

Votes Committee Interim Election Report April 19, 2016

The Votes Committee was formed on February 10, 2016. It was composed of Jacob Denz, Michael Gould-Wartofsky, Darach Miller, Tess Rankin, and Shelly Ronen. Jessica Feldman joined the Votes Committee shortly thereafter on March 9, and Parth Singh joined on April 3.

The first committee meeting took place on 29 February 2016. Darach Miller, Tess Rankin, Shelly Ronen, and Local 2110 Executive Board member Patrick Gallagher attended. At this meeting, Votes Committee made clear our intent to administer the steward election and BDS referendum vote using both online and in-person balloting. Gallagher stated that the Local would oppose online voting for all but the BDS referendum. He also informed us that we could administer the stewards election and BDS referendum using our Unit criteria for eligibility but that the Local had its own criteria for nominees to Joint Council (JC). The Local, he said, would insist on administering the JC vote. Gallagher also said that the Local may be willing to be flexible on these eligibility criteria for JC nominees because our Unit is not composed of members who work continuously. Gallagher advised us that he would confer with others at the Local and confirm. He did not.

Subsequently, our Committee worked with the Local in good faith. We collaborated on the call for nominations, which Gallagher drafted and sent to the committee on March 10. In the week before the deadline for the call for nominations, the Local became unresponsive and evasive and refused to answer several emails and phone calls, including several calls from Ronen to Local President Maida Rosenstein. Rosenstein also declined to offer clarity regarding the as-yet unclarified eligibility criteria for Joint Council nominations, saying she would not "advise JC nominees." Rosenstein and Gallagher's continued evasion was highly inappropriate, and obstructed our ability to smoothly administer this election.

Also irregular was the Local's decision to announce the results of the election by acclamation without involving us. This was undemocratic, obstructed our capacity to ensure the election was properly administered, and resulted in at least two irregularities. One candidate was initially excluded inappropriately, Ziad Dallal, whose candidacy was subsequently reinstated. Secondly, one candidate was included inappropriately, Jacob Denz was simultaneously serving on the Votes Committee for a while and as we found out from Friday's Notice of Election, he was also running as a candidate for Joint Council. His simultaneous service and candidacy were highly improper. It was against rules we were all aware of and had agreed to--rules that Maida Rosenstein herself enforced when she insisted in an email exchange of April 15 that Chris Nickell, who was a candidate, be removed from communications pertaining to Votes Committee business. When Ronen pointed out the inappropriacy of Denz's candidacy and service on the Votes Committee in an email of April 18, he immediately resigned. We were very concerned about this, but have decided to permit his candidacy because we believe in working toward the most inclusive union possible, and we take his resignation from Votes Committee in good faith.

When these elections have concluded, we will issue a full report.

In solidarity,

Votes Committee

Jessica Feldman
Michael Gould-Wartofsky
Darach Miller
Tess Rankin
Shelly Ronen
Parth Singh