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Election of Regents of the University of Minnesota

The Board of Regents is the governing body of the University of Minnesota. It is the only governmental body in the state to which members are elected by the legislature. This information brief describes the election process in Minnesota, explains the role of the Regent Candidate Advisory Council, and lists the current members of the board.

Legal Provisions

The Minnesota regent election provisions were established by the territorial legislature as part of the University charter in 1851, and then incorporated into the Constitution when Minnesota achieved statehood. Some statutory specifications have been added. The constitutional and statutory provisions include the following:

Constitutional

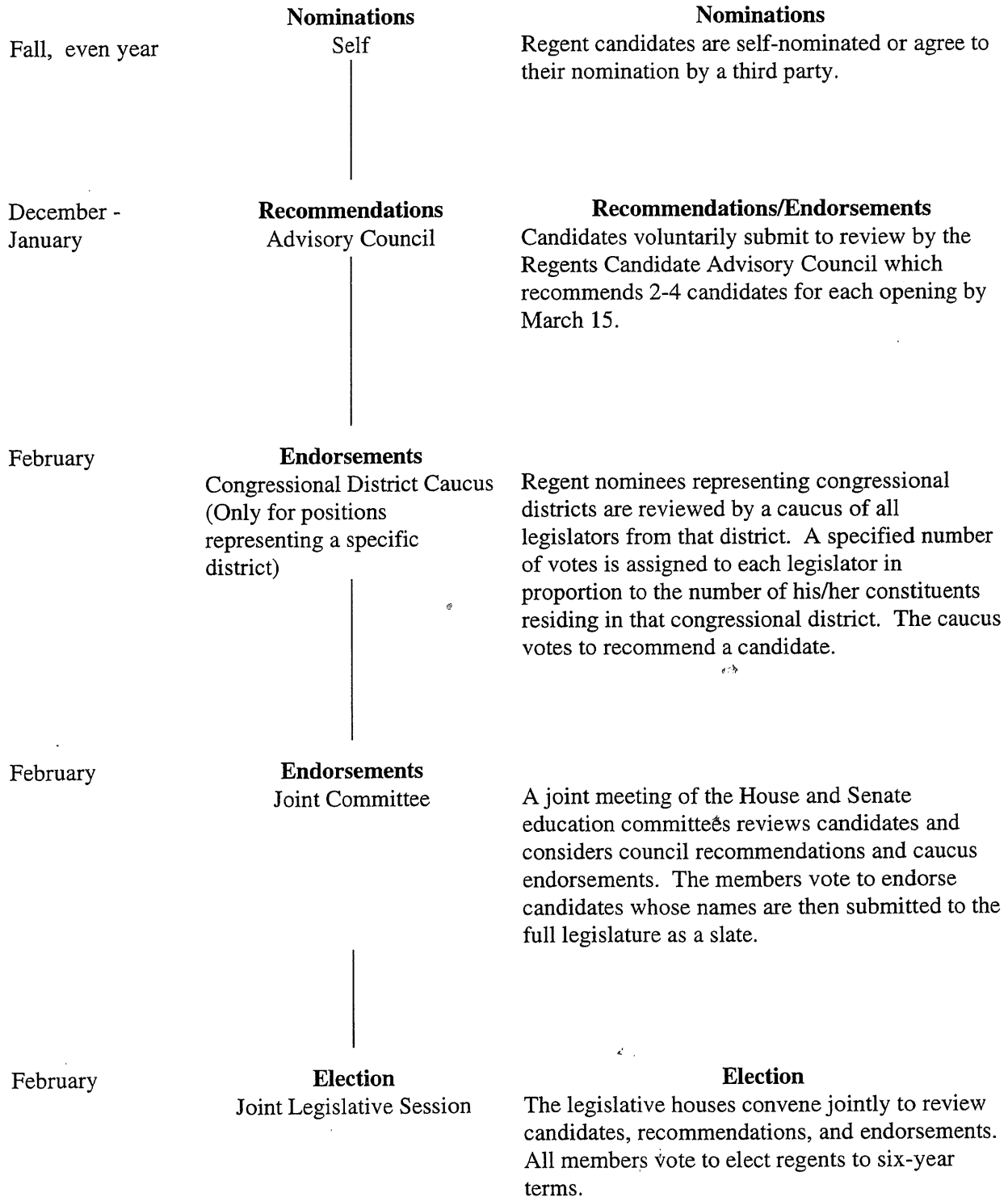
- Twelve regents are elected by the legislature to six-year terms.
- One-third of the board is elected each odd-numbered year at a joint convention of the legislature.
- Vacancies prior to the expiration of a term are filled temporarily by gubernatorial appointment.

Statutory

- Eight members are elected to represent congressional districts.
- One at-large regent must be a student at the time of election.

Regent Election Process

1997 Timeline



Advisory Council

The 1988 Legislature established a Regent Candidate Advisory Council to assist in recruiting and identifying candidates. Prior to that time, candidates nominated themselves and no screening process existed.

Membership

The advisory council is composed of 24 members: 12 are appointed by the Speaker of the House and 12 by the Senate subcommittee on committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration. Initial members were appointed for two, four, or six years to provide for staggered terms; later appointments are for six-year terms with one-third appointed each even-numbered year. The following criteria apply to the appointments.

- No more than 1/3 of those appointed may be current or former legislators.
- No more than 2/3 of those appointed may belong to the same political party.
- Political affiliation or activity may not be required for the appointment of any member.
- Geographical representation must be considered in making appointments.

Duties

The advisory council is charged with three duties:

- develop statements describing regents' duties and outlining criteria for recommending candidates;
- identify and recruit qualified candidates for each opening on the board; and
- recommend to the legislature two to four candidates for each opening.

Timeline for Election

The Regent Candidate Advisory Council meets throughout the year with increased activity during the months immediately preceding the legislative election. The council receives nominations during the fall preceding election. It selects a pool of candidates for each position and conducts public interviews with them during the winter. By March 15 the council must submit the names of two to four recommended candidates for each opening.

The legislative process usually has started in March with congressional district caucuses. Joint committee meetings have followed the caucuses in March or early April, with elections in April or early May. In the 1997 session, the council proposed that the process conclude earlier. The legislature responded by holding the election in February.

Traditionally, newly-elected regents assume their seats at the June meeting of the Board of Regents. However, with the earlier 1997 election, the new regents took office in April.

Current Board of Regents

Current regents are listed below with the year in which their terms expire.

<u>Member</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>
H. Bryan Neel	1	2003
Julie A. Bleyhl	2	1999
William E. Hogan	3	1999
David Metzen	4	2003
Michael O'Keefe	5	2001
Maureen Reed	6	2003
Bob S. Bergland	7	2003
Thomas R. Reagan	8	1999
Warren Larson	At large	2001
William R. Peterson	At large	1999
Patricia Spence	At large	2001
Jessica Phillips	At large, student	2001