

ASTAC IS MODERNIZING ITS ANNUAL MEETING VOTING PROCESS

As our longtime subscribers are aware, ASTAC has traditionally required its members to appear at annual meetings in person to vote for board members and bylaw amendments. This process was originally required by our bylaws and Alaska law. Alaska law has been revised and now allows the Cooperative to offer voting by mail and electronically at the annual meetings as an option. Adopting a voting by mail procedure will allow participation in the election process by members who are travelling or who are physically unable to attend a village meeting. To modernize our voting procedures, the Cooperative will propose a bylaw amendment at the 2017 annual member meetings which will allow for both voting by mail and electronically. Approval of this bylaw is required in order for the bylaws of the Cooperative to comply with state law.

For the 2017 annual meetings, the Cooperative will provide for voting by mail. A ballot and an envelope with postage and the Cooperative's return address will accompany the annual meeting notice this year. The notice, ballot and return envelope will be mailed around June 1, 2017 to allow time for the members to vote and return their ballots prior to the commencement of this year's annual meetings.

It will be important to read the voting instructions in the meeting notice carefully. In order for a mailed in ballot to be counted, it must be filled in by or at the direction of the member shown on the application for service held by the Cooperative. The ballot will then need to be inserted in the return envelope. The member will then need to print and sign his, her or its name on the back of the return envelope and put it in the mail for return to the Cooperative. The ballot must be mailed back so that it is received by the Cooperative by July 3, 2017 in order to be counted.

In addition, ASTAC is adjusting the deadline for submitting nominating petitions prior to commencement of the 2017 annual member meetings. As in the past, members in Anaktuvuk Pass, Kaktovik, Nuiqsut and Wainwright may nominate additional candidates for the board positions open in their respective districts by submitting a petition signed fifteen (15) or more members in good standing. Any such petitions must be received in the main office of the Cooperative in Anchorage by no later than May 15, 2017, in order for these nominees to appear on the official ballots. No more than four nominees may run for each of the open seats on the board of directors. Petitions will be accepted in the order in which they are received by the Cooperative at its main office. Nominations will no longer be taken from the floor of an annual member meeting.

In order to qualify as a candidate for an open seat of the board of directors, the nominee must be a subscriber in good standing or the authorized representative of a subscriber in good standing. The nominee must also be in good standing on the date of the district election. The nominee must be a full time resident of or maintain his or her primary place of employment in the district where the board seat is open. The nominee may not be an employee of the Cooperative or in any way employed by or financially interested in an enterprise that competes with Cooperative or in one or more of its subsidiaries, with wholesale, resale, resale exchange, interconnection, competitive local exchange service provider or is involved in a joint venture or other business relationship with the Cooperative or one of its subsidiaries or a business engaged in selling telephone supplies, or constructing or maintaining telephone facilities.

ASTAC hope the members will find the new voting option to be convenient and useful. Any member having questions regarding the new voting by mail process should contact Megan Clapper at 907-564-2601, the main office of the Cooperative in Anchorage, Alaska.