

From: Hellenic Electronic Center hec@greece.org

To: Elections Committee

Subject: Conclusion of the Elections

Date: 16 March, 2014

Summary

The Elections Committee has not met the mandate required by HEC Bylaws.

In light of the events of the past 11 days, there has been a breach of trust for the ability of Elections Committee to carry out their duties. The HEC Executive Council has lost all its confidence for the Elections Committee and has no choice but to **dismiss the Election Committee**.

HEC appreciates their noble effort in volunteering and trying their best under enormous difficult circumstances caused by a poisonous environment under constant undermine of the entire election process.

HEC EC has convened and declared the elections uncontested; completed the elections accepting the three candidates (unopposed) as the new HEC EC members and the unopposed candidate for director.

HEC EC ensures that all HEC services will continue as they are including all mailing lists, websites and projects. HEC will continue to expand its services engaging with new individual projects and organizations. As a first step, a second server will be placed soon on service as part of our expansion. HEC is thankful to the three new EC members who will provide the additional help required for continuing growth.

A. HEC Elections

[<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/>]

HEC created a dedicate website for the elections. All activities and all documents have been online for complete transparency during the entire process. A graphical representation of the **10 Steps** showed the progress step by step. Project Plan, Financial Statements, List of Members, Letters to Members and Nominees, Announcements and all relevant information was and is available to all. A complete and thorough process was followed as per bylaws.

B. Project Plan

[<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/elections.pdf>]

According to the Project Plan, from 07 March to 17 March was the period allocated for the actual voting time. Instead the elections committee used all this time to engage in practices outside of their mandate.

The Project Plan was executed as scheduled up to and including **Step 7**.

The Financial Statement was also part of the elections information and it was completed with the exception of information required from the owner (one HEC director) of the National Bank of Greece

(NBG) account, required information which the HEC representative owner of the account refused to provide.

[<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/finance/2013/index.html>]

In hind sight, this was part of his attempt to undermine the elections.

C. Election Procedures

[<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/procedures.html>]

The HEC EC followed the exact **10-Steps Elections Procedure** as mandated by the Elections Addendum in the HEC bylaws. For the addenda not ratified in the current HEC bylaws, the previous bylaws Addenda applied. In this case, the Elections Addendum is the same in current and previous bylaws (i.e. the Election Procedure is identified in the bylaws of 2010 and 2009.)

This procedure of **10 Steps** was followed exactly and as per Project Plan schedule.

1. The HEC Human Resources (HEC-HR) list of names was created and verified. It was a meticulous work by the HEC HR identifying and including names of individuals who either had volunteered, or donated since 2010. In addition, other names were added from old (unverified) list of people who may qualify for membership. The list comprised of 407 individual names to whom emails were sent allowing them over one month time to apply/register. (email sent: <http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/members-letter.html>)
2. The HEC FULL MEMBERS list was established representing the Electoral Register of qualified voters.
3. Subsequently, nominations were solicited producing ten (10) nominations. Out of the ten nominations, three (3) accepted their nominations. A letter was sent to the nominees requesting their biographical information. [<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/nominee-letter.html>]
4. Nominations were solicited for Elections Committee producing five (5) nominations. Four were accepted (one withdrew due to his nomination for EC position)
5. The Elections Committee was established. The names of EC nominees as well the Electoral Registry (Voters List) was already established and posted.
6. Due to vacant positions, there were no resignations other than one director's position, which also was unopposed.
7. The HEC EC reviewed the EC nominees' biographical letters, approved and notified them, legally under current procedure as Candidates for the current election.
8. At this time, the HEC EC notified the Elections Committee (Reference #1).

The remaining Steps are to declare completion of the elections, and the HEC EC to establish the newly formed governing body.

D. Initial Email to Elections Committee

On Thursday March 6th, the HEC Executive Council officially entered **Step 8** of the election procedures. An email was sent to Elections committee (Reference #1). In view of the fact that the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacant positions to be filled, the Election Committee had the two obvious options:

- a) to declare the candidates uncontested by Acclamation, or

- b) to hold the casting of the votes and to produce the results, which would have been inconsequential to the end result.

The Committee was asked if option (b) was to be followed, to communicate with EC to facilitate the opening of the account with <http://www.ballotin.com> in order to proceed with the voting.

The elections committee had only one job, which was to go through the voting to make sure each person votes once and that each person is a HEC member. Anything else short of that would have undermined the elections and fallen outside the established elections process and the mandate given to the Election Committee as per Bylaws.

E. Elections Committee Engagement

Since the start, there were several communications with the Elections Committee. It was evident that they were overstepping the specific mandate on **Step 8**.

The HEC EC informed them several times that

- The process of elections cannot be changed in the middle of the process, or backtrack to previous completed steps for the current election.
- They had two options (a) or (b). After their choice, they could also recommend an improvement to the process. In this case the EC would have reviewed and implemented the suggested recommendations for improvement as required for the next elections.
- We have completed legally, transparently and honorably the first **7 Steps** of the process as per HEC's Charter. There was NO alternative; there was NO option of backtracking **Steps**. The Candidates had already been approved legally as per current process. If the committee had concluded that the Election Procedures and the Protocol used to arrive to **Step 8** could be improved, they were free to do so after the decision of (a) or (b). The EC would take into consideration and review the recommendation for improvement of the next elections.

The HEC EC invited the Committee at least three times to live meetings. However these attempts to discuss any questions they might have had in a teleconference were futile.

Due to the prolonged time the Elections Committee had taken, and due to constant interference from the one director, the Committee was already under pressure because they had exceeded their mandate in carrying out their duty within the timeframe. The ten days as per Project Plan were allotted for the actual casting of the votes and not for the committee's deliberation.

At this time, there was evident constant interference by one of the HEC directors, as well as by other non-HEC members undermining the elections process.

See also Reference #4

F. Elections Interference/Objections

There were obvious attempts to influence results and undermine the elections.

From the first announcement of elections, Mr. E. Rigos began posting misinformation to the Professors Forum of almost 5000 subscribers. Only a handful of the Forum subscribers are HEC members

regardless of frequent posts from the HEC EC notifying everybody who qualified to apply for membership.

Mr. E. Rigos is the administrator of the Professors Forum. His constant postings regarding elections were in violation of the HEC bylaws, in absence of seeking the HEC EC approval. In this Forum Mr. Rigos and his supporters argued that there was no need for people to register as HEC members and that everybody who had volunteered or donated to HEC should be automatically given the right to vote and stand as candidates. This was in complete contradiction to **Article 8 Membership** which requires Application for membership. The continual disinformation posted to this list undermined the electoral process, which at all times must be seen to be fair and transparent.

Mr. Gatzoulis, an EC member, applied but refused to accept the Bylaws, thus his application remained incomplete regardless of several requests by the EC for him to complete his application. In addition, Mr. E Rigos asked to be removed from the Members database.

In parallel to the above, the HEC EC is bringing to your attention the email below from the same director, which he sent to one of the Elections Committee members (Reference # 2). Obviously, he illegally undermines the integrity of the Elections Committee with this e-mail. There is no question that the integrity of the Committee had been compromised at that time reaching a breach of trust. Though the HEC EC does not doubt this person's integrity, this Election Committee member should have, either resigned from the assignment immediately on her own, or in the very least, post a reply and distanced herself from the offending email. The Committee Chairman had a duty to address the flagrant breach of trust interfering with the Elections, or to dismiss the person mentioned in this email.

A number of objections were sent to the Election Committee, almost exclusively by people who had chosen not to apply as full members although they qualified to do so. Throughout the election process, including after the commencement of Step 8, it has been extremely difficult for this committee to act fairly and without interference.

The tasks are designated and specific. Yet, the Election Committee, apart from their ignoring the above mentioned email, quoted below, chose instead to exceed the mandate as elections committee.

Again, the Elections Committee was outside their jurisdiction in engaging with these individuals. At this point it was obvious that the environment was already poisonous by interfacing with individuals outside EC's official instructions. The breach of trust had already occurred.

The Elections Committee started receiving objections from the outside, all of whom (except #7 which is an objection of the objections, and #8) were from the same individuals who were posting repeatedly to various mailing lists undermining the elections process.

Objection 1 – Mr. Rigos requests that HEC by-Laws of 2010 be applied, without the Addenda. However, a) he refused to apply* as per Article 8, and b) Addenda of previous bylaws apply (which were followed in these elections).

Objection 2 – Mr. Billis is NOT a registered voting member of HEC

Objection 3 – Mr. Episcopos is NOT a registered voting member of HEC

Objection 4 – Mrs. Aroniadou-Anderjaska is NOT a registered voting member of HEC

Objection 5 – Mr. Katsifarakis is NOT a registered voting member of HEC (Reference #4)

Objection 6 – Mr. Gatzoulis refused to accept the HEC Bylaws after several requests to do so, thus his application is incomplete.

Objection 7 – Mrs. Eleni Bomi voices her concern over the repeated intervention to Election Committee Chair by non-members.

Objection 8 – Mr. Karkamanis addresses a summary of opposition demands

Objection 9 – Mr. Rigos is inconsistent in adhering to the HEC By-Laws as updated and modified under his leadership.

Objection 10 – Mr. Rigos summarizes again his opposition to Elections. At this point it is clear he is colluding with the Election Committee undermining the elections.

Objection 11 – Mr. Rigos again summarizes his opposition to the Elections, by promoting his own accomplishments which are not accurate, another interference with the Election Committee.

The HEC EC reiterated that applying for membership has always been a part of the HEC bylaws and that since January 2011 HEC migrated to a database system for complete and accurate membership enrollment.

The Election Committee was been specifically informed several times that **Steps 1-7** of the Election Procedure Protocol have been completed. These reminders were sent March 6, 7, 12 and 14.

In addition, the Election Committee, according to election procedures of the bylaws mandate, was informed to carry on **Step 8**.

HEC EC delivered the ELECTORAL REGISTER (List of voting Members) and the List of APPROVED Candidates to the Election Committee.

Instead of carrying out their responsibility, the Committee allowed external pressures based on false premise to undermine the Elections of persons to fill the vacant EC positions.

Finally, the Election Committee was specifically instructed that the Members mailing list was not to be used any longer as its purpose had been completed.

The Election Committee was specifically told that the Members list was NOT for their use. Instead the Election Committee allowed for the manipulation of a process which was very clear, transparent and as per HEC Bylaws. The **Bylaws Article 8 Membership** is very clear:

- 1) Full Members
 - a. Apply as Full Member
 - b. Volunteer consistently their time for HEC – and/or,
 - c. Pay yearly dues or make an annual monetary contribution
 - d. Qualify for HEC positions
 - e. Eligible to vote in the Center’s elections

The committee ignored the fundamental principal of the bylaws on Membership, allowing baseless objections.

G. HEC Executive Council Decision

The Executive Council is the governing body of HEC. Not any single individual is HEC. The EC worked diligently since the beginning of January 2014 to carry out fair, democratic and transparent elections. All activities were updated daily in the dedicated elections website.

[<http://www.greece.org/hec/admin/vote/2013/>].

The HEC EC is composed by dedicated persons who oversee and perform the organization's operations (i.e. Corporate requirements, Taxation, Banking, Human Resources, Memberships, Server, Internet connectivity and applications, Social Media, Communications, Projects, etc..), all in accordance to HEC By-Laws. There is the technical team which ensures that the server, applications, all mailing Lists and websites operate effectively, and the entire EC cooperates as a team in ensuring normal operations and in coordinating many of HEC Projects. Every one is a volunteer and consensus, reasonability, and above all appreciation must characterize all of their efforts.

In light of these developments:

- a) The Executive Council thanks the elections committee, and dismisses them from their duties.**
- b) The HEC EC declares the end of the elections (Step 9)**
- c) The HEC EC accepted the candidates and director uncontested members to the EC and welcomes them**
- d) The new governing body consists of:**
 - Bomis, Helen (administration)
 - Eleutheriadou, Fotini (technical/design)
 - Gatzoulis, Bill (List manager)
 - Lawless, Anna (director)
 - Manias, Stelios (technical/systems)
 - Michael, Nico (technical/systems)
 - Rigos, Evangelos (director)
 - Voudouris, Thanos (director)
 - Eleftherios (Terry) Dritsas (New member)
 - Marios Chinas (New member)
 - Konstantin (Gus) C Stamatis (New member)
- e) This decision was voted and unanimously accepted by all EC members who were in attendance on this HEC Board meeting.**

This decision was taken subsequent to intense deliberation on the part of the participant EC Members. The HEC EC by adhering to its Bylaws ensures respect and trust while furthering HEC's mission for Hellenism.

The HEC Executive Council

hec@greece.org

REFERENCES (emails) - [BoardMeeting-2014-03-16-Letter-with-refs.pdf](#)

#1 Subject: Letter to Elections Committee - Initial email and instructions to Elections Committee

#2 Subject: Re: Election Progress - Email by Mr. Rigos

#3 Subject: RE: Protasi gia tilediaskepsi – Apantisis (March 12)

#4 Subject: RE: Protasi gia tilediaskepsi – Apantisis (March 11)
