



**SF Bicycle Coalition Board of Directors Election
Candidate Handbook
August 2016**

So, you've decided to run for a seat on the Board of Directors for the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition. Congratulations!

Whether this is your first time on a board or you're a seasoned nonprofit board president, we hope this handbook will help you better understand the roles and responsibilities of serving on the SF Bicycle Coalition board, as well as the plans and key dates for the upcoming election process. This resource was created by board and staff members and will be shared online, as well as directly with all declared board candidates.

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1. What are the roles & responsibilities of the SF Bicycle Coalition Board of Directors?

The top responsibilities of the 15-member SF Bicycle Coalition Board of Directors include fiduciary oversight, governance duties, strategic direction and fundraising — all with the goal of advancing the mission and organizational health of the SF Bicycle Coalition.

Board members are active SF Bicycle Coalition members, participate in regular meetings and attend public events, such as member gatherings and fundraising events. The board plays an important role in representing the organization on group rides and at major events, such as Bike to Work Day.

2. How much time does board service take?

Most board members volunteer an average of two-to-four hours weekly, including evenings and weekends, with some seasons busier than others. Members attend monthly all-board meetings, regular committee meetings (everyone serves on two-to-three committees) and an annual all-day retreat.

3. What other commitments are there?

Board members are asked to attend major events, such as Winterfest and Golden Wheel; help solicit donations and sponsorships twice a year; and directly contribute to the financial health of the organization by being a major donor and/or garnering support from others.

4. How does one become a board member?

Each year, half of the 15 board seats are up for election to a two-year term. Any current SF Bicycle Coalition member is eligible to run and is asked to comply with the designated process and deadlines, as explained further below. All current members may vote (see deadline for eligibility below). We are preparing now for the 2016 board elections, with voting later this year (more details below).

If you're considering board service, here are a few recommended steps to take:

- Read the [2017-2018 Skills and Qualities](#) document to learn more about the specific top needs, professional skills and characteristics that have been identified as board priorities for this year's candidates.
- Review the **election process and timeline below**, which include election timeline, communications, rules of engagement and next steps.
- Come to an upcoming board meeting to learn more about how the board functions. Upcoming meetings include Aug. 30, Sept. 27, and Oct. 25, all 6:30 - 8:30 pm at the SF Bicycle Coalition office. All meetings are listed on our [events calendar](#). No RSVP necessary.

- Be available to meet with a current board member to ask questions or learn more about their experiences.
- **Extended deadline: By 5:00 pm, Sept. 9**, complete our [online candidate questionnaire](#) and e-mail a current resume to boardnomination@sfbike.org. Resumes will not be shared publicly. All candidates will then be contacted to schedule an in-person meeting with members of the Board.
- **Sept. 29** All interested candidates are asked to attend an election kickoff meeting at the SF Bicycle Coalition offices to review the process, meet fellow candidates, and ask questions.

Get additional information on these and other board-related topics at www.sfbike.org/news/2016-board-elections/.

*Note: Per SF Bicycle Coalition bylaws, any member in good standing by Nov. 4 may nominate themselves or another member as a candidate. The questionnaire has been developed to provide members with more information on candidates and to give candidates an additional way to communicate to members regarding their qualifications and experience.

5. What are key dates/deadlines in the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition's Board election this year?

A. Like many events, from surprise birthday parties to concerts at Stern Grove, many months and many people are involved in the planning. The election process for the Board of the SF Bicycle Coalition is no different. Here are the major moments in the 2016 SF Bicycle Coalition Board elections:

- **Summer 2016** Promotion of board election amongst members and encouragement of interested members to declare their interest, including a meet & greet of prospects.
- **Aug. 23, 2016** SF Bicycle Coalition Board election materials posted online at sfbike.org: Candidate Handbook and Questionnaire.
- **Sept. 9, 2016** Deadline for all interested Board candidates to submit completed questionnaire and resume to boardnomination@sfbike.org.
- **Starting Sept. 9, 2016** Current board sets up one-on-one meetings with all Board candidates to answer questions and share more information about Board service. Depending on the number of candidates, these meetings will extend over several weeks, ending before the October Board meeting.
- **Sept. 29, 2016** Staff meets with all available candidates to review the election process and answer any questions.
- **Oct. 25, 2016** Regular meeting of Board of Directors to review interest level and prospects and to assess match with [priority skills & qualities](#).
- **Nov. 4, 2016** Confirmation of intent to run: All prospects who decide to run for the Board of Directors are requested to submit their candidate statement of no more than 150 words describing their qualifications for serving on the Board of Directors, as well as a photograph. Per SF Bicycle Coalition bylaws, any member in good standing by Nov. 4 may nominate themselves or another member as a candidate.

- **Nov. 4, 2016** Deadline for members to join/renew in order to be eligible to vote in SF Bicycle Coalition board elections.
- **Nov. 14, 2016** Voting begins.
- **Nov. 17, 2016** Annual member meeting & candidate forum, offering board candidates a chance to meet with interested members. (More details to come on exact time, location and plans for this event.)
- **Dec. 4, 2016** Voting ends. Members will have a chance to vote in-person at the Winterfest member party, after which time the voting period will end.
- **By Dec. 19, 2016** Election results announced by staff in Biker Bulletin.
- **Jan. 1, 2017** New term begins.

6. What are the Rule of Engagement for the SF Bicycle Coalition board elections?

At the beginning of each year, the Board of Directors meets for a one-day, retreat-style meeting, where as a group, mutually agreed-upon Rules of Engagement for the Board of Directors are created and committed to. As potential board members, we'd like to share this with you and ask that your actions and behaviors during the election process also comply with these Rules of Engagement:

- 1) Respect each other's time, efforts & boundaries (i.e. be prepared and on time to meetings);
- 2) Show respect, empathy and professionalism in all communications and interactions;
- 3) Demonstrate a desire to learn about and from different perspectives and opinions;
- 4) Contribute to the best of your ability and follow through on your commitments;
- 5) Prioritize actions to best support and empower staff in realizing the SF Bicycle Coalition's mission; and
- 6) Act as positive, engaging and professional ambassadors for the SF Bicycle Coalition.

The staff and board members overseeing elections also commit to these Rules of Engagement and to the goal of running a fair, transparent and engaging election.

7. What opportunities do I have as a candidate to communicate with members?

There are more ways than ever to communicate with your fellow members about your candidacy in the election. Here are all the ways our members learn about you:

1. **Candidate statement and photo.** This 150-word statement allows you to communicate your main points around who you are, why you're running and what you'd bring to the board. Please note that candidate statements can include links to allow you to share even more information. The statements and photos will appear in several places: the 2016 Official Election website on sfbike.org; in multiple editions of the weekly Biker Bulletin email; and a link will be shared in Issue 157 -- the fall, 2016 edition -- of the SF

Bicycle Coalition's *Tube Times* magazine, so that we are reaching members who may not see the email announcement.

2. **Candidate questionnaire.** This is a brief questionnaire that all candidates are asked to complete, allowing candidates the opportunity to share more about themselves and the value they would bring to the board. This will be available on the SF Bicycle Coalition's website and allows members to more easily compare candidates' skills, experiences and strengths to help inform their votes.
3. **Candidate forum.** (Nov. 17) This in-person event, which is part of our annual SF Bicycle Coalition member meeting, provides the opportunity for you to communicate in person to an audience of members. This forum will be recorded with plans to upload to the official election webpage, so that members who could not attend can see it.
4. **Other volunteer or member events** before or during the campaign time (Nov. 14 - Dec. 4).
5. **Winterfest.** (Dec. 4) Candidates will be given a special name tag that states you are running to be on the Board. This is a another opportunity to meet and engage with members, especially as there will be a voting station at the event.

8. Does the Board plan to endorse or recommend any candidates? If yes, then how so and what is the goal?

A: We're always excited to see the caliber and quality of candidates that put their name forward to join the Board of Directors each year. This year, the Board plans to recognize top candidates based on the [Skills/Experiences we have identified](#) as priorities, given the organization's needs, and will share the list of recommended applicants with SF Bicycle Coalition members before the voting period begins. The total number of recommended applicants will be determined based on the candidate pool, so it may vary. Please note that we do not intend to create a slate (recommendations of the same number of open seats), but rather to recognize how the prioritized skills/needs seem to be represented in the candidate pool.

The Board of Directors, working closely with the Executive Director, has insight into the greatest needs for the organization, particularly regarding those responsibilities that are assumed by the Board of Directors. There is an interest the organization's leadership representing and supporting the diverse needs of the SF Bicycle Coalition -- these are further explained in the list of Board roles and responsibilities (above) and, specific to this year, in the top [Skills/Experiences](#) assessed as priorities for the organization in the coming year. To that end, the recommendations are intended to highlight to members where top needs are expected to be met amongst the candidates. It is important to note that this is just one data point that members will have in making their decisions about the Board; they can also read the candidates' statements and see their responses to the questionnaires.

It is important to note that these recommendations are decided by the current Board members who are not running for re-election; staff does not participate in these discussions or decisions.

9. How does the staff of the SF Bicycle Coalition communicate with members about the election and promote voting?

1. Via multiple “Biker Bulletin” emails
2. Online -- check out <http://www.sfbike.org/news/2016-board-elections/>
3. Via Facebook and Twitter
4. Via Print: Fall Issue of *Tube Times*

Note that staff commits to all communications about the election remaining neutral. If you have questions about the process, please contact Executive Director Brian Wiedenmeier at brian@sfbike.org.

10. Can you provide more information about requesting member contact information?

At over 10,000 members, we are proud to be one of the largest bicycle advocacy organizations in the country. With this great opportunity also comes great responsibility to you and your fellow members. The board, staff and members have concerns about sharing members’ contact information (as is a member’s right to demand for nonprofits with member-elected boards under [California Corporations Code section 6330](#)). There is a concern for members’ privacy, as well as concern for members’ willingness to share contact information with the SF Bicycle Coalition in the future, which would lessen our effectiveness in rallying support when needed. Because of these concerns, we respectfully request that all candidates for the Board of Directors utilize the official process and communicate with members in the five ways provided (as outlined above). To respect members’ privacy and the SF Bicycle Coalition’s organizational strength and capacity, we request that you not ask for nor use the member list. We commit to provide ample and sufficient means for candidates to express their viewpoints and reach members, as laid out in this document.

If any candidate does request and receive the member list, we will share this information with members on our online election page and through election-related communications. This will allow members to understand why they are being contacted directly.

We feel that the process presented here provides ample and sufficient means for candidates to express their viewpoints and reach members, while still maintaining the health and effectiveness of our organization.

11. Further updates & questions

If you have any questions, please contact boardnomination@sfbike.org. And for any updates, see our Elections page online at <http://www.sfbike.org/news/2016-board-elections/>.