

## COCFA PAC POLITICAL CANDIDATE INTERVIEW AND ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

### I. POLITICAL CANDIDATE INTERVIEW AND ENDORSEMENT

- A. COCFA will endorse candidates or officeholders by using a process of interviewing candidates. The Interview Committee shall follow the Procedural Rules in Appendix A and B to conduct its interviews and deliberations.
- B. COCFA will conduct this process in collaboration with the COCFA-PAC. The process will be as follows:
  1. All eligible candidates or officeholders of a particular election cycle for a particular political office will be invited to interview with the COCFA Candidate Interview Committee. An email confirmation will be sent to all candidates. Candidates who have publicly announced their candidacy and/or filed their Declaration of Candidacy with the Board of Elections within 24 hours of the interviews shall be invited to participate.
  2. COCFA will post endorsement timeline to cocfaculty.org website and will make a public announcement at the Santa Clarita Community College Board of Trustees meeting.
  3. Candidates will be interviewed by an interview committee, formally to be named, COCFA Candidate Interview Committee.
    - a. At the discretion of the COCFA Executive Board, the candidate interviews may include other represented groups of College of the Canyons strictly as observers. The other represented groups shall not have the power to change questions asked by COCFA Candidate Interview Committee, but may request additional interview questions to be added at the discretion of the COCFA-PAC and the Executive Board.
    - b. The COCFA interview committee's deliberations and recommendation of endorsement of candidates shall be independent of other groups. This separate deliberation insures that final endorsement rests with COCFA Representative Council.
    - c. The COCFA Executive Board must report to the Representative Council its intention to invite other College of the Canyons' represented groups to the candidate interviews, so as to give the Representative Council the opportunity to direct the Executive Board to reconsider its decision.

4. All interviewees will be asked the same set of questions. Interview questions will be developed by the COCFA-PAC and adopted and approved by the Executive Board. The Executive Board may amend the question list at their discretion.
  - a. The interview questions will be made known and available to the Representative Council and members at large at the conclusion of the interview process.
5. COCFA-PAC and the Executive Board will set the time, date, location and duration of the interview.
6. All invited interviewees who cannot attend the scheduled interview process for unavoidable reasons will be provided an opportunity to submit a written response to the same set of questions that were posed to the other interviewed candidates or officeholders. But it is strongly advised that candidates be present.
7. At the conclusion of candidate interviews, the interview committee will deliberate for a reasonable amount of time in good faith with the intended goal to reach a consensus on whether to recommend any particular candidate or candidates for endorsement to the Representative Council. If no consensus exists, then the interview committee will forward its recommendations and findings to the Representative Council based on a simple majority vote. The interview committee's deliberations will be directed by the chair of the interview committee to ensure equitable participation by all interview committee members.
8. The final decision to endorse rests with the Representative Council. The interview committee will present its recommendations and findings to the council at the next regularly scheduled Representative Council meeting, or sooner if the COCFA President calls for an emergency meeting of the council in order to endorse the candidate in a timely manner.
  - a. The Representative Council will deliberate for a reasonable amount of time in good faith with the intended goal to reach a consensus on whether to endorse any particular candidates. If no consensus exists, then the Representative Council will make its final determination to endorse or not endorse a particular candidate based on a two-thirds majority vote. The COCFA President will chair the deliberations process to ensure equitable participation of all council members. The COCFA President may delegate his/her duties over this process.
  - b. In the event the interview committee concludes no candidate should receive the endorsement of COCFA, the Representative Council may not, thereafter, choose to endorse any candidate for the particular political office for the election cycle

- c. The Representative Council may only endorse one candidate per office. The Santa Clarita Community College District Board of Trustees hold specific offices that are separate from one another. Whether to endorse unopposed candidates is at the purview of the Representative Council. Regardless of endorsement, PAC funds from CTA's ABC Committee shall never be spent on unopposed candidates.
    - d. During deliberations, the Representative Council will have access to the interview questions posed to the candidates and officeholders as well as the summaries of the respective candidates' answers that were taken during the interview process.
    - e. The Representative Council endorsement decisions must be accomplished in one COCFA Representative Council meeting. It is understood that this meeting may be an extended meeting.
  - 9. COCFA may issue letters of endorsement/recommendation or statements of endorsement/recommendation with reasons for the endorsement/recommendation for purposes of press releases or member education after approval.
- C. Deliberation procedures. This meeting shall be a single, extended COCFA Representative Council session. COCFA President may chair the endorsement meeting or appoint another Executive Board member to chair the endorsement meeting.
  - 1. Presentation of Interview Committee Findings. Each member of the Representative Council will be provided a copy of the conclusions and findings of the COCFA-PAC Candidate Interview Committee. Included in the packet will be documentation necessary for the Council to make a final determination of whether to endorse or not endorse a particular candidate.
    - a. Each set of documents provided to the members of the Representative Council will include:
      - 1) Summary of COCFA-PAC Candidate Interview Committee Recommendations
      - 2) Summaries of Individual Candidate Responses to Committee Questions
      - 3) Candidate Bio Contact Form

- 4) Candidate Statements/Endorsement Forms voluntarily brought to the interview by the candidates themselves.
  - b. Members of the Representative Council are encouraged to review these documents, particularly, the *Summary of COCFA-PAC Candidate Interview Committee Recommendations*. When the Chair of the Representative Council believes a reasonable amount of time has passed for Council members to have familiarized themselves with the written documentation, he or she will call for the deliberation process to begin.
2. Deliberations. The Chair shall ensure equitable opportunity for input by all members of the Council. No vote or conclusion for an endorsement shall be held until at least one round of deliberations among all present and attending members of the Council has been completed.
  3. Voting Procedures.
    - a. When the Chair believes a reasonable amount of time has passed to warrant an initial vote, the chair shall call for Council members to nominate a candidate, or candidates, for the Council's endorsement. All nominated candidates require a seconded motion of nomination from another Council member. After nominations have been completed, the Chair will call a vote for nominated candidates in the order the nominations were received by the Chair. Council members shall be allowed to motion for further deliberations if they believe the additional discussion is necessary to better formulate their respective positions. Calling for further deliberations after the Chair has called for nominations also requires a second supporting motion.
    - b. If there is more than one Board of Trustees seat up for election, the Chair will ensure to segregate the candidate nominations by the particular seats and correlating candidate filings for those particular seats. The Council can only recommend one candidate per available political seat. Consequently, Council members must decide which candidate, per seat, they will cast their vote in support of for endorsement. Council members cannot vote in the affirmative more than once for candidates seeking the same political seat. There is only one affirmative vote allotted per Council member per available political seat. However, there is no limit on a Council member's right to vote in the negative.
    - c. There is no requirement that a Council member vote in the affirmative for a nominated candidate. There is no requirement

that the Council as a whole must endorse a candidate. The council members also have the option of making a motion specifically to take no position whatsoever on a particular candidate. If no nominations are made, the absence of a nomination shall be interpreted as a decision by the Council as a whole, not to endorse any candidate for that particular political seat.

- d. Any other outside material, information or hearsay that cannot be conclusively and factually attributed to the candidates will be excluded from deliberations. Any additional information to be admitted to the deliberations process must be approved by the Chair overseeing the deliberations process.
  - e. In reaching a conclusion, the Council should seek to finalize its decisions to endorse a candidate or not to endorse a candidate first by consensus, and in the alternative, by two-thirds majority vote.
4. Representative Council Conclusions. If the Council, by consensus or majority vote, concludes it will endorse a candidate or candidates, it must summarize the reasoning and rationale for its decision in writing. If the Council, by consensus or majority vote, concludes it will not endorse a candidate or candidates, it must summarize the reasoning and rationale for its decision in writing. The summary shall be drafted by the Chair of the Representative Council, or by an appointee of the Chair. The Chair shall submit the summary to the members of the COCFA Executive Board and the COCFA Political Action Committee. The summary of findings will guide the drafting of a COCFA press release and other endorsing materials.
5. Subsequent COCFA-PAC Actions. If the Representative Council endorses a particular candidate for an available political seat, the COCFA-PAC Chair will subsequently inform the Council of potential campaign/election options and will seek Council input. Specifically, the Council should provide opinions as to whether to disperse COCFA-PAC funds to the endorsed candidate or candidates in support of their election and candidacy, and whether to conduct political organizing on behalf of the endorsed candidate or candidates.