

## **CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

### **Purpose:**

The primary purpose of the credentials committee is to ensure that an accurate count of the number of attendees to the annual meeting is prepared for the president at the beginning of each business session as quickly as possible so that the business of the annual meeting can begin. At the end of the annual meeting, and before the annual meeting can close, the credentials committee presents an accurate count of the total number of attendees to the annual meeting over its duration.

Credentials are important and as much a part of the annual meeting process as is registration.

When there is a vote by ballot, the credentials committee is responsible to prepare ballots and a ballot box and to assist with balloting.

For videoconference meetings, the committee will work with the Communications Vice President to use a polling function to count votes.

### **Role of Credentials Chair:**

1. Consult early with the state parliamentarian.
2. Have available:
  - a. AAUW Maryland Bylaws
  - b. AAUW Maryland Handbook
3. Be familiar with following bylaws articles:
  - a. Article IX. Nominations and Elections
  - b. Article X. Board of Directors
  - c. Article XIII. Meetings of the Membership especially Section 4 on Voting and Representation
4. Registration and Credentialing
  - a. The announcement in the Marylander (by which people register to attend) should refer to Registration/Credentials - the two should be linked.
  - b. Attendees must go through the credentials process before each business session.
  - c. When branch members send in their registration forms, they should clearly indicate whether they are attending as delegates.
  - d. The registration form should be worded so that there can be no doubt.
5. Voting and Representation [Bylaws Article XIII. Section 4]
  - e. A branch is entitled to one delegate for every ten (10) members or major fraction thereof.
    - i a major portion of 10 members is 6 or more members. Therefore, a branch with 65 members is entitled to 6 delegates, while a branch with 66 members is entitled to 7
    - ii each branch is entitled to at least 2 delegates

5. Other classes of members, in addition to branch delegates, who are entitled to vote
  - a. All members of the AAUW Maryland board
    - i if there are two people serving as co-elected officers, the office is entitled to only one vote
  - b. National Member delegates in attendance. They are appointed by the state president at the rate of one delegate for each ten (10) National Members residing in Maryland.
6. Any one member is entitled to only one vote or ballot even though that member may fall into more than one (1) of the above categories.
7. For voice or standing votes during business meetings each person who is entitled to vote has one vote.
8. For written votes, including balloting, each branch is entitled to a number of ballots equal to the number of delegates, NOT to the number of delegates present.
  - a. If a branch does not have a full complement of delegates attending the annual meeting, the delegation chair is given any additional ballots to which the branch is entitled.
  - b. If a branch does not have at least one member present, that branch cannot vote.
  - c. It is to the advantage of the branch to appoint as delegation chair and delegates members who are not entitled to vote as members of the state board. This will maximize the number of their members voting.
  - d. If a branch president is the delegation chair, the branch gets the number of ballots entitled to it based on branch membership. They do not have an additional ballot for the branch president. The branch president can vote as either a member of the state board or as the delegation chair, but not both.

**Before the annual meeting:**

1. Prepare notices to send to all branch presidents
  - a. AAUW Maryland Directory lists all state officers and branch presidents
  - b. Get the official count of branch membership as of January 31, upon which the number of branch delegates is determined, from the state treasurer.
  - c. Inform each branch president of the number of branch delegates that the branch is entitled to. Request that the branch send names of the delegates and the name of the delegation chair to the credentials chair before the annual meeting.
2. The credentials chair and the annual meeting registration chair need to work together to verify accuracy of the status of participants.
  - a. Ask the Registration Chair to provide a list of all attendees by branch
    - l) this list is used at the credentials table to check people into the annual meeting and should contain the following categories:
      - 1) branch delegates
      - 2) state board members
      - 3) National Member delegates
      - 4) other members (nonvoting)
  - b. guests
  - c. If there is a written vote, prepare a ballot box and ballots.
  - d. Obtain list of nominees from nominating committee chair.
  - e. Nominations from the floor can be written on the ballot by each person voting.
  - f. If any nomination from the floor is written in, ALL such nominations must be.
  - g. If there are any additional nominations from the floor, the credentials chair also needs to have a master ballot containing only nominations from the committee with space to write in all nominations from the floor.

3. Signing In At The Annual Meeting
  - a. The credentials table should be as close to the registration table and the annual meeting door as possible.
  - b. Place a "Credentials" sign on the table.
  - c. On the second day the credentials table can be moved immediately outside the door of the general meeting room (if a business meeting is planned).
  - d. Check-in everyone, including guests, on the list provided by the Registration Chair.
  - e. All attendees have to check-in before each business meeting.
    - I) Identify each voting member on their nametag.
    - II) Identify delegation chair on that person's nametag.
4. Make changes in delegate status as authorized by the branch president or delegation chair.
5. For the business meeting
  - a. Be ready to give the first credentials report as soon as possible, about 5 minutes after the business meeting begins
  - b. Report - Prepare format ahead of time:
    - (a) number of branch delegates
    - (b) number of state board members
    - (c) National Member delegates
    - (d) other nonvoting members
    - (e) guests
    - (f) grand total attending annual meeting
  - c. If there is more than one business meeting, a report is given in the same format at the beginning of each meeting.
  - d. At the end of the annual meeting, before it can close, the credentials chair must present the final credentials report giving the total number attending over the duration of the annual meeting in all the previously mentioned categories.
6. Balloting
  - a. When the voting begins, assign someone to watch over the ballot box.
  - b. When the ballot closes, the watcher will hand the ballot box to whoever is counting the vote.
  - c. If asked, credentials chair can help count
7. After the annual meeting:
  - a. Prepare a report to help next year's credential chair and include suggestions. This report should be included in the annual meeting report prepared by the annual meeting chair.