



2023

CANDIDATE PACKET

for

Board of Directors

Audit Committee

Nominations & Elections Committee



2023 ELECTION FAQ

To download an information packet for prospective candidates, please go to the GHI web site at <https://www.ghi.coop> and click on "Elections."

Below are Frequently Asked Questions about voting and running for office.

Which GHI positions do members elect?

The members of GHI elect three bodies to represent them:

1. The **Board of Directors** consists of 9 members who serve 2-year terms, which are staggered so 4 members are elected in even years and 5 elected in odd years. In addition, members are elected to fill any terms continuing into their second year which are vacant or are held by someone appointed by the Board to fill a vacancy.
2. The **Audit Committee** consists of 3 members who serve 1-year terms.
3. The **Nominations & Elections (N&E) Committee** consists of 5 members who serve 1-year terms.

When does GHI hold elections?

GHI holds elections each May in conjunction with its annual membership meeting, usually held in May. This year's meeting is scheduled **Thursday, May 11**, at 7:30pm.

Members of the N&E Committee are elected during the annual meeting by a floor vote or acclamation.

Members of the Board of Directors and the Audit Committee are elected by a secret ballot. The Nominations & Elections Committee is working with the Board of Directors to finalize voting procedures, but anticipates **online voting** will be available immediately after the annual meeting goes into recess **until noon Friday, May 12**. **In-person voting** will be available outside the GHI office **4-8pm Friday, May 12**. For everyone's health and safety, members are encouraged to vote online if possible.

If pandemic or other concerns compel the Board of Directors to reschedule the annual meeting, GHI bylaws and N&E policies mean most dates for the associated election will also be revised. The Nominations and Elections Committee may also need to revise voting processes and procedures described below. Please monitor the GHI E-News and website for any updates.

How would I go about running for a GHI office?

To be elected, your name must be on the ballot. There are two ways for that to happen:

- 1) **Nomination by the N&E Committee:** To request nomination by the N&E Committee, you must fill out a candidate consent form and return it to a member of the N&E Committee or to the GHI management office no later than 5pm Wednesday April 27. The N&E Committee is not obligated to nominate everyone who submits a consent form.
- 2) **Petition:** To have your name placed on the ballot by petition, you must file a candidate consent form and a nomination petition, signed by at least 10 members, at the GHI management office or with Board Secretary Ed James (56D Crescent Road) by 5pm May 3. Note the 10 member signatures must represent distinct memberships—if two people share a single membership (such as unit co-owners), only one of their signatures counts toward the requirement.

In addition, for your biography to appear in the *Greenbelt News Review* with those of the other candidates, you must also submit a candidate biography and form to the N&E Committee by noon Sunday, May 1.

Who is eligible to run for office in GHI?

The bylaws specify only a member at least 21 years of age and residing in GHI may run for elected office. Only one member from a unit may hold elected office at a time.

What else happens at the GHI annual meeting?

Candidates for the Board of Directors and Audit Committee are introduced to the membership and give short presentations on their qualifications and reasons they wish to hold elected office. Members also consider other agenda items and vote on any proposed changes to GHI's bylaws.

How do I learn about the candidates?

Candidate biographies provided to the N&E Committee will be posted at <https://ghi.coop/> and published in the *Greenbelt News Review* one week before the election. Technology permitting, candidates will also be given the opportunity to address the membership at the annual membership meeting

Typically, the N&E Committee also schedules a Candidate Forum so members can learn more about Board and Audit Committee candidates. For this year due to reduced in-person social gatherings, candidates are given the opportunity to write longer biographies, up to 250 words. Candidates are also welcome to prepare a video introducing themselves to the membership. N&E will distribute links to candidate videos we receive, and candidates are welcome to link to their videos in their biography.

What are the responsibilities of the Board of Directors?

The Board elects its own president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. It sets policy and provides oversight for the management of the property, business, and affairs of the GHI Corporation. It oversees the performance of the general manager, who manages all GHI employees. Board members are centrally involved in planning and setting priorities for the cooperative, principally through development and approval of the annual budget. The Board acts on all membership applications and considers member requests for exceptions to policies and regulations.

The work of the Board is carried out mainly at its regular meetings, generally held twice per month. The Board also typically meets for additional work sessions throughout the year to address specific topics in depth. GHI's volunteer membership committees are appointed by, and report to, the Board, with each director serving as liaison to one or more committees and often attending their monthly meetings.

What are the responsibilities of the Audit Committee?

The Audit Committee is an independent oversight group, directly accountable to the membership. It reports to members at least annually. It does *not* perform the yearly external audit of GHI's finances. Its responsibilities, as described in the Bylaws, are to review and evaluate GHI finances and other operations. Generally, this means taking steps to ensure day-to-day management and meetings are conducted according to GHI Bylaws and established policies. Audit Committee members are not required to attend official Board meetings, but should plan to attend as many as possible. Decisions are not made at Board workshops and informal meetings, but Audit Committee members may choose to attend.

Audit Committee members do not have to be financial or legal experts, but the committee is well-served when its members bring a strong sense of business ethics, the courage of their convictions, and a firm grounding in common sense. The committee has considerable discretion as to what warrants its attention and can employ professional help when expertise is needed.

What are the responsibilities of the N&E Committee?

The N&E Committee identifies and solicits GHI members to become candidates for office, prepares nominations for the annual election, administers all aspects of GHI elections (excluding elections for N&E itself, which are conducted by the membership during annual meetings), and certifies election results.

Would I receive compensation if I held a GHI office?

Directors and Audit Committee members receive a small stipend to help defray expenses resulting from their service. The monthly stipend for Audit Committee members is \$74.44; for the four Board officers, \$189.16; for other Board members, \$168.33.

I'm going to be out of town for the election. May I cast an absentee ballot?

Yes—but note also that you can also vote online from anywhere as long as you have internet access and access to your email. GHI bylaws permit members to vote in absentia due to their religious beliefs, physical condition, or absence from Greenbelt during an election. **The best time to vote absentee will be May 6–10 when a member can complete the process with one trip to the GHI office.** Members may pick up an absentee ballot application from noon Friday, May 5 until Tuesday, May 9 from the Director of Member Services at the GHI management office. Fill out the ballot and return it to the office no later than 5 pm Tuesday, May 9. **If you request an absentee ballot, you will be unable to participate in votes at the annual meeting.**

May I give another member a proxy to vote on my behalf at the meeting?

Yes, although since 2020 most members have found that joining the annual meeting online has been more effective. A member can give their proxy only to another GHI member, and it must be acquired and dated no earlier than three months prior to the date of the annual meeting. A member may carry no more than one other member's proxy. In 2023, the official proxy form must be submitted to the GHI management office by closing time Friday, May 5, or to Board Secretary Ed James (56D Crescent Road) by 5pm Saturday, May 6. **If you give your proxy to another member, you will not be able to participate in votes at the annual meeting,** as that would allow a member to vote twice.

How does the N&E Committee guarantee integrity of the ballot box?

GHI Bylaws state "The Nominations and Elections Committee shall adopt and publicize appropriate procedures to guarantee the integrity of the ballot box". Those procedure are:

1. Immediately prior to distribution of ballots, the Nominations & Elections Chair, or designee member(s) of the N&E Committee, will certify all ballot boxes are empty.
2. From the time of this certification through the time the ballot count is complete:
 - a. All ballot boxes will remain locked, with key(s) in physical possession of the N&E Chair or designated N&E Committee member(s).
 - b. All ballot boxes will remain in possession of a member of the N&E Committee, or in a locked area of a GHI facility with controlled access only to designated GHI Staff and/or members of the N&E Committee.
 - c. No Ballots shall be removed from the ballot box except for the purposes of verifying the legitimacy of a submitted ballot (if needed), and counting the ballots once the designated period for accepting ballots has concluded.
3. Any online balloting will be conducted only on a platform providing secure balloting.

How can I contact the N&E Committee?

The members of the N&E Committee are Tom Jones (Chair), Dan Gillotte, Theresa Henderson, Luisa Robles, and Joe Ralbovsky. You are welcome to email the N&E Committee at GHI.NominationsAndElections@gmail.com or contact the chair directly at tom@spril.com or 301-474-6001.

How will this year’s election be conducted safely?

The Nominations & Elections Committee has made the following arrangements to enable members to cast ballots with minimal social contact. The following provisions are subject to change to reflect public health best practices.

1. **Online Voting:** Members who have provided their email address to the GHI Office will be able to vote online using the GetQuorum secure online platform. Instructions for online voting will be sent to the email address each member has provided. To ensure secure voting the following members are *ineligible* to vote online, or to participate in the annual meeting online:
 - a. A member who designates another member as their proxy,
 - b. A member who submits an application for an absentee ballot,
 - c. A member who registers to attend the annual membership meeting in person.

2. **Absentee Ballots:** Members can receive an absentee ballot by completing the application they will receive with the annual meeting announcement (or obtaining one from the GHI office) and returning it to the Director of Member Services at the GHI Management office before **5pm May 9**.

3. **Proxies:** Members can designate a proxy to vote on their behalf for the annual meeting and election by submitting official proxy forms to the GHI management office by closing time **May 5**, or to Board Secretary Ed James at 56D Crescent Road by 5pm **Saturday May 6**. Note that each member can carry no more than one other member’s proxy.

4. **In-Person Voting,** from 4–8pm **Friday May 12**, members can vote in person outside the GHI Management Office. All members casting ballots must wear a face mask. To ensure secure voting the following members are *ineligible* to vote in person:
 - a. A member who designates another member as their proxy,
 - b. A member who submits an application for an absentee ballot,
 - c. A member who has voted online.

GHI ELECTION SCHEDULE	
Annual Meeting and Election: Thursday May 11, 2023	
Voting Continues: Friday, May 12 online until noon, in person 4–8pm	
Friday April 21– Monday May 1	GHI management office mails, or arranges to mail, annual election notice to all GHI members, with an application for an absentee ballot.
Wednesday, April 26 by 5pm	To be considered for nomination by the N&E Committee, candidates must submit a consent form to the GHI office or an N&E Committee member by this date.

Thursday, April 27	N&E Committee submits a list of nominated candidates for all elective offices to the Board secretary for immediate publication/posting.
Sunday, April 30 by noon	Deadline for candidates to submit a biographical sketch (250-word maximum) for publication in the <i>Greenbelt News Review</i> to the GHI office or an N&E member.
Friday May 5 – Tuesday, May 9, 5pm	Members may pick up an application for absentee ballots from the Director of Member Services at the GHI management office.
Tuesday, May 2 by 5pm	Final deadline for candidate nomination by written petition. Requires at least 10 member signatures and a signed consent form submitted to the GHI office or Board Secretary Ed James (56D Crescent Road).
Tuesday, May 2 by 7pm	GHI Candidates Forum at the Greenbelt Municipal Building and online.
Thursday, May 4	Candidate biographies appear in the <i>Greenbelt News Review</i> .
Friday, May 5, noon – Tuesday May 9, 5pm	Absentee ballots available at GHI Office. The best time to vote absentee is May 5–9 when a member can complete the process with one trip to the GHI Office.
Saturday, May 6 by 5pm	Deadline for members to submit official proxy forms to GHI management office by 5pm Friday May 5, or to Board Secretary Ed James (56D Crescent Road) by 5pm Saturday, May 7.
Thursday, May 11, 7:30pm	Annual Membership Meeting. Afterward, members may cast ballots online for Board of Directors and Audit Committee.
Friday, May 12 midnight–noon & 4–8pm	Election Day Polls open online until noon, and in-person outside the GHI office from 4–8pm to vote for Board of Directors and Audit Committee.
As soon as practical after polls close and ballots can be counted.	Election results will be posted as soon as possible at the GHI management office, at the Co-op supermarket, on the GHI web site, and the next edition of the <i>Greenbelt News Review</i> . It is possible that safety protocols related to the Covid-19 pandemic may mean election results are not available for several days.



2023 GHI CANDIDATE CONSENT FORM

To be considered for nomination by the Nominations & Elections Committee, return this form to the GHI office or to a member of the N&E Committee no later than 5pm Wednesday, April 26. After that time, for a name to be printed on the official ballot, nomination must be made by written petition with signatures representing at least 10 GHI memberships and must either be filed at the GHI office by 5pm Friday May 5, or to Board Secretary Ed James (56D Crescent Road) by 5pm Saturday, May 6 together with this consent form.

I, _____ of
(please print name)

(please print residence address)

in Greenbelt, Maryland, being a member of GHI age 21 or over, give the Nominations and Elections (N&E) Committee permission to review my Mutual Ownership Contract to determine my eligibility to run for elected GHI office.

I do herewith consent to have my name appear on the ballot for the annual 2023 GHI election.

I understand that the N&E Committee has the authority to formulate procedures it deems appropriate for the conduct of fair and expeditious GHI elections, and I agree to follow such procedures.

If elected, I will serve to the best of my ability as a member of (check only one):

- Board of Directors (2-year term)
- Audit Committee (1-year term)
- Nominations & Elections Committee (1-year term)

Signature

Date

E-mail Address

Telephone Number(s)



2023 GHI CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHY COVER SHEET

Name: _____

Position sought (check one):

- Board of Directors
- Audit Committee
- Nominations & Elections Committee

Signature

Date

Instructions:

For your biography to appear along with those of other candidates in the Greenbelt News Review, your biographical sketch with this cover sheet must either be filed with your consent form, due by 5pm April 26, or be returned to the GHI management office or a member of the N&E Committee no later than noon Sunday April 30.

The biographical sketch must be limited to **250 words (expanded from 150 so candidates can write more when social gatherings are limited)**. Any text exceeding that limit will not be printed. Consider providing information about yourself in the following areas: how long you have lived in GHI, relevant educational background, your occupation or work experience, committees you have served on, and other experiences or skills you would bring to the position you seek. Biographies are expected to appear in the *News Review* published one week before the annual meeting.

This statement should provide a brief resume or statement of qualifications for the elected position you seek. You are welcome to use other means to present your platform, concerns, and goals. Options include the Candidates' Forum, paid advertisements in the *Greenbelt News Review*, and fliers distributed within the community.

As long as circumstances permit, each candidate is also provided a 3-minute period to speak directly to the membership during the annual meeting.