

# Chapter Delegate Report

By Mark Kienert

This is a summary report to the membership of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association of the voting results of the GCSAA annual meeting in Dallas, Texas during the 65th International Turfgrass Conference and Show on February 7, 1994.

When analyzing the fifteen separate bylaws votes cast in this year's balloting, the end results can be directly linked to the chapter delegates meeting held in September of 1993 in Lawrence, Kansas. It was there that simple debate created the overwhelming support for the adoption of eight of the fifteen proposed bylaws changes. As it has been reported in many of our trade publications, the proposed changes were a rehash of many of the measures that were soundly defeated by the chapter voting delegates in Anaheim in January of 1993.

In what can now be termed an understated "backlash", a large voting block of highly motivated delegates voted against the progressive desires of the "old guard." The most controversial of issues (e.g. individual voting, field staff members) were left off the ballot. The others were separated and reviewed as individual items. The board of directors of the GCSAA felt that this was an effort to guard against "throwing the baby out with the bath water" as many of those issues were of considerable merit and warranted a second look. Those issues were debated, revised and sent to the bylaws committee for their review and subsequent authorization to place those issues on the ballot for membership vote.

There were close to 5,500 ballots cast in this year's referendum, second highest vote totals when compared to last years record turnout. The bylaws proposals that succeeded with an excess of 5,000 votes were as follows:

Ballot 1 (Eliminated the word Green Keeper from the articles of incorporation.) Ballot 2 (Changed the bylaws to reflect the change in Ballot 1.)

Ballot 9 (Suspension of membership privileges for perjury.)

Ballot 11 (Made secretary/treasurers position an elected one.)

Ballot 12 (2/3rds vote of board required to indebt future Boards.)

Ballot 13 (Makes secretary/treasurers position an officer position.)

Ballot 14 (Changes the title of executive director to CEO.)

Ballot 15 (Established the trustees of the benevolence fund.)

The only two issues that failed to achieve the required two-thirds majority vote for passage were the issues that dealt with the creation of numerous "Class D" memberships (Ballot 5), and the establishment of classifications for "Club Officials" (ballot 6). However, those measures would have passed in an election governed by a simple majority of votes!

Other measures that were passed to amend the association's bylaws were:

Ballot 3 (Gives the board the right to develop standing rules for new membership classifications.)

Ballot 4 (Established a "Class C" classification for assistant golf course superintendents.)

Ballot 7 (Established membership classifications for educators and extension personnel.)

Ballot 8 (Allowed for the establishment of membership dues by delegate voting.)

Ballot 10 (Would publish how chapter delegates voted on issues in "Newswire.")

The election of officers for 1994-95 saw Joseph Baidy from the Acacia Country Club in Lyndhurst, Ohio elected to the position of president. Gary Grigg from the Naples Golf Club in Naples, Florida was elected to serve as vice president. For one remaining year, Bruce Williams of the Bob O'Link Golf Club in Highland Park, Illinois was appointed to serve as secretary/treasurer for this year. Changes in the bylaws will now make this an elected position in 1995.

Those nominated to serve the various lengths of terms for the position of director of the association were Bruce Williams (4460 votes); Paul McGinnis from the Union Hills Country Club in Sun City, Arizona (3750 votes and); R. Scott Woodhead from the Valley View Golf Club in Bozeman, Montana (3399

votes); Appointed to fill the one year term left vacant by the appointment of Bruce Williams to the position of secretary/treasurer was Tommy Witt from the Bent Tree Country Club in Dallas, Texas (2905 votes).

A major disappointment and an indication that "The Big Machine Politics" of the association is still alive and well was the defeat of Charlie Passios of the Hyannisport Club in Hyannisport, Massachusetts. All indications are that he wasn't able to carry one large chapter voting block in his quest to return to the GCSAA board after having been a victim of last year's fallout. In my mind, it is too bad that so few control so many of the votes.

It is for this reason that I would propose and would like to see the development of the midwestern chapters into a strong voting block to maintain a balance of power. I would call it a "Conference of State Chapters". It is very doubtful, under the present system, that this effort would ever work. But as it stands now, there are no checks or balances in place to provide any measures to guard against special interest projects being force upon us by any large voting block that is capable of supporting such a special interest measure.

As long as you've read this far and I still have your attention, here's to the hope that the GCSAA never again takes our association conference to the "Detroit of the South,"—Dallas, Texas. And I was one of the fortunate to have stayed in the Stouffers Hotel. Very nice, if it wouldn't have cost me a month's wages for cab fare to attend the various functions and to find a spot for dinner since there were no restaurants within a safe walking distance. Should have rented a car.

The convention center was nice, but the transportation to the conference center and the hotels left a lot to be desired. In my mind, they should have had one bus route that serviced the enormous number of guests that stayed at the Loews Anatole. This hotel saw many of our group walk to register for a room after the deplorable conditions of their original hotel choice was too much to handle after a couple of nights. I can still hear the groan of those of us on the bus when the bus driver would ask for a show of hands from those needing to be dropped off at the Travel-lodge. Yuk!

"San Francisco, here we come!" 🌿