

Here is the current section of the bylaws:

**4. Life Members.** *JSTS may, at the recommendation of the board and with advance notice to the membership, by majority vote designate certain members of the club as life members in recognition of their significant contributions to the club. Life member candidates shall be at least age 70, unless the age requirement is waived by a majority vote of the board due to extraordinary circumstances. Such members will not be required to pay annual dues (but shall execute the LAB waiver found on the JSTS registration form), and shall pay for any other expense required of an adult member for any club activity (i.e. - the Holiday Party).*

The following concepts should be introduced into the bylaws with regard to becoming a Life Member:

- **Honor not a Right** - There is a misconception by some members that being granted lifetime membership with the club is a virtual right once they meet the age requirement. Bestowing the honor of "Life Member" on someone is exactly that... an honor. It is something that is "earned". The tougher the requirements, the greater the honor. If we lessen the requirements, we basically diminish the honor.
- **Quantity and Frequency** - I believe that we should limit the number of new Life Members to no more than 1 per year... and maybe even no more than 1 every two years. If more than one member is nominated, then it would be up to the board to determine which candidate, if any, should be given the honor. It should also be clear that there is no obligation to bestow this honor every year (or two). Once again, the more restrictive we make it to get this honor, the greater the honor it is to get it.
- **Longevity** - While the concept of an age requirement often implies some type of longevity with the club, this is not always the case. There are times where members join the club "later in life", and may meet an age requirement after being with the club for only a few years. While I am fine keeping an age requirement (along with the ability to waive that requirement due to extraordinary circumstances), I recommend that we consider adding a requirement with regard to longevity with the club. Based on some casual discussion at the January general meeting, it seems like something in the 15-20 year range would be appropriate. Similar to the age requirement, this requirement could also be waived due to extraordinary circumstances.
- **Significant Contribution** - A candidate should have made "significant contributions to the club" over their years with the club (as stated in the current bylaws). There are numerous ways in which members can contribute to the club. The most obvious way is by volunteering. This includes, but is not limited to, holding positions on the board, being a ride leader, or helping with some of the many events that we hold each year.
- **Positive Role Model** - A candidate for Life Member should be a positive role model within the club. This means that they help promote cycling, and the values that our club stands for, like safety, camaraderie, etc.
- **Vetting and Confidentiality** - The vetting process of any candidates should be done with a certain level of confidentiality. This avoids situations where a potential candidate is announced to the membership, but then is not recommended by the board after the vetting process has been completed. Furthermore, the vetting process must include a "fair representation of the membership" (i.e., not just a couple of people). If the board is unable to find people who are interested in speaking up on behalf of a candidate, it could be an indication that the candidate might not be worthy of the honor. If the board is unable to properly vet a candidate, they can ask for assistance with the vetting process from another club member(s), while still keeping the process as confidential as possible.
- **Final Vote** - Any candidate that has been properly vetted and recommended by the board for consideration as a Life Member, should have a brief bio presented to the membership with regards to the qualifications of that candidate (i.e., the results of the vetting process). The candidate should only receive that honor if they receive at least a 2/3 majority vote by the membership. Rather than having this vote at a regular meeting, I recommend having this vote at the same time as the annual election... it would simply be something else on the ballot (along with the candidates for board positions). Furthermore, it should either be a secret ballot, or the candidate should be asked to leave the room during the vote. If there is any discussion to take place at the meeting before the actual vote, the candidate (if present) should also be asked to leave the room.
- **Formal Announcement** - Announcement of a new Life Member should be done at one of our club events that has a large attendance by the membership. The most obvious that comes to mind is the annual holiday party, which works out well from a timing perspective, as the party follows shortly after the annual election.

We could eliminate the Final Vote if we could be sure that a candidate would be properly and thoroughly vetted. We would essentially be empowering the board to make the final decision on their own.