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www.mdpta.org
5 Central Avenue
Glen Burnie, MD 21061
Phone: (410) 760-6221
(800) 707-7972
Fax: (410) 760-6344

April 21, 2015

Susan Burkinshaw, Treasurer
Montgomery County Council PTA's
13709 Charity Court
Germantown, MD 20874

Greetings Susan,

The Executive Committee reviewed your complaint and has directed me to inform you of our findings.

Firstly and most important is that in looking at your complaint it became obvious that the Montgomery Council was not following proper procedure with regards to recognizing Co-Chairs. Co-Chairs are not legal appointments. No co-chairs presently listed can be recognized as board members. We have urged the Council to look at their current Board structure and correct these bylaw infractions and appoint one chair per committee. We realize that the Council has been operating this way for some time. Now that they are aware of the interpretation being incorrect we are asking that it be addressed and corrected.

Secondly the State, Council, Local Relations committee recommended pointing out that while the chair appointments process made addressing the original complaint moot, we are concerned that the process used to remove Mrs. Burkinshaw set a less than desirable example for your locals. It is our belief that dissenting opinions are healthy and conducive to progress. In a parliamentary society, it is important to protect the voice of the minority. Removing someone because they have differences in opinion or style is never a best practice.

Below is the response from our Parliamentarian:

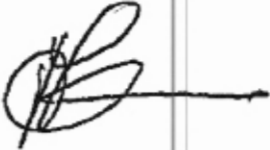
In a letter, dated March 13, 2015, Frances Frost, President of Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA), notified Susan Burkinshaw that MCCPTA's Executive Committee (EC) had rescinded her "appointment" as co-chair of MCCPTA's Committee on Health and Safety. On March 17, 2015, the Committee on State, Council, and Local Relationships of Maryland PTA received a written request from Ms. Burkinshaw to review alleged violations of MCCPTA bylaws by the EC. Ms. Burkinshaw contends the EC's action did not comply with the bylaws because Article VIII, Section 9, regarding removal from office, was not followed. Article VIII, Section 3, of the bylaws provides that standing committee chairs are members of MCCPTA's Board of Directors (BOD), and, although not stated specifically in the bylaws, I understand the Committee on Health and Safety to be a standing committee.

Regarding compliance with MCCPTA's bylaws, it is unnecessary to reach the issue raised by Ms. Burkinshaw's complaint. This case presents a more fundamental issue regarding the original action of MCCPTA's EC in electing "co-chairs" of committees. Article IX, Section 5b, and Article X, Section 3, of the bylaws authorizes the EC to elect "chairmen" and "chairs" of committees, respectively, not "co-chairs." The EC's action of electing co-chairs of MCCPTA's Committee on Health and Safety, therefore, violates the bylaws. Likewise, "co-chairs" of standing committees serving as members of the MCCPTA BOD is violative of the bylaws because Article VIII, Section 3, authorizes standing committee "chairs" as members. I recommend that the EC be required to notify the co-chairs of the Committee on Health and Safety that the EC: (1) violated the bylaws by electing co-chairs of the

Committee on Health and Safety; and (2) will proceed immediately to remedy this violation by electing a chair of the Committee on Health and Safety in compliance with the bylaws.

MCCPTA Bylaws

As you well aware, the bylaws of the MCCPTA are not properly formatted/codified. All amendments should be incorporated into the bylaws text, and the portions that are struck out should be eliminated. One should be able to read the bylaws without reference to amendments appended at the end of the document. Additionally, portions of the amendments appear to be highlighted, which makes that particular text very difficult to read. I recommend that MCCPTA be required to format/codify its bylaws properly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ray Leone', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ray Leone

President

Maryland PTA