

Random Thoughts on Why You Should Vote for Timmy

Overview

I have posted a variety of position papers on topics I feel are important to American Mensa. But there are a lot of things that I've not been able to say because they do not fit into any of those papers.

So I am going to use this paper as a "catch all" of random ideas. Please excuse the staccato nature of the discussion.

Being Different

I am running against the incumbent who has served 2 terms as Chairperson. She is now asking to serve a 3rd consecutive term.

I think she's a wonderful person who has done awesome things for American Mensa. I applaud her service.

If you want American Mensa to stay the same, to continue on its current course – then you should vote for the same people who have dominated the AMC for the past 4 years.

But if you want change...

If you think we need to get better...

If your gut tells you that we need to do something different:

- To reverse the declining membership trend
- To seriously address our poor financial situation
- To improve communications in our on-line communities

Then I implore you to vote for me. Even though I might not seem to be the perfect candidate, I promise productive change.

The Big Picture

If elected as Chairperson, I will only serve one term.

I will not run for reelection nor will I run for another position on the board.

I expect to make a significant positive impact on the organization.

If I can't accomplish that in one term, then I don't deserve a second chance.

The Actual Risk

Speaking of risk – we need to be clear about the “power” of the Mensa Chairperson.

The AMC Chair has a great deal of authority to appoint people to volunteer roles, create committees, etc.

It is an important position and should not be taken lightly.

But ...the Chairperson does not have supreme power over the organization.

All changes in the AMC meetings are done by vote.

The Chairperson has 1 vote (out of a possible 15 voting members). But tradition has it that the Chair does not vote unless there is a tie.

If elected, I promise to continue that tradition. And I will take it a step further – if I am in a position to break a tie vote - I will vote no.

If a proposed change cannot earn a simple majority on its own merit, then it’s authors need to rework it.

AMC Meetings

AMC meetings should continue to be virtual (except for the Annual Business Meeting).

- Members want to be more involved. They deserve the ability to watch the meetings.
- The meetings should remain virtual until we clean up our financial mess.
I can’t imagine the AMC saying that we are cutting all costs to the bone and at the same time flying around the country to for a 2-4 hour meeting.

I also believe that AMC meetings should be far more boring.

I know that sounds odd, but I have a good explanation...

The AMC meetings follow Robert’s Rules of Order. That is good and important (and a little boring).

However; following Robert’s Rules makes it really hard to have a dynamic discussion, especially with our strict time limits.

It doesn’t provide a meaningful way for non-AMC members to participate in the discussion.

We need to find a way to have these important discussions BEFORE amendments are submitted to the AMC.

The discussions need to happen in a public forum.

We need to get members involved in the discussions.

Any wording changes should be resolved before the AMC meeting.

I am proposing a significant change to the way we discuss and resolve problems in American Mensa

- ... that we actively involve members in important issues

- ... a new communications paradigm which I believe will lead to greater member engagement

Communications

I will hold regularly scheduled, on-line Chairman-Member chats.

My target is between 6 and 12 each year.

For now, I imagine that they will be similar to a Reddit AMA (Ask Me Anything). No question is off limits.

But I welcome your ideas on how to make them productive, fun, and interesting.

Hopefully I can convince members of the National Office and/or AMC to join the discussions.

I hope these talks will act as a small step toward opening the lines of communication between the members and the AMC/National Office.

Firehouse

I recently had a member tell me that they will not vote for me because they can't trust that I will defend Firehouse and what I means to the organization.

And I had a different member tell me that they will not vote for me because they think I am too pro-Firehouse.

I obviously can't be both, the truth is that I am neither.

Our challenges run far deeper than any individual SIG or on-line community.

We are divided, and I think the current AMC is somewhat-trying to pick the winning side. I

don't think that the AMC can or should try to pick the winning side.

Doing so would be antithetical to the founding purpose of Mensa.

We need to scale back the anger and heal the divide.

It won't be easy, but our long-term success depends on it.