

Agenda Item 6a.

Election Process for Chair and Vice-Chair – Final Action on 2/10/20

Resolution for Consideration

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission adopts a closed ballot process for the election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair which will take place during closed sessions of the Commission.

Background

The election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission (the Commission) is an administrative function which falls outside of the scope of the Open Meetings Act. Therefore, the election will take place during two separate closed sessions of the Commission. During the closed sessions, candidates for Chair and Vice Chair positions will be given the opportunity to make oral statements to the full Commission regarding their candidacy.

The election will be conducted by means of a closed ballot system: each Commissioner will submit a paper ballot with the name of the Chair or Vice-Chair candidate for whom they are voting. Staff will then count the votes and the candidate receiving the most votes will be announced as the Chair or Vice-Chair. Successful candidates will begin serving in their new role at the next full Commission meeting. The election of the Chair will occur during the March 10, 2020 Commission meeting. The election of the Vice-Chair will occur during the April 13, 2020 meeting.

Election Process Timeline

COMMISSION CHAIR

- February 21, 2020: Commissioners shall submit their nominations for the position of Chair by email directly to Commission staff Sonya Osei and Zenita Hurley by close of business on 2/21/20. Self-nominations will be accepted.
- February 28, 2020: Nominees will receive an email from Commission staff notifying them that they have been nominated and requesting that they respond by: (a) submitting a one paragraph statement about why they are qualified for the position; or (b) stating that they are not interested in being considered. Responses are due by close of business on 2/28/20.
- March 2, 2020: Commission staff will circulate the list of candidates and their statements to Commission members by close of business on 3/2/20.

March 9, 2020: Candidates will be given the opportunity to make oral statements to the Commission. Commission members will then vote for Chair during closed session. The results of the vote will be reported out to the public when the Commission returns to open session.

April 13, 2020: Elected Chair, if new, begins service.

VICE CHAIR

March 20, 2020: Commissioners shall submit their nominations for the positions of Vice Chair by email directly to Commission staff Sonya Osei and Zenita Hurley by close of business on 3/20/20. Self-nominations will be accepted.

March 27, 2020: Nominees will receive an email from Commission staff notifying them that they have been nominated and requesting that they respond by: (a) submitting a one paragraph statement about why they are qualified for the position; or (b) stating that they are not interested in being considered. Responses are due by close of business on 3/27/20.

March 30, 2020: Commission staff will circulate the list of candidates and their statements to Commission members by close of business on 3/30/20.

April 13, 2020: Candidates will be given the opportunity to make oral statements to the Commission. Commission members will then vote for Chair during closed session. The results of the vote will be reported out to the public when the Commission returns to open session.

May 11, 2020: Elected Vice-Chair begins service.

Chair and Vice Chair Duties and Responsibilities

The Commission's Bylaws, adopted on November 16, 2019, set forth the following duties for the Chair and Vice-Chair:

Chair: The Chair speaks on behalf of the Commission and shall preside at all meetings of the Commission. The Chair is the designated signer of papers authorized by the Commission and performs such other duties as the Commission may from time to time assign.

Vice Chair: At the request of or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall perform all of the duties of the Chair, and, while so acting, shall have all the powers and authority of the Chair. In addition, the Vice Chair shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Commission or by the Commission Chair.

Commission Bylaws, Art. IV, Sec. 2.

In addition, Commissioners may wish to consider the following traditional responsibilities of board leadership when nominating/voting for the Chair and Vice-Chair:

- Ensure orderly deliberation and decision-making;
- Build organizational unity, solidarity and trust; demonstrate integrity and ethical leadership;
- Guide the Commission in carrying out its responsibilities;
- Run the meetings according to the organization's procedures/bylaws and the rules of order;
- Initiate the proper processes and procedures to ensure the Commission successfully fulfills its purpose and responsibilities;
- Determine, review and ensure the completeness of Commission agendas and meeting minutes;
- Ensure that the Commission has sufficient and appropriate information to fulfill its responsibilities;
- Encourage participation, ensure individual members do not dominate discussions and that others fully engage in the deliberations;
- Ask questions to make sure all points are covered and understood;
- Summarize discussions noting areas of agreement and disagreement;
- Call for votes on the issue once there has been adequate discussion; and
- Speak on behalf of the Commission stating its position within the areas delegated to him/her.

Adapted from:

<https://www.governancesolutions.ca/governance-solutions/publications/pdfs/Choosing%20a%20Chair.pdf>