SBCA Bylaws
Proposed Amendments (2026) — Pro/Con Arguments

Required by Art. X for every bylaws-change ballot question

Question 1 — Combine the Nominating and Elections Committees into a single Nominations & Elections Committee

Argument in Favor

SBCA currently splits candidate recruitment and election administration between two separate committees performing closely related functions with substantial overlap in timing and required expertise. Combining them into one Nominations & Elections Committee, chaired by the Immediate Past President with the Vice President serving in an advisory capacity, streamlines the recruiting-through-election process and reduces the number of volunteer roles required each cycle.

Argument Against

The current two-committee structure separates who recruits and vets candidates from who administers and certifies the election that decides among them, a structural safeguard against even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Merging these functions into a single committee, even with protections like barring candidates from administering elections, concentrates more influence over who gets recruited and who runs the resulting election in fewer hands, removing an independent check that previously existed between the two functions.

Question 2 — Expand the Board to nine non-officer seats with staggered thirds; shift officer and director terms to the conference year

Argument in Favor

The Board's current eight non-officer seats produce an uneven three-two-three election cycle, even though the bylaws already describe the goal as electing a third each year. Nine seats allow exactly three seats to turn over annually, simplifying recruitment and succession planning. Shifting terms to the conference year, rather than the calendar year, means the Board no longer transitions leadership in the middle of the year's most demanding stretch, conference execution, giving incoming officers and directors a natural on-ramp instead of starting cold three months before the conference.

Argument Against

A larger Board adds coordination overhead and dilutes each member's individual voice and accountability, without clear evidence that eight seats were insufficient for the Society's current scale. Separately, extending the terms of currently serving officers and directors to bridge the transition to the new conference-year cycle gives those individuals additional months in office beyond what members elected them to serve, without an intervening election. Even as a one-time transitional measure, some members may view that as a legitimate democratic concern.

Question 3 — Reduce bylaws-mandated committees from eight to four; move Finance, Journal, and Program Committees to Board-authorized status; dissolve Development into the Executive Committee

Argument in Favor

Several of the Society's eight bylaws-mandated committees don't function as described, and one, the Development Committee, doesn't exist at all. Concentrating bylaws-mandated status in the four committees genuinely central to governance, Nominations & Elections, the Executive Committee, the

Presidents Group, and Audit, while moving the Finance, Journal, and Annual Conference Program Committees to Board-authorized status, lets the Board adjust structure, charge, and composition as the Society's needs evolve without a full membership vote every time. Finance moving to Board-authorized status also lets its membership match how it's operated for the past two years, the Treasurer, Past Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer working as a group, rather than the broader membership the bylaws currently describe.

Argument Against

Moving committees out of the bylaws removes a membership-level check on how they're structured. Bylaws-mandated status requires member approval to change; Board-authorized status means the Board alone can create, restructure, or eliminate these bodies going forward. For committees overseeing the Society's finances, its scholarly journal, and its annual conference, some members may prefer that future changes require the same membership vote the current structure does, rather than leaving that discretion to the Board alone.

Question 4 — Formalize the Presidents Group as the Society's primary decision-making body for day-to-day operations

Argument in Favor

The Presidents Group, consisting of the President, Vice President, and Immediate Past President, already meets regularly and handles operational decisions in practice, but has no basis in the bylaws or any governance document today. Formalizing it closes that gap, gives the Society a documented, accountable process for time-sensitive decisions between Executive Committee and Board meetings, and makes clear how it relates to the bodies holding ultimate authority.

Argument Against

Designating a three-person body (four, including the non-voting Executive Director) as the Society's "primary decision-making body" for day-to-day operations concentrates real operational authority in a small group that reaches that composition through the normal officer election and succession process, not through a vote for that specific role. Some members may prefer that day-to-day decisions continue running through the full Executive Committee, which has broader officer representation, rather than a smaller subset of it.

Question 5 — Remove the Treasurer as Audit Committee chair; formalize membership as an odd number of non-officer Voting Members on staggered three-year terms, recruited by the Nominations & Elections Committee

Argument in Favor

Having the Treasurer chair the body that audits the Society's own finances is a structural conflict that sound governance practice generally avoids, and removing that tie is what actually makes the review independent. The larger change here is formalizing the committee itself: staggered three-year terms, with one new member recruited annually by the Nominations & Elections Committee, replace what's currently an ad hoc, unstaggered group with something that builds real continuity year over year. The bylaws leave the specific chair-selection mechanism to the Board's discretion rather than fixing one in place, which keeps this level of detail out of a document that requires a membership vote to change.

Argument Against

Removing the Treasurer as chair fixes the clearest conflict, but it also removes the person with the deepest financial expertise from leading the review; a rotating chair drawn from the general committee may need more time each year to get up to speed on the Society's finances, even with staggered terms meant to build

continuity. Separately, and more minor by comparison, leaving the chair-selection question entirely out of the bylaws means the Board decides and can change who leads the committee without any membership vote or fixed rule to point to.