, no later than ninety (90) days before the start of the term of office, the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union shall cause election ballots to be mailed to all active members. The election mailing shall list the names of the nominees for each office in alphabetical order and instructions for how the member may cast their vote. Each active member in good standing may vote for one (1) candidate for each office and the successful candidate for each office shall be the eligible candidate receiving the greatest number of election votes. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot.**

**b. Master Executive Council Officer election ballots executed by the active members in good standing of each Local Council at the airline shall be returned to the International Office no later than forty-five (45) days before the start of a term of office. Ballots shall be validated and tallied under the supervision of the Ballot Certification Committee. It shall certify the election results and notify the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, who shall promptly telephone and e-mail, if available, a copy of such certification to the successful candidates and post this certification on a page of the International Office website. The International Secretary-Treasurer will also ensure that the current Master Executive Council President receives a copy of this information for posting on bulletin boards and websites, as applicable. Additionally, the International Secretary-Treasurer will arrange for an e-mail to be sent to all members of the respective airline who have an email on file with the union. All election ballots and the transmittal envelopes in which they were received, or electronic ballot results, shall be retained at the International Office for at least one (1) year.**

**c. In cases where top vote getters receive a tie vote, the two (2) or more candidates who are tied shall participate in a runoff election by a mail or electronic ballot that will be held as soon as practicable after the initial balloting is completed, and with a balloting timeframe that is concluded prior to the new term of office.**

**d. In the event no eligible member is elected as President, Vice President or Secretary-Treasurer, the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union shall immediately arrange for additional balloting for such office.**

**e. The election of Master Executive Council Officers shall be completed and the successful candidates notified of their election by the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union immediately.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article VIII.B.3.b. be amended as follows:

b. No later than ~~sixty (60)~~ **one hundred fifty (150)** days prior to the end of an existing Master Executive Council term in each Election Category, or as soon as a vacancy exists, said vacancy, including job description, shall be posted at each domicile of the Master Executive Council **and on the union's website.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article IX.B. be amended as follows:

## **ARTICLE IX.B - RECALL OF MEC OFFICERS**

### **B. Master Executive Council Officers**

- ~~1. Any Officer of the Master Executive Council may be removed from office at any time, either with or without cause, by a majority vote of the Master Executive Council conducted on a roll call basis, provided that in the case of a single Council airline, a Master Executive Council Officer may only be removed as prescribed in Section C. of this Article.~~
- ~~2. A member of the Master Executive Council may be removed from membership on the Master Executive Council as a result of action taken pursuant to Section C. of this Article.~~
- ~~3. An affirmative vote for removal of an Officer of the Master Executive Council shall not remove the Officer from membership on the Master Executive Council if this Officer is still qualified for membership thereon as an Officer of a Local Council.~~
- ~~4. When a Master Executive Council President is removed from office, the Master Executive Council may elect a new President at that meeting or apply Article VII.C.3~~

**Recall of an MEC Officer may be accomplished in the following manner: If twenty-five percent (25%) of the active members in good standing at that airline petition the International Secretary-Treasurer of the Union in accordance with Article III.D.10 requesting a recall of any said Officers, it shall be the duty of the International Secretary-Treasurer to circulate such recall ballot to all active members at that airline. Such ballots shall be returned to the Ballot Certification Committee within twenty-one (21) days and a count date shall be specified thereon. Recall shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all active members in good standing voting in such recall election. The Ballot Certification Committee shall certify the results of such election to the International Officers, the Master Executive Council, and the membership. When such recall is accomplished, such recalled Officers shall immediately be divested of all authority, prestige, and rights commensurate with that office.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the title for Section IX.H.4 be amended as follows:

**SECTION IX  
UNION VOTING PROCEDURES**

H. Additional Procedures for Local Council, MEC, and International Officer Elections

4. Electronic balloting will be used to conduct Local Officer, MEC, and International Elections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Section IX.O. shall be amended as follows:

Additional Procedures for Master Executive Council Elections Pursuant to Article VII.C.3 –  
Filling of vacancies

The procedures outlined in this Section are applicable to the filling of vacancies of ~~to~~ Master Executive Council Officers ~~Elections~~ when a vote of a multi-council MEC results in a deadlocked tie.

1. The AFA-CWA International Secretary-Treasurer's Office must be notified that the MEC is in a deadlocked tie,
2. Only in the event of a deadlocked tie will the vote advance to a rank choice ballot. Each voting member of the MEC will be asked to cast their votes - ranking their election choice in order on a numbered ballot.
3. The MEC Secretary-Treasurer or Ballot Certification Committee will tally all voting MEC members' first choice. If there is still a tie, the second choices of the voting MEC members will be counted and added to the primary vote ballot. This will continue until there is a successful candidate.
4. If the count still results in a tie, a roll call vote will be conducted. The MEC President/ Designee or Ballot Certification Committee will circulate a ballot that contains roll call numbers for the MEC. Each voting member of the MEC will cast their respective roll call votes. After the votes are tallied, the MEC President/Designee or Ballot Certification Committee will announce the results to the Master Executive Council and International Officers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Section X.E.1.b. be amended as follows:

**SECTION X  
MERGER AND RELATED EMPLOYEE PROTECTIVE PROVISIONS**

**E. Merger of Master Executive Councils**

1.b. The International President or International President's designee shall ensure this process is completed no later than ~~ninety (90)~~ one hundred eighty (180) days after the financial close of the merger.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all other language within Section E remains unchanged.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Section IX be amended to add a new paragraph (P.) that reads:

**P. Additional Procedures for Master Executive Council Recall Petitions**

**Step 1: A petition must be registered with the International Secretary-Treasurer's office, along with the official statement of the petitioner, while always adhering to the AFA-CWA Mutual Respect Policy. The statement from the petitioner will be distributed to the members.**

**Step 2: The International Secretary-Treasurer will promptly notify the officer(s) who are the subject of the petition(s) and provide them with a copy of the petitioner's statement. The subject(s) of the petition will also be given an opportunity to provide a statement for distribution to the members.**

**Step 3: The petitioner shall have 30 days from the date the petition is recorded to submit the final petition to the International Secretary-Treasurer pursuant to the provisions of Article III.D.10.**

**Step 4: After the petition is returned, validated, and authenticated, the International Secretary-Treasurer shall circulate the official recall ballot to all active members at that airline. The statements from both the petitioner and the subject(s) of said petition will be included with the balloting information.**

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the International Secretary-Treasurer will identify any inconsistencies and make changes that may be necessary to ensure consistency.