

# 103.4 Black Rose Election Policy

February 2019

**I. Election Committee and Observers:** The Black Rose Board of Directors (Board) will appoint an Election Chair no later than 15 February each year. The Election Chair will choose/appoint at least one other member to form the committee overseeing the election.

**II. Nominations Window:** Nominations for the Board, Arbiter, and Ombudsman shall open 15 March and shall close 30 April. Names of candidates will be announced as nominations are received (and after verified for eligibility). A recurring update provided to the membership via weekly email.

**III. Eligibility for the Board of Directors:** All candidates for the Board must meet the following qualifications:

(1) Persons wishing to be elected must have been Black Rose members for at least one continuous year<sup>1</sup> prior to 30 April of the year in which they seek election, in good standing, with dues paid in full.

(2) Spouses and/or significant others or any other family members of other candidates and/or of board members may not run for a board seat if it would cause them to serve simultaneously.

(3) Persons wishing to be elected must not have worked as professional dominants or submissives for at least one continuous year by April 30 of the year in which they seek election and cannot work in these roles during their terms.

Anyone running for a board position must have regular access to e-mail (this is the primary method used to communicate between board members, staff, and the membership) and be able to receive emergency phone calls during the day.

**IV. Eligibility for the Position of Arbiter and Ombudsman:** All candidates for the position of Arbiter and Ombudsman must meet all criteria for members seeking election to the Board. In addition, Arbiter and Ombudsman candidates must have the following qualifications:

(1) Candidates must have been a member of Black Rose for at least three continuous years prior to 30 April of the year in which they seek election.

(2) Candidates for election to the Board, seated Board members, and their spouses and/or significant others are not eligible to run for Arbiter or Ombudsman.

(3) Individuals wishing to run for the office of Arbiter or Ombudsman must not have been a member of the Board for one year prior to taking office (i.e., a seated Board Member may not be a candidate for these offices).

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<sup>1</sup> The Neon membership system has an option for automatic renewal that creates a new membership the day after the current membership expires. This will be considered “continuous.” The bylaws allow for a 15-day grace period effective January 1, 2018. This grace period is not retroactive.

Approved by the Board on February 13, 2019.

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**V. Candidate Statements:** All candidates for the Board and the positions of Arbiter and Ombudsman must submit a statement of candidacy of between 50 and 250 words emailed with their request to be placed on the ballot to [elections@br.org](mailto:elections@br.org). The Election Chair will return statements exceeding this limit to the author for re-write in the interest of fairness. If revisions are not received by the due date, the statement will be truncated to 250 words. This statement will be posted on the Black Rose website no later than 15 May, and will be included with the electronic ballot. The statement must be presented to the Election Chair on or before the deadline set for nomination statements (30 April).

Candidates shall provide their legal first name (or middle, if used) and last initial, to be included on the ballot. If specifically requested by the candidate, a scene name may also be included.

**VI. Verification of Member, Voter, and Candidate status:** It is the responsibility of the Membership Director to serve as or appoint a Membership Liaison to the Election Committee to verify membership status of all declared candidates for election to the Board. The Membership Director must notify the Board by 1 May if a Liaison is appointed.

The candidate eligibility information must then be submitted to the Election Chair on or prior to 5 May. The Membership Director or Membership Liaison should verify eligibility within a week of being notified of a candidate's nomination. The Election Chair shall verify legal names by checking government issued identification and conferring with the Membership Director or Membership Liaison to verify the information matches the membership database before the Meet the Candidates Night.

The Membership Director or Membership Liaison will provide the Election Chair with corresponding lists, sorted logically, to verify eligibility of votes.

A file will be provided to the Election Chair in accordance with the service provider's file requirements. Members will use their member numbers for logon IDs. The Election Chair will remove the names of the President and Vice President from the list because they only vote in case of a tie.

Passwords will be created by the Elections Chair and sent to the member. If members do not have a computer or smart phone, they may use the Membership laptop before Tuesday night education meetings to vote; however, the member must have a valid email account for the ballot to be sent. Paper ballots will not be accepted.

**VII. Eligibility to serve as Members of the Election Committee:** Members serving on the Election Committee must be current Black Rose members, and may not be in a close and continuing relationship with candidates or seated Board members. Previously elected or appointed Board members must not have served on the Board for one full fiscal year prior to appointment to any position on the Election Committee. The Black Rose President or Vice President vote only in the event of a tie; as the tiebreakers, they are not eligible to serve on the Election Committee. The Membership Liaison is not eligible to serve on the Election Committee.

**VIII. Publication of Nominees:** Once individual nominees have had their eligibility verified, the Election Chair will ensure that an updated list of nominees is published on the Black Rose website and included in weekly updates via the BR Members email list.

**IX. Meet the Candidates Night:** A single Meet the Candidates Night will be scheduled, in accordance with the bylaws, within the first two weeks of May. The Election Committee will collect questions from the membership and will moderate the meeting. These questions may be submitted in advance by writing to [elections@br.org](mailto:elections@br.org). The Election Committee has the

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authority to rephrase or refuse to address questions that are personal attacks or not germane to the organization and business of Black Rose.

**X. Ballot Eligibility:** All ballots are non-transferable, any found to have been purchased, coerced, hacked, or otherwise improperly or unlawfully directed by outside parties shall be rendered null by a vote from the Election Chair.

**XI. Deadlines for the Election Process:**

15 February: The Board will appoint the Election Chair.

15 March: Nominations for all elected positions open.

15 March: Membership must notify Associate Members living outside the voting states that they are not automatically eligible to vote in the annual BR elections and provide them with instructions on how to request a distance waiver.

8 April 11:59 pm: Distance waiver requests for Associate Members living outside the voting radius must be received by Membership ([membership@br.org](mailto:membership@br.org))

15 April 11:59 pm: Voting members must ensure that their email addresses are correct in order to receive a ballot. The responsibility for certifying a change of email address lies with the individual member, not with Membership or the Election Committee.

15 April 11:59 pm: Any individuals expecting to cast a ballot in the annual election must have joined Black Rose before this deadline.

30 April 11:59 pm: Nominations for all elected positions close. Nominations received later than this deadline will be disqualified.

5 May: Membership will verify the eligibility of all declared candidates to the Election Chair. This deadline is to ensure that the Election Chair can have the candidate statements formatted and available to the membership in time for Meet the Candidates Night.

Second Tuesday in May: Meet the Candidates Night is normally the second Tuesday in May and there is no charge to attend. The meeting is open to current members only. No membership applications will be accepted or processed at this meeting.

10 May: Electronic ballots shall be ready as close to Meet the Candidates Night as possible, but no later than this deadline.

15 May: Ballots to voting members are to be delivered as close to Meet the Candidates Night as possible, but no later than this deadline.

Second Tuesday in June 8:15 pm: All electronic ballots must be cast. There are no provisions in the electronic balloting system to delay the deadline.

Three days after ballots close: The Elections Chair shall send [boardonly@br.org](mailto:boardonly@br.org) the certified elections results with the numbers of ballots cast for each and every candidate. The Elections Chair shall send the membership an email announcing the election winners without the number of ballots cast.

\*\*All times noted are Eastern Time.

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