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Jamaican Nationals Association of the Washington DC Metropolitan Area (JNA)

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS PROCESS FOR 2023 ELECTIONS**

Prepared by the Nominations & Elections Committee

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- 1. What are JNA’s elected leadership positions, the responsibilities of these positions and who elects these leaders?**
  - a. They are the President, Vice President, Executive Secretary, Recording Secretary Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and Parliamentarian  
(*Bylaws Section 5.05*)
  - b. The responsibilities and duties of these positions appears in Article VI of JNA’s Bylaws which is attached to these Guidelines.
  - c. Officers are elected by JNA’s general membership.
  
- 2. What is the tenure for JNA officers?**
  - a. Officers serve a two (2) year term or until their successors are elected. (*Bylaws, Section 5.05*)
  - b. An Officer may be re-elected for additional terms. (*Bylaws, Section 5.05*)
  
- 3. Can an Officer hold more than one elected position ?**
  - a. A person may hold more than one position but may not serve concurrently as both President and Treasurer or President and Executive Secretary of the Association.  
(*Bylaws, Section 5.04*)
  - b. A person who holds more than one office on the Board of Directors may not act in more than one capacity to execute, acknowledge, or verify an instrument required by law to be executed, acknowledged, or verified by more than one officer.  
(*Bylaws, Section 5.04*)
  
- 4. Who can nominate a candidate for a JNA elected office?**
  - a. Any member can nominate a candidate to the slate of nominees. This includes self-nominations. (*Bylaws, Section 6.04B*)
  - b. The N&E Committee should strive to recruit new talent for the elected officers.
  - c. The N&E Committee should seek nominations from all members via telephone and e-mail.



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**5. What are the qualifications to become a candidate for president or vice president of the Association?**

- a. The required threshold qualification is that the candidate must be a JNA member for at least six (6) months. (*Bylaws, Section 6.03*)
- b. Another qualification which shall be given great weight is the candidate’s commitment, activism, or contribution to the Association or the Jamaican diaspora such as documented service as officer, committee member, volunteer, financial donor, or in-kind contributor.
- c. Other qualifications include:
  - (1) Training, experiences, or activities that reflect the skills, necessary to execute the duties of the position:
    - Leadership, management or organizational skills or training obtained through formal education, career or volunteer positions, or other experiences.
    - Ability to delegate, inspire and communicate effectively including strong listening skills.
    - Ability to problem-solve and to be flexible .
  - (2) Integrity, transparency, resiliency, and empathy.
  - (3) Strong interpersonal skills and ability to collaborate and create strong working relationships.
  - (4) Ability to inspire and envision the future role of the position and the growth of the Association through innovation, creativity, resourcefulness.
  - (5) Familiarity with technology used by the Association, such as e-mail, google docs, zoom, and other social media technologies.

**6. What are the qualifications to become a candidate for other officer positions in the Association?**

- a. Required threshold qualification is that the candidate must be a JNA member for at least three (3) months (*Bylaws, Section 6.03*)
- b. See relevant qualifications in response to Question 5 above.

**7. When does the nominations process open and when does it close?**

- a. Nominations may begin as early as three months in advance of the Annual Meeting.
- b. Nominations may also take place at the general meeting immediately preceding the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting called at least fourteen (14) days before the Annual General Membership Meeting by the Board of Directors for that purpose; (*Bylaws, Section 6.04D*)



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**8. What is the process for reviewing the nominees to ensure that each nominee has complied with Section 6.03 and these rules?**

- a. As the By-laws provide that elections take place at the Annual Meeting, the N&E Committee has prepared a calendar for the process included in these Guidelines at Question #16 below.
- b. An Application Form, a copy of these Guidelines and relevant sections of the Bylaws shall be available on the website
- c. Candidates shall be asked to submit a short statement as a part of the Application,
- d. Applications shall be reviewed to determine qualifications set out in Question 5-6 above. Candidates shall be interviewed.
- e. Candidates shall prepare a presentation for the Annual meeting where members will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

**9. How will officers be elected? What form shall the voting take?**

- a. Officers shall be elected or re-elected by secret ballot at the annual meeting by the members in good standing as of the determined record date, (*Bylaws, section 6.04E*)
- b. The form of voting shall comply with Sections 4.09, *Form of Voting by Members*, which provides that “A member shall vote in person and not by proxy. A voting agreement shall not be enforceable.” (*Bylaws, Section 6.04E*)
- c. In person, electronic or a hybrid of both is allowed.

**10. What are the quorum and other requirements for the election of officers?**

- a. Officers shall be elected by a majority of the members present and in good standing with the quorum requirements having been met. (*Bylaws, Section*
- b. A quorum shall consist of the presence, in person, of twenty percent (20%) of the members *in* good standing or not less than fifty percent (50%) of the Executive Committee plus 10% of members in good standing. (*By Laws, Section 4.11 G* on Quorum for transaction of business at Membership Meetings)

**11. What is the member’s right to vote and who qualifies for this right?**

- a. According to *Section 4.08 of the Bylaws* on a *Member’s Right to Vote*, each member shall have one (1) vote and shall have the same rights and obligations as every other member with respect to voting.
- b. According to *Bylaw Section 4.10*, a member entitled to vote at a meeting requires determination of a voting record date and that the member is in good standing on that date. As used in the Bylaws, a member is an individual who has met all the



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requirements for membership. “Member in good standing” is used periodically in the Bylaws to emphasize that the member has met the qualifications for membership and paid the membership fees.

**12. What is a voting record date and what is its significance in determining whether a member can vote?**

According to *Section 4.10B of the Bylaws, and DC Nonprofit Law*, the record date is the date used to determine who is a member entitled to vote on a particular matter. The record date is the day before the date that notice of the meeting is first given to the members. The determination of who is a member eligible to vote is made as of the close of business on the record date. The member is then viewed as a member in good standing.

**13. When is the Annual Meeting?**

According to the *Bylaws, Section 4.11C*, the annual meeting shall be held on the last Sunday in October of each year. The Board of Directors shall specify the date, time, and location. The failure to hold an annual meeting does not affect the validity of any Association transaction”. One of the primary functions of this annual meeting shall be primarily to “nominate and elect officers of the Association”. *Please note that the elections as a part of the Annual meeting are postponed to November 2023.*

**14. What type of notice is required for the September general session meeting which precedes the October Annual Meeting and is there a special notice for the October Annual meeting?**

*Bylaws, Section 4.11 A. Membership Meetings* sets out the requirement for *Meeting Notices*. Whenever members are required or permitted to take any action at a meeting, written notice of the meeting’s date, time, and place shall be mailed or e-mailed to the members at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting. This applies to the annual, regular, or general sessions, and special meetings. Meeting notices shall include an agenda of the meeting.

**15. Do members have a right to inspect membership list at a Meeting?**

- Bylaws, Section 4.11 B - Member’s Right to Inspect Membership List at Meeting* provides that:
- a. After fixing a record date for a membership meeting, the Board of Directors shall prepare an alphabetical list of names of all its members that are entitled to notice of that meeting. The list shall show the address and the period of membership.
  - b. The list of members shall be available for inspection by any member, beginning two (2) business days after notice of the meeting is given for which the list was prepared and continuing through the meeting, at a place identified in the meeting notice where the meeting will be held. (*DC Nonprofit Law*)



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**16. What is the N& E Committee’s calendar of activities and the schedule for the 2023 elections?**

- First Committee Meeting - *Spring 2023*
- Committee considers whether voting shall be in person or electronic and adopts draft Application Form and 2023 Guidance including calendar - *Spring 2023*
- Committee presents for Board of Directors’ review the Candidate Application Form, and the 2023 Guidance, which includes the calendar which proposes changes 2023 voting date to November meeting - *Sept 2023*
- **Board of Directors adopts N& E Committee recommendations – *Sept 2023***
- Guidance with calendar and Candidate Application Form presented to the membership and posted on JNA’s website - *Sept 2023*
- Committee solicits members’ interest in becoming a candidate - *Sept 2023*
- Notice to Members of the Annual Meeting and determining who is a member in good standing by the record date - *By Oct 7, 2023*
- Nominations accepted at October 2023 meeting - *Oct 22, 2023*
- Availability of membership list should a member wish to review it - Sunday, **Oct 22, 2023, meeting.**
- In-person and electronic elections at November Meeting – **Sunday Nov 19, 2023, meeting**
- Newly elected Executive Committee takes office - *in January 2024*

**17. What is the protocol for election at the annual meeting?**

Election of officers shall be conducted as the first order of business at the Annual General Meeting, in accordance with the following procedure:

- a. The President will preside over the initial part of the meeting including determining whether there is a quorum and determining members in good standing who are entitled to vote.
- b. Members who participate remotely via electronic means such that they can contemporaneously hear all other members at the meeting and be heard by all other members at the meeting, shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.
- c. The election process shall be managed by the Chair of the N&E Committee
- d. Pre-voting and voting by proxy are not permitted for election of officers.
- e. The slate of nominees will be presented in writing and orally at the meeting.
- f. A nomination will only be valid if the candidate declares orally at the meeting, or in writing or by electronic mail prior to the meeting, that he/she is willing to take office if elected.
- g. Any candidate may make a statement at the meeting regarding their candidature. The



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presentation of such a statement shall take no longer than five minutes. Where there is more than one candidate for a position, the order of the candidates’ statements shall be determined by the Chair of the N&E Committee using a random selection process.

- h. To be elected, a candidate must receive votes marked with his or her name from the majority of the members present and in good standing. Ballots should be cast marked with the name of an announced candidate or with the word “abstain.” A candidate can withdraw at any time from subsequent votes.
- i. If there is only one candidate for each position, the slate may be voted on as a whole.
- j. Where there are more than two candidates running for a position and none receive a majority of affirmative votes in a vote, the vote is rerun with only the candidates receiving the two highest vote counts eligible.
- k. The vote is retaken in the case of a tie for first place. The Chair of the N&E Committee can use a coin toss to choose which candidate is to remain eligible if the tie persists after the fifth vote or upon the request of the majority of the members voting.
- l. The nominated candidates have the option of running for other positions in the case where there is a new call for candidates from the slate of nominated candidates, noting that pursuant to the Bylaws, an officer may hold more than one position with the exception of President and Treasurer or President and Executive Secretary.
- m. The voting process restarts in the case where there is a single candidate for a position, but that candidate does not receive enough affirmative votes.
- n. Voting will be by secret ballot. Two members of the N&E Committee will serve as Tellers
- o. Members who participate remotely in a manner such that they can hear the proceedings of the meeting and be clearly heard by all other attendees, shall vote by privately conveying their vote to an election teller.
- p. The minutes shall record the candidates nominated for each position and the elected candidate.
- q. A candidate may request that the statement made to the Board in respect of their candidacy be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.



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## RELEVANT PROVISION OF JNA’s BYLAWS PROVIDED FOR EASY ACCESS

### ARTICLE VI - ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

**SECTION 6.01. *Positions that constitute Elected Officers of the Association.*** The Association officers are the President, Vice-President, Executive Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Parliamentarian and Public Relations Officer who are also the officers of the Board of Directors. Officers of the Association shall be qualified members of the Association, elected for each position by the members.

**SECTION 6.02. *The Executive Committee of the Board.*** Elected officers and the appointed ex officio member in Article VII constitute the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee shall have all the power of the Board of Directors between the meetings of the Board, just as the Board has all the power of the Association between the meetings of the Association.

**SECTION 6.03. *Candidate Qualifications to seek election as Officers.*** Candidates for Officers of the Association must be members of the Association. Candidates for President and Vice-President must have been members for at least six (6) months and three (3) months for all other officers.

Candidates must demonstrate qualification for each position. Great weight shall be given to a candidate’s documented commitment, activism, or contribution to the Association such as service as an officer, committee member, volunteer, or donor.

Other qualifications include training and experiences relevant to the specific position that reflect the skills necessary to execute the duties of that position and the mission of the Association, and demonstrate integrity, effective communication, interpersonal and leadership skills, and familiarity with technology used by the Association. Candidates must also present their vision for the position and the growth of the Association to the membership and commit to periodic board training. As provided in Section 4.09, the Nominations & Elections Committee shall develop Guidelines that further identify these qualification requirements.

### **SECTION 6.04. *Process for Electing Officers.***

A A Nomination & Election Committee comprised of three (3) members shall be appointed by the President, approved by the Board, and approved by a majority vote of members



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meeting in general session. No member accepting nomination for election shall serve on the Nomination & Election Committee

B. The Nomination & Election Committee shall develop rules and procedures for conducting the nomination and election process, which shall provide that any member can nominate a candidate to the slate of nominees.

C. The Nomination & Election Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the nominees to ensure that each nominee has complied with Section 6.03 and the rules for conducting the elections.

D. Nominations shall take place at a general meeting immediately preceding the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting called at least fourteen (14) days before the Annual General Membership Meeting by the Board of Directors for that purpose.

E. Officers shall be elected or re-elected by secret ballot at the annual meeting by the members in good standing, as determined in accordance with Sections 4.09, and 4.10. Officers shall be elected by a majority of the members present and in good standing.

**SECTION 6.05. *Duties of the President, who is also known as the Board Chair.***

A. The President shall preside at all meetings of the membership, meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee and, in general, shall perform all such duties as assigned to the President by these Bylaws and from time to time by the Board of Directors.

B. The President, except in such instances where these Bylaws confer specific powers on other officers of the Association, shall supervise, manage, and direct the business of the Association and shall communicate to the general membership reports, proposals and recommendations for consideration or action.

C. The President shall act for or on behalf of the Association in all matters in which action by the President is required by law, and he may do and perform all other acts incident to the position of President, including the signing of contracts and other documents in the name of the Association where authorized by the members meeting in general session, except as may be otherwise provided in these Bylaws or ordered by the Board of Directors;

D. The President shall call all meetings of the Executive Committee of the Board.

E. The President shall have the power of appointment to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors including vacancies in elected positions until an election is held to fill any vacancy in an elected position. Such appointments shall be approved by a majority of the Board.

F. The President shall have the power of appointment to fill any position deemed necessary for the proper functioning of the Association.





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**SECTION 6.06. *Duties of the Vice President, who is also known as the Board Vice-Chair.***

- A. The Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. in the absence or disability of the President.
- B. The Vice President shall serve as ex officio member of the standing committees.
- C. The Vice-President shall be responsible for ensuring that the Standing committees are meeting and operating administratively.
- D. The Vice-President shall have such powers and perform such duties as the Board of Directors, or the President may from time to time prescribe.

**SECTION 6.07. *Duties of the Executive Secretary.***

- A. The Executive Secretary shall see that all notices required by these Bylaws are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws or as required by law and shall be custodian of the records of the Association, as required by the DC Nonprofit law. In general, the *Executive Secretary* shall perform all duties incidental to the office of a secretary of a corporation, and such other duties as are from time-to-time assigned to the Secretary by the Board of Directors.
- B. The Executive Secretary shall receive all appropriate communications and prepare all appropriate correspondence as identified by the Board and at the direction of the President.
- C. The Executive Secretary shall maintain the Association’s official files as identified in written Guidelines approved by the Board and have charge of all materials pertaining to the performance of his/her duties.
- D. The Executive Secretary shall maintain an up to date list of the members of the Association working with the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer and the Membership committee chairperson.
- E. The Executive Secretary shall perform such other duties as are assigned from time to time by the President or the Board of Directors

**SECTION 6.08. *Duties of the Recording Secretary.***

- A. The Recording Secretary shall record and maintain a record of the minutes of all general, special, and annual meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors, in files, books, e-files provided for that purpose.
- B. In general, the Recording Secretary shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the President or the Board of Directors.



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**SECTION 6.09. *Duties of the Treasurer.***

A. The Treasurer shall have charge of and be responsible for all funds, securities, receipts, and disbursements of the Corporation, and shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, in the name of the Association, all moneys or other valuable effects in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall, from time to time, be selected by the Board of Directors.

B. The Treasurer shall enter, or cause to be entered, regularly in books to be kept by for that purpose, full and accurate account of all monies received and paid by or on account of the Association.

C. The Treasurer may endorse in the name and on behalf of the Association all instruments for the payment of money, bills of lading, warehouse receipts, insurance policies and other commercial documents requiring such endorsement.

D. The Treasurer shall render to the President and to the Board of Directors, whenever requested, an account of the financial condition of the Association, including information to the Executive Secretary and the Membership Committee Chair on membership payments such as the date of payments, names, addresses, contact information and membership category

E. The Treasurer shall submit a written financial report at each general meeting.

F. The Treasurer shall submit a full financial report at the Annual General Meeting of the Association. The annual report shall be accompanied by an auditor’s report or accountant’s review or statement, where required by the Board.

G. The Treasurer shall prepare and file all reports required by law to be filed with municipal, state, and federal agencies.

H. The Treasurer shall co-chair the Finance & Fundraising Committee; and

I. In general, the Treasurer shall perform all the duties incident to the office of the treasurer of a corporation, and such other duties as are from time-to-time assigned to the Treasurer by the Board of Directors.

**SECTION 6.10. *Duties of the Assistant Treasurer.***

A. The Assistant Treasurer, like the Treasurer, shall have the care and custody of all the funds and securities of the Association and shall have cause such funds to be deposited to the credit of the Association in such banks or depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Assistant Treasurer shall assume the duty of the Treasurer and provide the President, the Board of Directors, including the Executive Secretary and the Membership Committee Chair with monthly information on membership payments such as the date of payments, names, addresses, contact information and membership category.



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B. The Assistant Treasurer shall perform such duties as may from time-to-time be assigned to him/her by the Treasurer or the Board of Directors; and

C. In the event of the absence of the Treasurer or his/her incapacity or inability to act, then the Assistant Treasurer may perform any of the duties and may exercise any of the powers of the Treasurer.

**SECTION 6.11. *Duties of Parliamentarian.*** The Parliamentarian shall advise on the contents of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Roberts Rule of Order to address any procedural disputes arising during the conduct of meetings of the Association. The Parliamentarian shall serve as a member of any Judiciary Committee formed to address any relevant matters.

**SECTION 6.12. *Duties of the Public Relations Officer.***

A. The Public Relations Officer shall use a wide range of media to build and sustain the Association’s good image.

B. The Public Relations Officer shall update and distribute promotional materials on the Association through brochures, e-newsletters, videos, and social media:

C. The Public Relations Officer shall serve as a liaison between the Association and other organizations; and

D. The Public Relations Officer shall chair the Communications & Outreach Committee.

**SECTION 6.13. *Role of Appointed Assistant Officers.*** The Board may appoint such other assistant officers as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to assist elected officers as provided in Article X, Administrative officers. These appointees cannot vote, need not be members of the Board and may be employees of the Association.