Proportional Representation and Pacifica

This is a digest of information designed to familiarize the reader with the Proportional Representation method (particularly **Single Transferable Vote/Choice Voting**) of electing representatives to a governing body which is **referred to in various drafts of proposed Pacifica bylaws**. Proportional Representation was used in the "KPFA Model" of elections for their 2 station board elections. **It is being used successfully around the world to increase the diversity and fairness of elected governing bodies.**

With Proportional representation/choice voting, **all diverging positions within a community are represented** in proportion to their voting strength. That all perspectives can be represented in the decision-making process of that body **echoes the mission of Pacifica**.[www.wbai.net/bylaws/bylaws_mission_statement.html] This strengthens the community's trust and confidence in the elected board, and increases the motivation for the community to fight to preserve and protect the interests of the community (Pacifica).

Included in this document:
· **Overview statements** regarding Proportional Representation
· An **abridged explanation of Proportional Representation**
· Relevant **portions of proposed Pacifica bylaws drafts**
· **Links** to various resources on the internet.
Many relevant documents and links may be found at: **http://www.wbai.net**

OVERVIEWS OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

From: **KPFA LAB election FAQ's:**
    Proportional representation refers to voting systems in which groups of voters win representation in proportion to their size. For example, 10% of the voters win 1 out of 10 seats, 20% win 2 out of 10 seats, and so forth. The majority wins a majority, but not all of the seats, while minority viewpoints also win their fair share of the seats.
(http://www.wbai.net/elec/elec_kpfa_ballot_how_to01.html)

Pizza Version from **www.fairvote.org:**
    Will It Work? Let's Have Pizza For Dinner! Putting Pizza Into Practice
But how would we use Proportional Representation for actual elections? Imagine a thousand people are choosing pizza. Everyone would get a ballot and check a box next to their favorite topping. If 200 people checked onion, 20 percent of the pizza slices would be onion; if 500 people checked pepperoni, half of the pizza slices would be pepperoni; if 300 people checked sausage, 30 percent of the slices would have sausage. Now replace pizza toppings with points of view (liberal, conservative, moderate, progressive) or political parties, and you've got an idea how proportional representation would work in elections. There are different election methods and ways to mark candidates, but the result is the same: voters win representation in proportion to their share of the vote. Now that's fair!

From **http://www.fairvote.org/pr/index.html:**
    Where in the world is PR used?
PR is used by most of the established democracies in the world, including Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, and Venezuela, to name a few.

HOW PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION ELECTIONS WORK

There are many systems of proportional representation. The system discussed here, referred to as **choice voting** is considered to be the most just, the most democratic. It is also known as the **single-transferrable ballot method** or as the O'Hare method.

How it works.

Proportional representation/choice voting was the method used to elect the selectmen to New England town councils.

All the candidates for the seats on the council lined up along the edge of the town green. All the voters stood in lines behind their first-choice candidates. If a first-choice candidate had enough votes to win a seat on the town council, the candidate was considered to have been elected, and all the extra voters moved over to the lines behind their second-choice candidates. This shuttling back and forth continued until all the seats on the council were filled.

The number of votes required to fill a seat ("threshold") is determined by the number of voters voting. It is calculated by **dividing** the number of votes cast by the number of seats to be elected plus one and adding one to that calculation.

> If there are l00 voters and 3 seats, l00 is divided by
> 4 (3 seats plus l), which equals 25. Add l to 25 (26).
> 26 votes are required to fill each of the 3 seats.

All voters mark their ballots by numbering each candidate in order of their preference, marking their first choice with a "l", their second choice with a "2", and so on, until the entire ballot is complete.

All votes for first choice are counted. If any candidates receive the required number of votes (26 in the above example), they are considered to have been seated. **Any extra votes are redistributed to the voters' second-choice candidates.** If those second-choice candidates have already been seated, or are seated by the influx of new votes, the extra votes are redistributed to the voters' third-choice candidates, and so on, until all the seats are filled.

After all excess votes have been redistributed, if any seats remain to be filled, the candidate with the least votes is eliminated from the running, and that candidate's votes are redistributed to each voter's second-choice candidate. If this redistribution seats more candidates, their excess votes are redistributed, until as many seats as possible are filled and as many votes as possible are redistributed. This entire process is repeated until all the seats are filled.
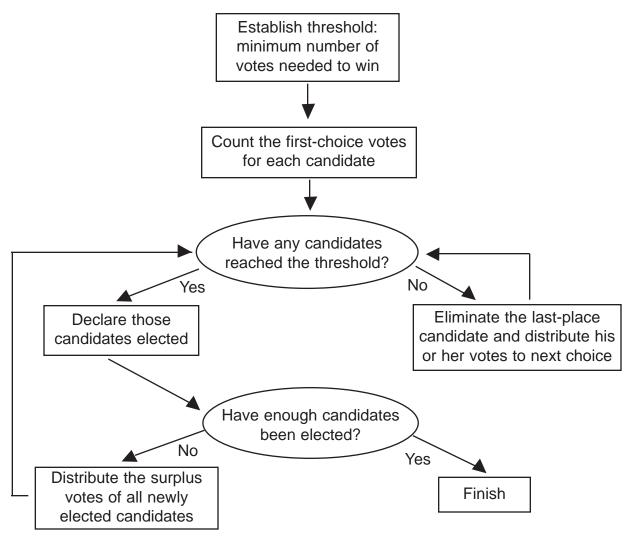

[kpfa ballot]

CANDIDATES ARE LISTED IN RANDOM ORDER

Each voter has one vote to choose thier representative to the LAB. Decide on your first choice candidate and mark them with a "1", then decide who your second choice would be if your first choice was not elected and mark them with a "2". Continue ranking as few or as many candidates as you like.

_____Jim Ferrigno

_____Rudy Posch

_____Adrenne Lauby

_____Constance Buck

_____Bud Hopkins

_____Patricia Cooper

_____Christine Lee

_____Willie Ratcliffe

_____Fadi Saba

_____Chandra Hauptman

_____Curt Gray

_____Sherry Gendelman

_____Susan da Silva

_____Gail Blasie

_____Robin Reynolds

_____Keith Nickolaus

_____Ted Friedman

_____Irwin Silber

_____ _____

Write-in-candidate

PIN: 24483851

Diagram of Ballot Transfer Process

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                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │  Establish threshold:│
                    │  minimum number of   │
                    │  votes needed to win │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │ Count the first-choice│
                    │  votes for each       │
                    │  candidate            │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘
                               │
                               ▼
                     ╭───────────────────╮
          ┌─────────▶│ Have any candidates│◀────────┐
          │          │ reached the        │         │
          │          │ threshold?         │         │
          │          ╰─────────┬─────────╯          │
          │       Yes│            │No               │
          │          ▼            ▼                 │
   ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐
   │ Declare those│      │ Eliminate the        │
   │ candidates   │      │ last-place candidate │
   │ elected      │      │ and distribute his   │
   └──────┬───────┘      │ or her votes to next │
          │              │ choice               │
          ▼              └──────────────────────┘
   ╭───────────────────╮
   │ Have enough        │
   │ candidates been    │
   │ elected?           │
   ╰────┬─────────┬────╯
    No  │      Yes│
        ▼         ▼
 ┌──────────┐  ┌────────┐
 │Distribute│  │ Finish │
 │ the      │  └────────┘
 │ surplus  │
 │ votes    │
 └──────────┘
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[Chart from article by Douglas J. Amy - *How Proportional Representation Elections Work*:
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/BeginnningReading/howprwor.htm]

FROM PROPOSED PACIFICA BYLAWS DRAFTS:

From Proposed Pacifica bylaws A and B:
[http://www.wbai.net/bylaws_revise/br_drafts4-2-03.html]

ARTICLE FOUR
DELEGATES [Local Station Board members]
SECTION 5. ELECTION OF DELEGATES

All elections for Delegates shall be by written ballot, provided, however, that the elections supervisor shall also have the option of providing a secure electronic means of voting via the internet. Members shall only have the right to vote for Delegates for the Foundation radio station with which the Member is affiliated. Members shall vote in classes: Listener-Sponsor Members shall elect 18 Delegates for each radio station and Staff Members shall elect 6 Delegates for each radio station, for a total of twenty-four (24) Delegates for each Foundation radio station. Elections of Delegates shall be staggered over a 3-year period with elections for 3

[From Proposed Bylaws drafts cont.]

Staff Delegates and 9 Listener-Sponsor Delegates held in the first year, elections for 3 Staff Delegates and 9 Listener-Sponsor Delegates held in the second year and no elections in the third year. The ballots shall be counted by the **Single Transferable Voting method**. All ballots related to the election, and the removal, of any and all Delegates shall be filed with the Foundation Secretary and maintained with the corporate records for a period of three (3) years.

ARTICLE FIVE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FOUNDATION
SECTION 3. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF STATION REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS
. . .
B. ELECTION

The Delegates for each radio station shall meet annually in late December or early January to elect four Directors to represent that radio station on the Board. The Delegates of both classes of Members, voting together, shall elect three Listener-Sponsor Directors using the **Single Transferable Voting method**, and shall elect one Staff Director using the **Instant Runoff Voting method** [a form of PR used when filling only one seat], to represent that radio station on the Board. The Staff Director must be a Staff Delegate. The Listener-Sponsor Directors must be Listener-Sponsor Delegates.

LINKS:

- For a history and True experiences in proportional representation:
  http://www.fairvote.org/library/history/true_experiences.htm
- Frequently asked questions on proportional representation:
  http://www.fairvote.org/pr/q_and_a.htm
- Sections on Pacifica history, elections, bylaws, bylaws revision , hundreds of links:
  http://www.wbai.net
- Coalition for a Democratic Pacifica (Berkeley)
  http://www.cfdp.info
- New governance section at official WBAI website**:**
  http://www.wbai.org/about/bylaws_governance.php