ELECTION PROCEDURE FOR
THE LOCAL LITTLE LEAGUE

This excerpt was taken from the “Hometown Little League”
document Chapter 2 – FALL

Hometown Little League, like many leagues, tends to rest in the Fall. Sure, Hometown
has a “Second Season” program (Training and Development, discussed in the Summer
section of this publication.) But since most people associate baseball and softball with
Spring and Summer, interest in the local league naturally wanes when the weather gets
cooler. The Fall can set the tone for the entire coming season.
The groundwork for the success (or lack of it) of a season can often be found in how
well (or how poorly) the league conducts its operations during this time of year. The
keys, as with much of Little League, are proper communication and
application of Rules, Regulations and Policies.

Notice of Election
Hometown Little League’s constitution is the same as the Model Constitution,
recommended for adoption by local leagues, with all the optional spaces checked off or
the blanks filled in. This constitution was written with the specific purpose of giving a
local league a document that conforms to Robert’s Rules of Order, State Laws, Federal
Laws and Little League Rules, Regulations and Policies. At Hometown Little League,
written notice of the election (Annual Meeting) is delivered to all Regular Members in
good standing, at least 10 days before the election. The process is by mail, unless an
alternate process has been approved
by the membership (not the board) in advance of the Annual Meeting. A sample letter
from Hometown Little League to its members is included with this book.
The notice includes the date, time and place of the Annual Meeting. (Model
Constitution, Article V, Section 6.) Membership, and who should have it, is discussed
later in this chapter.

Absensee Ballot
Because proxy voting is no longer recommended, the accepted practice is now
absentee voting. If properly supervised, absentee voting affords far less chance of the
election being “rigged.” (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 5.) At Hometown Little
League, the absentee ballot is only distributed when requested by a Member. It must be
obtained IN PERSON from the league secretary, in a sealed envelope. The ballot itself
lists plenty of blank spaces for the number
of board of directors likely to be elected, according to the number listed in the
constitution. At Hometown Little League, the minimum is six. (Model Constitution, Article
V, Section 6 b.) The voters list their chosen candidates in order of preference. There is
no requirement to fill in all spaces on the ballot. The Member, in person, returns ballots,
in a sealed envelope, to the secretary. A sample absentee ballot for Hometown Little
League is included in this book.
Election Day
Usually, the best time to hold the election is the last week of September. This is because the fiscal year for Little League Baseball, Incorporated, starts on October 1 of each year. Electing a board in the spring or summer is allowed, but results in a “lame duck” board being in control for an extended period of time, until the fiscal year starts. Here is the sequence of events that should take place at the Annual Meeting for Hometown Little League:

Election Procedures for Hometown Little League
• Determine if a quorum is present. The quorum at Hometown Little League is one-third, as listed in the constitution.
• If a quorum is not present, the election cannot be held. (Robert’s Rules of Order.)
• Membership should be limited to those who qualify as volunteers. Leagues having difficulty obtaining a quorum usually consider all parents to be Members.
• Appoint an election Chairperson. (May or may not be the current president.)
• Ratify the Membership and Membership list for those present, by election. (In other words, the Members elect new Members for the coming year.) (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.)
• Determine how many people will serve on the board of directors. The number must be at least the number listed in the constitution. Hometown Little League settles on 15. They could settle on less than 15, but not less than six, since the Hometown constitution calls for a minimum of six. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 b.)
• The nominating committee presents its report on those who have agreed to serve. Nominations are not by position. The nominating committee should begin its work in June. (Model Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.)
• Nominations are opened to the floor. Any Member is eligible for nomination. (Robert’s Rules of Order.)
• Nominations are closed by vote of Membership.
• Every Regular Member receives one ballot.
• Voters list names of eligible candidates in the number previously determined. (Fifteen or less at Hometown for this season.) Exception: Absentee ballots are voted according to preference and may list more than the pre-determined number.
• Nominees must receive at least 51 percent of the vote to be elected.
• New board is announced.
• Membership votes to approve the results of the election.
• New board meets to elect officers from among its number (required). At a minimum, the officers are: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, player agent, safety officer, league information officer, coaching coordinator. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 d; Regulation I b.)
• Establish meeting dates for board.

First official responsibilities: Notify the district administrator, Regional Headquarters and International Headquarters, by mail, of the results of the election. (Must include proper addresses and telephone numbers of board officers.) If the league has a PO Box (recommended), supply headquarters with a physical address so packages can be shipped. At this time, the Board of Directors should also appoint a committee to conduct the background checks of board members and other volunteers and/or hired workers who provide regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. [Regulation I (b) and I (c) 8 and 9]
Little League Baseball recommends the board of directors appoint the local league president and two other individuals to handle the background checks. These individuals may be from the board or individuals outside the board. For instance, the board of directors may appoint individuals who have significant professional background in this area, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background.

Membership
At Hometown Little League, there are two types of members: regular members and player members. This section deals with regular members — the people usually defined as eligible to vote at the annual meeting and other general membership meetings. Regular members of Hometown Little League include, by definition, all current managers, coaches, volunteer umpires, board members, officers of the board, “team moms/dads,” volunteer maintenance workers, volunteer concession stand workers, etc. Just who exactly is a member is defined in the Hometown Little League Constitution. (Model Constitution, Article III, Section 2 b).
One of the worst mistakes any league can make is to define its membership as all the parents in the league. Think of it the same way as any parent/teacher organization in a school. Simply having a child in the school does not mean you are a member of the organization. You must DO SOMETHING to be a member — even if it’s simply to pay the annual dues.
So it is with a regular membership in a Little League program. The registration fee paid at Hometown Little League does not include dues for being a regular member. In fact, the league does not even solicit for new regular members at registration time, since it knows a majority of the parents who sign their children up will probably not attend general membership meetings.
Hometown Little League requires those who wish to be regular members to pay $5 in dues annually. If dues are not paid prior to one day before the annual meeting, the member is dropped from the rolls. However, your league could choose to waive a membership fee for the volunteers mentioned earlier in this section. A league that includes all of its participants’ parents in membership is inviting problems, such as:

• The single parent of four children in the league could charge the system is unfair, and he/she should have FOUR votes.
• Which parent gets to vote? If both get to vote, the single parent above has an even more compelling argument of unfairness.
• The normal quorum for a meeting is one-third of the members. In a league with 200 participants, this could result in more than 400 eligible members, requiring more than 132 members to be present before any business can be conducted. If business is conducted with fewer members, the election could be challenged.

To view the “A Year In The Life Of Hometown Little League” please click here.

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