

To: Northwestern Division Director Jim Pace, K7CEX
From: The Board of Directors of the Western Washington DX Club
Date: January 9, 2018

Dear Director Pace:

As you know, the Western Washington DX Club is an ARRL affiliated organization with approximately 170 members, most of whom are themselves League members. We have many of the most active hams in Western Washington among our members.

We are sending this letter to express our concern about recent events at League headquarters and about various matters that we understand will be taken up by the ARRL Board of Directors at its January meeting. Specifically, we believe the (1) ARRL Board has made a serious error in its recent censure of Southwestern Division Director Dick Norton, (2) we are concerned with the lack of transparency and the stifling of communication already occurring under the Board's Code of Conduct (ARRL Policy on Board Governance and Conduct of Members of the Board of Directors and Vice Directors), and (3) the series of motions to be acted upon at the January meeting are contrary to the best interests of the Northwestern Division League members and in some cases violate fundamental principles of fairness and due process.

1. The Censure of Director Norton

Many WWDXC members were in the audience for the ARRL forum at the 2017 Visalia International DX Convention, and we have seen the letters written to the ARRL Board by Mark Weiss, K6FG, and by Tim Duffy, K3LR, stating what happened in that forum. The events as described by Mr. Weiss and Mr. Duffy are accurate. In our opinion, Mr. Norton did nothing in the Forum to deserve the censure. We respectfully request that the Board rescind the censure.

We have reviewed the letter Hudson Division Director Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, sent to members of his Division in which he stated "... there were individual witnesses who attended the forum in Visalia who came to us with a different story than those released by Mr. Norton's supporters. ... I will not discuss the specific reasons enumerated as they are of a personnel nature and not appropriate for discussion ...". This position is alarming. Essentially, Director Lisenco is saying that the Board censured Director Norton based upon secret facts

(which obviously differ from what we, Mr. Weiss and Mr. Duffy observed) asserted by one or more unidentified witnesses. This lack of transparency does not speak well of the good faith and objectivity expected of all ARRL Directors. To the contrary, it suggests that there is an ulterior motive or something the Board is trying to hide and it is already bringing the Board's decision into disrepute and provoking suspicion, and worse.

2. The Code of Conduct

We understand why it is appropriate for the ARRL Board to have a set of governing principles such as the Code of Conduct. However, we believe that parts of the specific Code adopted by the Board at its January 2017 meeting is wrong for our type of membership organization. As the League itself announces on its website, "ARRL is a representative democracy—its members control its policies through the power of the ballot." <http://www.arrl.org/organization-structure>

The Code in its present form inhibits the free and effective exchange of information between our elected Director and Vice Director and the League members residing in our Division. As proof of the Code's "gag order" effect, we need look no farther than Director Norton's censure and the fact that various elected League representatives refuse to discuss it with us for fear of violating the Code themselves. We urge you to amend the current Code to provide for much more transparency of Board actions and a freer exchange of information (including how the Directors voted) with League members.

3. The January Motions

Some of the various motions to be acted on at the January meeting are non-controversial. But some are pernicious and flatly contrary to the interests of the Northwestern Division members. For example, the proposed change to Bylaw 2 would on its face permit one's League membership to be revoked without any definition of what constitutes "cause" or the opportunity to know in advance the basis for the proposed action and to be heard before the Board. Similarly, the proposed change to Bylaw 47 would authorize censure without advance notice or the opportunity to be heard. Finally, the proposed change to Bylaw 15 would in effect make the President and the Vice-Presidents voting Directors, even though they are not elected by the membership. This has a number of effects, including the dilution of elected Directors' votes and the possibility of Board action without the affirmative vote of a majority of the elected Directors.

These are simply examples, made necessary by the sheer number of motions.
But all fail a fundamental principle of governance: what is the problem sought to be remedied by the motion?

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As our Director, we urge you to move to table the various motions until such time as you have had the opportunity to request and receive comments and questions concerning them from the League members you represent. In the event your motion to table is not successful, we urge you to vote "No" on the various motions. We further request that you ask for a roll call vote on any votes taken at the January meeting in connection with or related to these motions.

Very truly yours,

Western Washington DX Club Board of Directors

Rob Fanfant, N7QT, President and Director
Adam Blackmer, K7EDX, Vice-President and Director
Dennis Kourkoumelis, K7DSE, Secretary and Director
Brian Wingert, N7RVD, Treasurer and Director
Kirk Bellar, N7UK
Larry Hanson, K7EKD
Walt Miller, K7ZQ
Rich Stempien, W6RS
Tom Sykes, NU7J
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