

# National Youth Rights Association Meeting Minutes 11/12/06

## Roll Call

### Present

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Scott Davidson       | (President)          |
| Alex Hull-Richter    | (Director)           |
| Rich Jahn            | (Secretary)          |
| Adam King            | (Vice President)     |
| Alex Koroknay-Palicz | (Executive Director) |
| Keith Mandell        | (Director)           |
| Katrina Moncure      | (Director)           |
| Pamela Tatz          | (Director)           |

### Absent

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Jessica Campbell | (Director)  |
| Zach Hobesh      | (Treasurer) |

## Agenda

1. Bylaws amendment for tallying votes (old business)
2. Support for Our Education
3. NYRA's Myspace group
4. Zach's proposal concerning the forums
5. Board Member Attendance Policy

## Reports

Scott Davidson reported he had solicited donations with Alex Koroknay-Palicz. He also wrote a letter to Rep. George Miller thanking him for his support of youth rights and asking him about supporting lowering the voting age. George Miller had criticized a search bill and introduced a bill to regulate behavior modification schools. Scott also helped campaign against Rep. Fitzpatrick in Bucks County. Scott viewed him as one of the worst enemies of youth rights in congress, and he ended up losing by less than 1%.

Adam King submitted a report by email. Adam reported he had continued researching the organization Our Education. Adam also reported the chapter formation staff had not held a meeting, and he had maintained minimal contact with the regional captains. Adam reported the captains were not fulfilling all of their duties and applications were still being accepted for additional regional captains. Adam reported his guest column about school board issues had been published in his school newspaper, and his column would continue to be published on a regular basis.

Alex Koroknay-Palicz reported he had done a lot of work on the NYRA website including altering the page format for articles. Alex also reported NYRA had a balance of \$2,851.18.

Rich Jahn reported he had made some minor edits to his proposed bylaw amendment, and emailed them to the bylaws committee.

# Old Business

## Bylaws amendment for tallying votes

Two proposals were put forward, one by Rich Jahn and one by Alex Koroknay-Palicz.

### Rich Jahn's proposal

A new section to the bylaws called TALLYING OF VOTES with the following bylaws.

- 1) A majority vote will require favoring votes to be greater than opposing votes.
- 2) A two-thirds (2/3) vote will require favoring votes to be at least two times the number of opposing votes.
- 3) A three-fourths (3/4) vote will require favoring votes to be at least three times the number of opposing votes.
- 4) Decisions made by the board of directors will only be effective if the sum of favoring and opposing votes is at least the quorum.
- 5) Candidates for the board of directors will be selected by single transferable vote using the ERS97 method published by the Electoral Reform Society.
- 6) Stated abstentions will be allowed in elections and illegal or blank votes will be counted as abstentions.
- 7) Decisions at election time requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote will only be effective if fewer than one-third (1/3) of members participating in the election abstained. Similarly a majority vote will require fewer than half to abstain and a three-fourths (3/4) vote will require fewer than one-fourth (1/4) to abstain.

Additionally minor edits were made to the rest of the bylaws where voting was mentioned. All references to voting were changed to the concise wording "majority vote", "two-thirds vote", or "three-fourths vote."

### Alex Koroknay-Palicz's proposal

In all votes, be they by the board or the membership, yes or no votes shall at least equal the threshold for passing the measure to be considered a valid vote. If, due to abstentions, the combined yes & no votes fail to meet the threshold for passing, the measure fails.

### Discussion

Rich Jahn pointed out that his proposal differed from Alex's in how board voting was handled, and also covering other areas his did not, such as specifying the single transferable vote (STV) method for elections.

Alex contended that Rich's proposal was excessively complicated, but Rich Jahn pointed out how the wording Alex chose was imprecise.

Alex pointed out how for a three-fourths vote, 4 voting in favor, 1 opposing, and 4 abstaining would fail under his proposal but pass under Rich's.

The board voted to adopt Rich Jahn's proposal.

# Business

## Support for Our Education

Adam King said he thought signing the endorsement letter as is would go against Resolution 00-L, which forbids NYRA from taking up issues to do with public school funding.

<http://www.oured.org/pdf/endorsementletter.pdf>

Alex Koroknay-Palicz said he support the work of Our Education such as getting students on school boards, but that it seems their main thrust is simply increasing public school funding which would go against Resolution 00-L.

Scott Davidson also felt Our Education was beyond the scope of youth rights, but he believed we should still try to get a delegate at their student bill of rights conference. Scott suggested Adam King.

Katrina Moncure said that NYRA should be able to support other organizations that support issues on NYRA's agenda, regardless if those organizations also support other issues NYRA does not.

Adam King noted MAY, Sound Out, and Rock the Vote all support Our Education.

Adam suggested contacting Our Education to find out if they support compulsory schooling. Scott and Alex warned that this might not be a fair litmus test, since nearly everyone supports compulsory schooling. Adam clarified that if they actively supported compulsory schooling, such as raising the minimum age to 18, then NYRA should not support them.

Keith Mandell said he thought networking with Our Education would be a positive benefit for NYRA.

Scott and Alex pointed out that from the website and endorsement letter it was clear Our Education was an organization primarily concerned with more school funding for a higher quality of education rather than student rights.

The consensus of the board was that NYRA should not sign the endorsement letter, since NYRA does not work to increase school funding. However, the board felt NYRA should still try to contact Our Education and work with them on issues both organizations work on. Also, everyone agreed NYRA should still try to attend the student bill of rights conference.

### **NYRA's Myspace group**

Katrina Moncure said to check out the NYRA myspace group at <http://groups.myspace.com/nyra>. It had grown to 518 members. Katrina wanted more NYRA members to participate because a significant number of youth rights opponents were posting there.

### **Zach's proposal concerning the forums**

This agenda item was postponed due to Zach Hobesh's absence.

### **Board Member Attendance Policy**

Adam King noted that according to the bylaws, Jessica Campbell's seat on the board of directors was now vacated due to violation of the board meeting attendance policy.

The bylaws stated:

The office of director shall be automatically vacated:

...

if a director fails to attend or participate in all meetings of the board of directors for a period of two consecutive months or three consecutive meetings, whichever time period is longer. A director is considered in attendance if he votes on one-half (1/2) of matters put to a vote, and/or contributes to the discussion. This also applies to non-director officers.

Also:

Any vacancy on the board may be filled by appointment by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the board of directors, binding until the next annual general election.

However, Adam noted the vote for appointing a new board director should go through the nominations committee first. Adam also pointed out that since Jessica Campbell was on the nominations committee, a new committee member would need to be appointed. Adam nominated Keith Mandell, and Keith accepted.

Rich Jahn pointed out that in the past the automatic removal policy had been ignored, and the board always voted to remove a director. However, since the bylaws state board directors are removed automatically, such votes were moot.

Alex Hull-Richter suggested finding out why Jessica Campbell was missing meetings. Pamela Tatz also suggested the nominations committee wait to hear from Jessica.

Katrina Mocure said she did not believe Jessica Campbell should be removed. Adam King said he agreed, but the bylaws would have to be amended.

Scott Davidson asked that the nominations committee meet before the next board meeting.

Adam King motioned to amend the bylaws to state the board or nominations committee will review a director who is in violation of the attendance policy. The board voted to adopt this amendment.

## Other Discussion

Scott Davidson suggested discussing strategy. With the democratically controlled congress, the greatest youth rights allies in congress, Waters and Kucinich, have become more powerful. Alex Hull-Richter knows both personally. Scott also noted that Jessica's representative Peter Defazio seemed supportive of youth rights. Also John Hall, although he was reluctant on lowering the voting age, was replacing a woman Scott considered to be the most ageist representative in Washington. Scott suggested contacting all supportive legislators to get written statements from them. Scott also suggested contacting Ron Paul.

Alex Hull-Richter also mentioned he had two resolutions up before the state resolutions committee in December. Also, his club voted to recognize Jesse Hunter with an American Hero Award.

## Resolutions

### **06-07 Res. 13 – Bylaw Section for Tallying of Votes**

A new section to the bylaws called TALLYING OF VOTES with the following bylaws.

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**Votes For**

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Scott Davidson  | (President)      |
| Adam King       | (Vice President) |
| Keith Mandell   | (Director)       |
| Katrina Moncure | (Director)       |
| Pamela Tatz     | (Director)       |

**Votes Against**

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Alex Hull-Richter    | (Director)           |
| Alex Koroknay-Palicz | (Executive Director) |

**Absent**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Jessica Campbell | (Director)  |
| Zachary Hobesh   | (Treasurer) |

**06-07 Res. 14 – Amend bylaws to have board or nominations committee review directors violating the attendance policy**

**Votes For**

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Alex Hull-Richter | (Director)       |
| Adam King         | (Vice President) |
| Keith Mandell     | (Director)       |
| Katrina Moncure   | (Director)       |
| Pamela Tatz       | (Director)       |

**Votes Against**

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Scott Davidson | (President) |
|----------------|-------------|

**Absent**

|                      |                      |
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| Jessica Campbell     | (Director)           |
| Zachary Hobesh       | (Treasurer)          |
| Alex Koroknay-Palicz | (Executive Director) |