



ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

President's Message

Dear Members:

At our most recent board meeting, one of the items discussed was a proposal to revise the IOS by-laws to streamline our organization's process for the election of directors.

At present IOS is organized like most grass roots organizations. As board member and former American Birding Association President Dan Williams described our process "the nominating committee huddles, chooses a list of candidates, calls them, hopes that they accept, and then presents the list to the membership for approval." Our members have the right to nominate candidates, something that has not happened once in our 13 year history.

Each year three board seats are open for election. Board members serve three year terms. They can serve two consecutive terms, but then must go off the board for at least a year. To date only one director has been reelected after having gone off the board.

The board elects a nominating committee each year of two board members who go through the process that Dan described. The IOS President is not a member of the nominating committee. The nominating committee presents its recommended slate to the board.

The board provides direction as to the type of candidates who would add strength to the board. Basically we look to maintain representation from throughout the state and to recruit a mix of professional ornithological/wildlife conservation and business folks, and lay birders from disparate backgrounds. We look for leadership qualities.

Our present board has two retired businessmen, a chemical company executive, an insurance industry consultant, two lawyers, a university employee, a not-for-profit executive and an IL DNR employee. Five of the directors have served or are serving in the leadership of not-for-profit organizations, including American Birding Association, Bird Conservation Network, Chicago Ornithological Society, DuPage Birding Club, a yacht club and a state biotech organization. Some are expert birders. Others just enjoy the sport. What we have in common is a love of birding and a willingness to devote time to advancing birding in Illinois.

Every year at the Annual Meeting dinner the nominees to fill the open board seats are presented to those members present and a vote is taken.

At no time in our history has the board received a nomination from the members at large, nor has the Annual Meeting not unanimously approved the board's recommendations.

The proposal is to streamline this process by amending the by-laws to give the board the authority to appoint IOS members to open board seats. The American Birding Association is organized this way.

This proposal is in no way intended to prevent any member from nominating any other member as a candidate for the board. Every member has that right now and would continue to have the right to make nominations. All you have to do is send your nomination to the IOS Secretary, presently Denis Bohm. Board elections would continue to be held in the spring each year.

Good birding.

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