

2-9-2022

Why the Glencoe Caucus System Works

The Glencoe Caucus System, the non-partisan way Glencoe selects candidates to run for elected positions on our Village, School, Park and Library Boards works because some 85 years ago residents of Glencoe determined that neighbors' working together for the best interest of the community was more important than the political divisiveness that the election process was causing. The community demanded better and the Glencoe Caucus system was devised. Under this system, representatives to the Glencoe Caucus are elected from their designated precincts to vet candidates for Village, School, Park and Library boards through interviews, calls to references and considerable evaluation of candidate qualifications.

Why does it work in Glencoe? Maybe it works because people who reside in Glencoe want their elected officials to be non-partisan, not obligated to any special interest group or focused on a singular issue. Maybe it works because voters recognize that the Caucus nominating committees are not predisposed to select candidates based on pending issues, that candidates for office don't get selected due to their prominence in government, finance, real estate or other fields of expertise. Maybe it works because people are more willing to step up and represent their community when they understand that the caucus system alleviates some of the pressure on them personally and their family when they run for and serve as an elected official.

It could also be that the Caucus system works in Glencoe because representatives on the nominating committees reside in all corners of the Village, that they are diverse in age, gender, race, religion and political viewpoint. Maybe it is because there is recognition that through the Caucus system, the Village obtains the benefit of independent government representation in the interest of the village as a whole.

The caucus system was carefully devised in 1936. It has faced challenges and adapted to make sure that it continues to be representative. The rotation of Nominating Committee and Advisory Council members follows defined terms (similar to the policy of the Caucus Plan with term limits for elected positions), contributing to fresh looks at how the Caucus system operates and continues to be vital for Glencoe. While the Caucus Plan has been periodically revised and updated, the principles of the plan remain the same; to eliminate special interest groups from the election process, to provide for careful informed selection of candidates, to assure Glencoe voters of the integrity in the selection process, to attract the most highly qualified candidates for public office and ultimately, to promote excellence in governance in the village.

And maybe, the Glencoe Caucus system works because it is not only what we collectively want, but, based on the traditions of excellence and our appreciation for what was, and recognizing what the future holds, it is what Glencoe demands.

That's what makes the Caucus system work in Glencoe. Get involved. Contact the Caucus at glencoecaucusAC@gmail.com or go to glencoecaucus.org for more information.