

how

YOUR ELECTED GOVERNMENT WORKS

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD IS A REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY RUN BY MEMBERS FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS.

The Guild is governed by a National Constitution and By-Laws, which have been written and adopted by performers to provide an organized system for the greater good of the entire membership.

The first Screen Actors Guild Constitution was written in 1933 to create a basic form of government for the institution. Over the years, the framework has changed, but it continues to ensure the representation of performers nationwide.

The current governance structure of Screen Actors Guild is comprised of a National Board of Directors, National Executive Committee, Division Board of Directors and Branch Councils (see chart on next page).

NATIONAL BOARD of DIRECTORS

The highest policy making body of the Guild is the National Board of Directors. Elected by the membership, the National Board is responsible for setting strategic direction and overseeing the general management and control of the affairs, funds and property of the Guild.

Some of the specific responsibilities include:

- 1) approval of the Guild's strategic plan,
- 2) approval of the budget and financial plan,
- 3) general oversight of member benefit programs and projects,
- 4) approval of amendments to major collective bargaining agreements and agency regulations with referral to a membership referendum vote where necessary,
- 5) approval of dues assessments and initiation fees to a membership referendum vote and
- 6) all decisions regarding the employment of a national executive director.

The 2007-2008 National Board of Directors consists of two national officers—president and secretary-treasurer—and 69 national directors (33 representatives from the Hollywood Division, 14 from the New York Division and 22 from the Regional Branch Division). The president and secretary-treasurer serve two-year

terms while national directors serve three-year terms, unless otherwise required to provide for staggered terms.

NATIONAL OFFICERS and EXECUTIVE STAFF

The top leadership positions of the Guild are the president, secretary-treasurer, 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, 3rd vice president and national executive director.

The leader of the National Board of Directors is the president. The president serves as the chief elected officer and chairman of the board. The president, in consultation with the national executive director and national vice presidents, establishes the annual meeting schedule and determines the order of business for the agenda at each meeting.

The liaison to the National Board of Directors for budgetary and financial matters is the secretary-treasurer. The secretary-treasurer serves as chairperson of the Finance Committee, which is responsible for guiding budgeting activities, monitoring financial performance and overseeing investment managers and the professional auditor in alignment with the Guild's financial philosophy.

Following the annual election, the national directors from each division elect a vice president. The 1st vice president is elected to represent the division with the largest number of members (Hollywood), the 2nd vice president the division with the second-largest number of members (New York) and the 3rd vice president the division with the smallest number of members (regional branches). Vice presidents usually also serve as chairpersons to the appropriate division board of directors.

The national executive director serves as chief contract negotiator, is responsible for the administration of the organization and reports to the National Board of Directors. The national executive director directly oversees the team of executive staff responsible for the execution and implementation of National Board directives.

MEETINGS of the NATIONAL BOARD of DIRECTORS

The National Board of Directors meets in session approximately four times per year in person and by video conference. The sessions are typically held on Saturdays and Sundays. A few weeks prior to each meeting, the National Board members receive a meeting agenda with a summary of pertinent information on matters to be discussed and voted upon.

Meetings are called to order by the presiding officer and board members promptly take their seats. The members are then led through the Pledge of Allegiance and receive a board replacement report, which includes the names of designated alternate national directors who will be serving in place of national directors who are unable to attend the meeting. Agenda items are then reviewed in order, unless otherwise approved by the National Board.

As business is discussed, motions are made from the floor and presented to the body for consideration. Motions are formal proposals made by members to take certain action on items and require that at least one other member of the body agrees that it should be considered. Once there is

agreement that the matter should be considered, the floor is open for discussion and debate. Members may debate the issue until 2/3 of the votes of its members believe that debate should be closed. Voting on the issue may then be conducted by voice vote, raised voting sticks, roll call vote or secret ballot. The appropriate method of voting is at the discretion of the National Board.

Each member of the National Board is entitled to at least one vote on any matter which comes before it. However, certain members are entitled to a weighted vote, which is currently 2.286, to ensure that the votes of directors in each division are proportional to the percentage of the membership which the directors in those divisions represent. The weighted vote is recalculated every two years to reflect any percent changes to the membership.

Most actions approved throughout the course of a meeting are policy-related or instructions for staff to carry out directives of the board. Occasionally, the board will enter into executive session or the presiding officer may invoke the rule of confidentiality (Rule 10 of the Guild's Rules and Regulations). This is a longstanding process whereby the board may discuss certain matters of a sensitive nature—such as financial matters, personnel issues, issues

regarding negotiations or information that is attorney-client privileged. When this occurs, all observers are excused. Typically, staff members are excused as well, although the board often requests that key staff remain when needed for purposes of the discussion or for administrative purposes.

During the rest of the year, national directors often attend division board and/or branch council meetings, in addition to participating in committee and other Guild related activities.

It is important to note that your elected officials serve as volunteers and are not paid for their services. The union is grateful for their tireless efforts and meaningful contributions to better the lives of working performers. Each one of us can make a difference. Get Involved! ■

