

The meeting was chaired to order at 8:20 by Edwin Ortiz, hereafter referred to as the Chair.

The following people were present: Rick Braun, Tony Hoffmann, Catherine Abate, Peter Gato, Mel Goodstein, Carol Feinman, Richard Kelmans, Neil Getnick, Lisa Briskman, John Mark, Jerry Goldfeder, John Colangelo, Liz Scholenberger, Tim James, Bill van Feliz, Chad Elson, Jim Briggs, Betsy Naylor, Stephanie Rogall, Dan Roskoff.

The chair requested Carol Feinman to take the minutes and this was approved by the Committee as a whole.

The Chair announced that the Committee would be looking into several areas of Constitution revision to present to the Executive Committee and the General Membership. These are:

1. Membership Reform - This refers to who gets to vote. It is important to keep in mind that any change may result in another change in another article. We must examine these possible changes when proposing and voting on proposals. At the next meeting, copies of the constitution will be provided in order that we will be able to refer to it.

2. Mel Goodstein's proposal to enlarge the membership of the Executive Committee. Since there are so many more members of the club should we not increase the number of Executive Committee members. At the present time, there are 29 members of the Executive Committee.

The chair stated that it is possible that the changes can be adopted by the March meeting. This will give us 2-4 committee meetings until that meeting. At the next committee meeting we will start to discuss specific proposals.

Bill van Felix stated that we must recognize that within the club there should be different points of view but we would want to avoid bringing members in to capture control of the club or leadership, particularly by outsiders. There are several directions which we can take. These are:

1. Varying time of non-voting rights depending on where the members come from.
2. Limit voting geographically.
3. Requiring members to attend a certain number of meetings before they can vote. This might create a bookkeeping problem.

All the forementioned suggestions would include a grandparent clause in order not to disenfranchise any existing members.

Tony Hoffmann ~~proposed~~ stated that the existing 30 day period was not sufficient to protect the integrity of the club. We should discuss specific proposals to rectify this situation. There is a need to keep proposals simple. We have to prevent packing the club but it cannot be done at the expense of membership encouragement.

Tony then proposed that anyone who lives in ~~the~~ New York County (Manhattan) can become a voting member of VID after a 90 day waiting period preceding the vote in question. (90 days after joining).

The chair asked Tony did he propose that we just change the constitution from using a 30 day waiting period to using a 90 day waiting period?

Tony added that this was the change as well as limiting voting membership to residents of Manhattan. Those people outside Manhattan could be a member but without any voting rights. There would be a grandparent clause for present members.

Richard Kelmans stated that he did not think that any proposal that contains a residential restriction is appropriate for V.I.D. This would be parochial and reduces the democratic proceedings in the club and would reduce the membership. We cannot make non-Manhattanites second-class citizens and would violate the principles of the constitution.

Chad Elson stated that if we have two classes of members we will have to decide whether they can be Executive Committee members.

Bill van Felix raised a point of information and asked whether voting rights mean endorsements or does it mean all voting.

Tony stated that the basic purpose of his proposal is to offset the packing of the club for voting for officers and endorsements. He would have no objections to allowing non-Manhattanites from voting for resolutions but a two-tier system might be cumbersome.

Tony also said that non-voting members could not become members of the Executive Committee.

Liz Schollenberger said that she felt there was a hazy line as to what are endorsements and what are issue votes. She would not object to a 90 day period between joining and voting but she felt it would not solve any real purpose, it would just lead to more complex packing.

Tony differentiated between endorsements and issues. We have a secret ballot for elections but not for issues.

Carol Feinman pointed out that we have used a secret ballot for issue votes, - the 1981 vote to encourage ~~people~~ candidates to enter the New York Mayoralty race. It is hard to differentiate between endorsements and issue votes.

Tim James stated that the primary role of V.I.D. is as a local club. At the same time some people view it as a leader of the reform movement. VID has become a battleground for several political groups around the city.

Catherine Abate asked Tim what was he suggesting?

Tim stated that a geographical limitation should be used. The boundary should be our Assembly District. That is how most political clubs are set up. He has no problems with a 90 day time limit but does not feel that it would make any meaningful difference.

John Mark concurred with Richard Kelmans and opposed any geographical restrictions. We should carry the torch of liberalism. He suggested a more stringent time requirement for people who live outside of Manhattan. Why should people outside the County suffer when they cannot afford rents in Manhattan.

Liz Schollenberger presented her proposal, see annexed copy. She would limit membership to residents of Manhattan but would leave the 30 day voting rule intact. The proposal would disenfranchise members who vote in other New Democratic Coalition (NDC) clubs. There would be a grandfathered clause with regard to residency but not with regard to club voting.

Jim Briggs asked what solid information is there about what other clubs have in their constitutions with regard to voting?

The Chair stated that Independent Democratic Club (IDC) has a geographical requirement; Chelsea has a time requirement - 30 days for residents of the A.D., 90 days for residents outside the A.D.; CFD has a geographical limitation for the Assembly District only.

Stephanie Rogall asked how do you determine who is or isn't a member of another

NDC club. Certain NDC will not release their membership lists. Certain NDC clubs which are run on an ideological, rather than a geographic basis. She cannot see how we can set up a system where we can find out who belongs to these clubs. To setup rules which we cannot enforce is no better than the present situation. What about people who are members of VID and members of regular (non-reform) clubs? These rules might only make us look stupid. It would be better to continue with a statement that one should not vote in two clubs and leave it up to the members' consciences.

John Colangelo stated that he saw no principal (principle?) reason to limit ~~new~~ voting membership to residents of Manhattan. He stated that what might happen is that we will be fighting the last war. It is important to cure the problems in the least restrictive manner. He would support some form of time limitation.

Catherine stated that she could support restricting <sup>voting</sup> membership to Manhattan residents but that John Colangelo and John Marks are basically right. To tie ourselves to something so tight might hurt ourselves in the future. It is more important to limit the time factor - this will have the effect of limiting any pack. The membership is not that organized that there will be a pack three months in advance.

Peter Gato stated that a 90 day rule with a requirement a person must attend three meetings might work.

Tony supported his proposal to limit voting membership to Manhattan residents. He could only think of one person who ~~ixxx~~ joined the club from outside Manhattan and remained active.

Dan Roskoff agreed with Messrs. Marks and Colangelo. Time should be the element which we concentrate. We should emulate Chelsea's 60/90 time rule.

The Chair asked for new points.

John Mark stated that one possibility might be to have a general 90 day waiting period but that residents of places outside of Manhattan would also have to attend three general meetings before they could vote.

Rick Braun stated that he was troubled by the implementation of a geographical limit. People who do not live in Manhattan but work in Manhattan or who have an attachment to the Village should not be cast off.

Tim James presented his proposal, see annexed copy. It would require that members be registered voters in the Assembly District within which V.I.D. is located. Exception would be resident aliens and those members under 18. Voting registration would have to be verified within a specific time period.

Richard Kelmans presented another proposal. This would state that a person shall not be entitled to vote for officers, members of the Executive Committee or endorsements during the first 90 days of her or his membership. This would not create an undue burden.

Jim Briggs presented another proposal to change the waiting period to 60 days for those people who are residents of our Assembly District and 120 days for those people who reside outside of the Assembly District.

The Chair reiterated the proposals as follows: 90 days for Manhattanites - Tony; 90 days for all - John Mark, John Colangelo, Richard Kelmans, Catherine; 60/120 - Jim Briggs

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30 day period but strict no 2 club voting - Liz Schollenberger  
geographical A.D. rule - Tim James.

~~R~~ The Chair stated that Richard Kelmans proposal is to change the 30 day waiting period to 90 days for endorsements, officers and Executive Committee voting.

Catherine and Johns' proposals had no geographical limitation. 90 days before you can vote on any issue.

Tony's proposal was for a 90 day waiting period but to limit voting membership to Manhattan. Geographical boundary.

Jim Briggs' proposal would have a 60 day waiting period for A.D. residents and a 120 day ~~xx~~ waiting period for others.

Neil Getnick called for a discussion of the proposals, particularly Jim Briggs'. The 120 day rule for non A.D. residents might make packing more difficult.

The Chair announced that the next meeting would be on January 17, 1983.

John Colangelo asked for a vote on geographical limitation vs. no such limit.

Mel Goodstein objected to a vote and wanted more time to think about the proposals.

The chair announced that at the next meeting we will start to vote on specific proposals.

Mel was asked to present his proposal and did so. This would enlarge the number of at-large Executive Committee members from 2 to 10 members. The reason for this is because of the additional number of members. 29 was arrived at in 1965. The Executive Committee should reflect the added membership since that time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 P.M. until January 17, 1983, 8 P.M.