



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
INDEPENDENT CITIZENS REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

**Resolution 2021.01.02**  
**ICRC Interview Recommendations for the**  
**Communications and Outreach Director Position**  
**Presented: January 7, 2021**

RESOLVED, that the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) hereby approves offering opportunities to interview for the Communications and Outreach Director position to Bill Froehlich, Walter Sorg, and Edward Woods III.

Attachment:

Memorandum to the ICRC – *Recommendations for the Communications and Outreach Candidate Interviews*

MOTION TO AMEND:

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

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	Main	Amendment
Motion by Commissioner		
Second by Commissioner		

RESULT: \_\_\_\_\_  
If Roll Call Vote, see attached.



## Memorandum

**To: The Commissioners of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission**

**From: Sue Hammersmith, Executive Director**

**Regarding: Recommendations for the Communications and Outreach Director  
Candidate Interviews**

At the December 17, 2020 meeting of the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, the Commissioners voted to have the Executive Director conduct a prescreening of seven candidates identified by the Commission for the Communications and Outreach Director position, and make a recommendation regarding which candidates the Commission should interview.

The job description created by the Commission was reviewed, and interview questions and a scoring rubric were developed for the interviews. The *COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR PRESCREENING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SCORING RUBRIC* document is attached.

The following seven candidates were interviewed between December 23 and 30, 2020: Bill Froehlich, Sonja Howell, Amy Hybels, Janet Lebson, Walter Sorg, Andrea Taylor, and Walter Woods III. Through the interview and scoring process, three candidates were identified as the most highly qualified, and their web and social media presence, and political contributions were subsequently reviewed.

Following is a description of each of the top three candidates listed in alphabetical order that provides rationale for recommending each to the Commission to interview for the Communications and Outreach Director position.

### Bill Froelich

Bill Froelich has 25 years of media relations experience, and currently works as a television reporter in Traverse City, covering 24 northern Michigan counties. He has followed politics since student government and currently reports on elections and other political matters. Previous work experience includes media director for a church, and news director and station manager for a public broadcasting station. He holds a bachelor's degree in communications with minors in political science and secondary education. He includes the following as his skills and abilities: relatability, impartiality, approachability, team player, trustworthy, and a sense of humor. He volunteers at his church, promotes education and outreach for the March of Dimes and Muscular Dystrophy Association, and has served as a spokesperson. He is adept at all forms of media communication, including press releases, talking points, on-camera interviews, video, and social media, and as a reporter would be able to anticipate questions coming from the media. He has contacts with media and government officials, always serving in a nonpartisan role to report the news. Descriptions within recommendations for Bill on LinkedIn include the following: professional, friendly, fosters a productive work environment, high quality and creative work, ethical, trustworthy, capable, reliable, natural ability and ease at writing stories, leader, understands deadlines and can be counted on, and comfortable in front of the camera.



### Walter Sorg

Walter Sorg was exposed to politics at a young age, growing up with a Dad involved in politics who became an advisor to Presidents Nixon and Reagan. Walt's first campaign was as a pre-teen volunteer for Republican Senate candidate Charles Percy of Illinois. His lifelong work has consisted of public policy, covering Michigan state government on radio while in college, and subsequently working as communications director for the state House and Speaker of the House, Public Affairs Director of the state Commerce Department, and as Assistant Director of Media for the State Bar of Michigan. He holds a bachelor's degree in business communication and is a guest lecturer at the MSU School of Journalism. He volunteers with environmental and health care causes, as well as the City of Lansing Public Service Board. He is currently retired, however since 2013 remains passionate about the independent redistricting process, volunteering and reaching "across the aisle", crafting messages, and conducting public outreach. He was a co-founder and board member of Voters Not Politicians from 2016-2018. He understands issues and potential issues facing the Commission. He lists his skills and abilities as: media and public relations, relationships near state government with varying political ties, knowledge of the constitutional amendment, and energy. He has connections with the League of Women Voters, NAACP, LatinoLEAD, K-12 education, service clubs, local clerks, and other groups that can assist with engaging Communities of Interest. Letters of support describe him as able to work with opposite sides of an issue; having good instincts, credibility, and integrity; working only for causes he wholeheartedly believes in; and being an effective spokesperson, including when conducting outreach to persons with varying opinions.

### Edward Woods III

Edward Woods III has more than 20 years of experience in high-level communications and public relations leadership, and currently works as the Executive Director of the Lansing Area Safety Council. His previous work experience includes Director of Learning and Leadership with the Michigan Association of Society Executives, Communication and Contact Center Director for the Michigan Department of Human Services, Director of Communications for the Michigan Department of Management and Budget, and Operations Manager for Michigan Works Berrien-Cass Van Buren. Relevant experience gained through these positions includes education and leadership programs, statewide public policy and marketing campaigns (for example, myths about poverty and Buy Michigan First), first state department to develop a mobile app, utilizing software 10 years ago to track social media metrics, connections to community colleges, and development of a statewide database for the Poverty Summit that engaged community partners and individuals throughout Michigan in addressing poverty. He has a bachelor's degree from Oakwood University, and a master's in public administration from Western Michigan University. He volunteers as an Elder and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Director for the Lake Region Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, working on social justice, voter registration, census completion, and other issues. He considers his top skills and qualities to be spokesperson capability, interpersonal relationships, networking, writing and production, transparency, hard worker, team player, and effective listener.



**COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR PRESCREENING  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SCORING RUBRIC**

	SCORE	WEIGHT	WEIGHTED SCORE	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	SCORING 300=excellent; 200=good; 100=minimal; 0=no NOTES
<b>GENERAL ?s</b>				Thank candidate for time & interest in the position	
		5		1-Why are you interested in the position & the work of redistricting?	
		5		2-What are your top 3 skills that have prepared you for this role?	
		5		3-What are your top 3 personal qualities that make you successful?	
<b>EXPERIENCE/SKILLS</b>					
Media Plans of Action		7		4-Briefly describe your experience developing strategic plans of action for media campaigns.	
Message development		5		5-Can you provide an example of a message you have developed for a marketing project?	
Public information campaign		7		6-Briefly share the name & focus of 2 or 3 public information campaigns you have developed.	
Years of Experience		7			
Website content development		4		7-For what organizations have you developed website content?	
Social media campaigns		5		8-Briefly describe your experience in developing social media campaigns.	
Media talking points & briefings		5		9-For what organizations or individuals have you developed media talking points &/or briefings?	
Outreach to engage public/Communities of Interest		7		10-Please describe how you would engage individuals in participating in public hearings. Do you have any specific ideas for engaging Communities of Interest?	
Organize public hearings		5		11-What basic steps would you take to organize 10 public hearings throughout the state?	
Crisis aversion/communication		4		12-Have you ever had to speak with the media during a crisis? If so, what was the most effective way to handle it?	
Executive experience; managing staff		4		13-What experience do you have managing staff? If we were to hire communications staff what skills would best balance your skills?	
Press releases		4			
Government/Open Meetings Act familiarity		4		14-How would you describe your familiarity with the Open Meetings Act on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most familiar?	
<b>ANSWERS TO SUPPLEMENTARY ?s</b>		5			
<b>PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEW</b>		4			
<b>PERSONAL INTEGRITY</b>		4		15-Describe a time you were asked to do something unethical by a boss/leader, and how you handled it.	
<b>NONPARTISANSHIP</b>		4		16-Are you affiliated with a political party? Have you made political contributions? How would you achieve your goals in a nonpartisan manner?	
<b>WRAP UP ?s</b>				17-What do you think will be the most challenging aspect of this position?	
				18-Why should I recommend you to the Commission for an interview?	

CANDIDATE \_\_\_\_\_