

Report #13: Elections Committee Report

To: Pacific Seabird Group Executive Council
From: Katie O'Reilly and Jane Dolliver, Elections Committee Co-Coordinators
Sadie Wright, Member, Elections Committee
Marc Romano, Member, Elections Committee
Date: 7 February 2023

PSG Elections Committee Report 2023

A. Elections overview and results

The PSG Elections for the 2022-2023 Executive Council closed on Sunday, 5 February 2023 at 11:59PM. The candidates in bold type below are the membership recommended candidates to be approved by vote of the Executive Council on Tuesday, 14 February 2023. There were no ties. A single write-in candidate for Secretary was listed, "Pat Baird." "Write-in" was checked three additional times: twice for candidates listed on the ballot (these were counted as votes for that candidate), once as a comment about not wanting to vote in an unopposed race (this was included in the "prefer not to vote" category).

Chair-elect
Juliet Lamb

Secretary
Lara Brenner

Treasurer
Brie Drummond
Pam Michael

Vice-Chair for Conservation
Lindsay Adrean
Michael Schrimpf

Canada Regional Representative
Tori Burt
Kerry Woo

Non-Pacific U.S. States Regional Representative
Sara Guitart
Julia Gulka

Washington and Oregon Regional Representative
Amelia DuVall

B. Summary of the 2023 elections process:

1. Ballots sent 1/7/2023
2. Reminders were sent: 1/29/2023, 2/5/2023
3. 2 life members missing from the membership list were sent ballots
4. 5 early-voting Canada members were asked to resubmit (earliest ballot was not displaying second candidate for regional representative).

C. Summary of the 2022 voter turnout

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1. 49% of eligible voters with a current email address submitted a ballot, across all regions. This is slightly lower turnout than 2022 and 2021, and we believe, a reflection of the fact we sent only 2 reminders (not the typical 3). The Elections Committee's goal is 50% turnout, every year – we were very close to that goal.
2. Reporting by region: Alaska/Russia 68%, Asia/Oceania 38%, Canada 59%, Europe/Africa 78%, Non-Pacific U.S. States 44%, Northern California 41%, Southern California 40%, Washington/Oregon 53%.

D. *Summary of voter comments*

1. Candidate recommendations:
 - a. Katie Holt, U of WA.
 - b. Brian Walker Fairfield University, Conn.
 - c. Dan Rizzolo for AK-Russia Rep!
 - d. Erin Lefkowitz
 - e. Lauren Scopel
2. Elections process comments - positive:
 - a. Thank you! I know this is very hard work.
 - b. Kudos to the elections committee for an excellent slate of candidates. Your work ensures a good future for PSG.
 - c. Thank you, Elections Committee! Great list of candidates - nice to see quite a few from a younger cohort of PSG members.
 - d. Great candidates.
 - e. Strong candidates made for tough choices where either way, PSG wins! Thank you, Elections Committee, for your hard work to fill these ballots with great options.
 - f. THANK YOU. The PSG election committee is AWESOME!
3. Elections process comments – improvements:
 - a. I thought we were supposed to elect the officer positions in alternate years. Really lose continuity this way. Is one a one year term?
 - b. I love reading the candidate biographies. Candidates do a great job of describing how passionate they are about PSG and their history with. What I would love to see more emphasis on is what skills they bring to position they seek and what experiences they have had to demonstrate those skills. Requiring this info in the candidate bios would help folks make informed choices based on relevant info, rather than well-written descriptions of their experiences in the field with seabirds and their first PSG conference. Those are fun to read, but don't help me make an informed decision. Thanks for making these elections work, I really appreciate it.
 - c. Thanks for your hard work to find candidates for the elections! My only feedback is that for the Treasurer position, given the significant financial responsibilities involved, candidates really need to tell us if they have a background in managing accounts of any kind, preferably more than their cheque book (!), working with a book keeper or professional accountant, and if they have any knowledge of the IRS requirements of non-profits. Neither candidate for Treasurer provided any indication that they had any account management experience or skills. My two cents!

E. *Summary of time committed by the Elections Committee*

1. Prospective candidate emails/Zooms/Elections Committee meetings ~15 hours
2. Candidate bios compile ~2 hours
3. Ballot set-up and QA/QC ~2 hours
4. Ballot checks and reminders ~2 hours

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5. Final report and updates to EXCO, committee members ~2 hours
6. Total time estimated ~23 hours (down 6 hours from 2022!)

F. *Recommendations for future elections*

1. This committee is still in need of additional volunteer help, especially for E(1,2,3) – above. Desired pre-requisites include a) deep history with the PSG community and/or exceptional networking and online research/investigative capabilities, b) desire to elevate and increase participation from persons historically underrepresented in PSG leadership c) endlessly positive and dogged in their electronic communications d) free time, especially Nov-Feb.
2. We welcome participation by EXCO members who are not running in 2024, and/or are stepping off EXCO, but would like to continue to serve PSG. Please reach out!
psg_elections@pacificseabirdgroup.org