



Executive Council Statement of Candidacy

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Name Jim Cocke

Big Red Number 4822

1. Please tell us a little about yourself, most importantly why you are interested in serving on the Executive Council.

I have an unusual combination of a desire to serve, training and experience in business and team management, five years' service on our club's board of directors, and a can-do attitude. I'm a fiscal conservative and social liberal; a pragmatist and a team builder.

When I served as president of the Airstream Club International, I insisted upon, and we passed, a balanced budget. We worked within that budget while still meeting or exceeding our goals for the year. The leadership team that year worked hard and successfully to increase the number of special event rallies. We worked closely and effectively with the new chair of the Caravan Committee and with the leadership of the Vintage intraclub, two vital gateways to new membership in the Airstream Club.

I'm interested in how the club manages increases in membership, programs and diversity. I want to help provide balance and perspective as the club deals with constant change. The club needs to remain true to its most important identity - a member service organization. I have the right experience and interest in moving the club forward.

2. What is your passion for the Club?

We bought our Airstream because it seemed very well built (it is!) and the design inside appealed to us (and still does 17 years later). Debbie Wood and I had not heard of WBCCI. We attended our first rally to find out what the club was about. The local membership chairs were dropping by our house frequently, according to our son, but we were both at work and didn't meet them.

At the rally welcome breakfast, Debbie and I were both floored as soon as we opened the door into the meeting hall. As the steam from all the cooking cleared from the doorway, we saw forty people talking, laughing, and breaking bread together. We had the same clear perception, that these people love each other and love camping together with their Airstreams. We were hooked! We joined on the spot.

Rallying, while important, is only one facet of the club. The club is different things to different people but can't be everything to everyone. We're bonded in aluminum, in our love for Airstreams. There's room for everyone, and I'm intensely interested in continuing development of affinity groups while also promoting tolerance for and even interest in other's lifestyle choices.

3. What has inspired you to commit to a two (2) year term on the Executive Council?

I'm very encouraged by and interested in the positive direction of the International Board of Trustees (IBT). Management of a large entity like the club requires long view, goals, and multi-year follow through. I'd be proud to work beside the strong team on the IBT. I served several years each in local club leadership, rising through the ranks for the Airstream Amateur Radio intraclub, then as the

newsletter editor, treasurer, and secretary for that intraclub. I served five years on the Airstream Club international board of trustees and executive committee.

I learned from this experience. Our club can be its best if we manage and adapt well to change. One-year terms don't support attaining important objectives or goals. I'm retired, like to stay busy. I've continued to serve in requested roles for the Club after my term as International Immediate Past President. I want to support the club's continued strengthening. If elected, I'll be glad to serve two years.

4. What areas of expertise would you bring to the Executive Council, and ultimately our membership? (E.g. Strategic Planning, Financial Management, Marketing, Leadership, etc.)

I'm a quick study, have deep and wide experience as a past international president of the Airstream Club International, and I'm a team player. Working through people who didn't work for me and facilitating meetings were integral to my career in health care management. I learned how to get things done through people and with people, not by telling people what to do. This was a vital lesson, one which I was able to apply in the run up to, and during, my year as international president.

I'm a good listener, I'm an excellent word processor, better than average with Excel®, and have served constructively on more leadership committees than I can list here. I'm a team player, I am willing to offer ideas and work hard, and I have the courage of my convictions.

5. If you have served, or are serving on one or more professional, recreational, city/county/state, charitable or other volunteer board(s), how would you bring those experiences to the members of the Executive Council and how do you envision positioning the Club for continued and sustainable growth?

I served as owners rep for two very large building projects and one historic district replacement building project. I learned flexibility and prioritizing my schedule, coordinating through other committee chairs whose goals didn't seem aligned with ours, and maintaining constructive relationships regardless of personal feelings about another team member.

I chaired the special committee to develop framework and details for the Airstream Club International to reform the structure of the International Board of Trustees (IBT). This work led to approval by the IBT for this Executive Council. Notably, the final proposal from the special committee to the IBT included ideas I had not initially agreed with. We kept egos out of the way and had a great team. The team worked well together and won everyone over to the best concepts.

Four key concepts will position the club for success. The Club will improve membership retention. The Club will continue fostering a strong mutually beneficial relationship with Airstream Company. The Club will reach out to and support local dealers in welcoming new Airstream owners, helping build enjoyment and satisfaction with their Airstream. The Club will support appreciation of diversity through thoughtful development and application of appropriate measures (see #9 below).

6. What accomplishments related to a project, board, business life, or other activity achieved a positive change?

I was lucky enough to serve as facilitator for the special committee for the current structure of the international board of trustees. This special committee was very dedicated and did fabulous work. I enjoyed watching team members' ideas become workable arguments and turn into fully supported proposals. The team's proposal was tweaked thoughtfully and well by another special committee for implementation. The program became this Executive Council for which I'm now applying to become a member.

In professional life I chaired a large multi-jurisdictional task force to develop a successful multi-million dollar grant proposal. The committee consisted of representatives of five counties' police, fire, emergency management, medical transport, and hospitals. This involved many agencies, a lot of similar but centric priorities, and a fixed sum of grant monies. I was probably the least knowledgeable person but had worked with most of these folks on other programs. We respected each other. We agreed upon the goals and worked successfully to apply for and receive the generous funding to

improve the region's response readiness for disaster and trauma incidents.

7. Where would you go to learn more about an alternative perspective presented to you, and from whom would you gather the information?

The people who presented the alternative perspective are the first resource. First, I would try to work with them to obtain background, references, and resources on their perspective.

I then would reach out for more information from the many wise and experienced members throughout the club. Perspectives sometimes are regionally or nationally-biased, so I would need to obtain viewpoints from people representing the target area and impacted areas as well.

Finally, my opinion about someone's perspectives on club issues is not important. What's important is what membership will or will not support. I would seek to learn from as many inputs as feasible. I need understand the perspectives, develop healthy discourse pro and con, and decide who should own the decision. If it's a leadership decision, all of leadership should participate in understanding before judging. If it's a question for membership to decide, then leadership owes to the members to lay out not just the facts but the implications for members to fairly judge upon.

8. What strategies have you used to build consensus with those who held differing viewpoints?

My favorite management book is Getting To Yes (Fisher, Roger and William Ury. Penguin Books). The prevailing concept is to seek the best answer, not just a "win". Ground rules need to set out the criteria for a proposal or agreement. The next step is to obtain relevant input on the viewpoints. Keep the discussions from becoming personal. Look for common ground in the viewpoints, seek agreements on constructive elements. Finally, don't get caught up in characterizing opposing positions. Instead work toward the reason for the discussion - common interests. Sometimes egos can get in the way of agreements. We can build consensus, get to yes, by starting out with as much input as feasible and focusing upon common interests toward the goal. Celebrate the wins, share the credit liberally.

9. Describe how you would create and ensure an inclusive environment.

An inclusive environment in our club would seem a given nowadays. Yet our national society reflects much contention about mutual acceptance and support of diverse peoples. At times, some contentiousness may seep into our club too. As diversity increases among our membership, the club must consciously address diversity, equity and inclusion. I would start with gathering data on the club's current standing via focus groups and opinion surveys. Leadership needs to develop agreement on what constitutes an inclusive club and communicate the criteria for inclusivity to membership.

Leadership must lead by example throughout all levels from International to local, promoting standards of inclusivity and modeling inclusive behavior. Finally, the rubber hits the road with membership's behavior toward one another and toward prospective members. Leaders and members have to own this, live it, and require inclusive behavior of each other. But we start with defining inclusivity clearly and openly throughout the club.

10. What do you feel is the single greatest opportunity for our Club? How would you work with the International Board of Trustees to expand the opportunity?

Members and businesses both benefit from improved relations between the club and Airstream Co, and the dealers and vendors. The club has a very uneven track record in relationship management with the related entities. This has improved in one area. The corporate manager, supported by the International Board of Trustees, has built a strong relationship for the club with Airstream Co. This seems to increasingly benefit both organizations. Similarly, the club has made some good progress with certain dealers and vendors.

Throughout all levels of the club, though, there seems to be an opportunity to improve the relationship with dealerships and vendors. The club's ability to provide product and service discounts to members hinges upon the vendors' and dealers' positive perception of the club. What if members could all be good ambassadors of the club in their interactions with dealers and vendors?

When there's disagreement between a member and a seller or dealer, no one benefits if everyone's

unhappy. I would like to see consideration of a helpful escalation process for members who become frustrated with a service or purchase related to their Airstream? The IBT can work on this and investigate other measures supporting Airstream Inc, dealers, and vendors.

11. What do you see as the single greatest challenge for the Club? What steps would you take to course correct the challenge?

Membership retention is the single greatest challenge for the club. Increasing new memberships is low hanging fruit, particularly during Airstream Company's boom production periods. The hard work is developing and sustaining an effective member retention strategy.

The club formerly supported a program to recognize members who signed up great numbers of new members. Notably, the program failed to measure any efforts or success on retaining those many new members. What if the membership chairs had been coached on working equally hard on retaining as on recruiting new members? Let's work further on learning what pleases or displeases members enough to influence their membership renewals.

The club can work to determine what the most frequently occurring membership dissatisfiers are and how to improve upon those, while also studying what the most frequently mentioned motivating factors are. Why not work tactically with that information? Improve motivation with frequent and clear demonstration of value for membership fees through activities and fiscal benefits. Reduce dissatisfiers through improving on-boarding, inclusion, and communication.

12. Have you served two (2) years on the International Board of Trustees as a Region President or Executive Council member?

Yes

Our members may wish to learn more about you, or ask some additional questions regarding your candidacy. Please indicate your preferred method of contact and include hours of availability & time zone:

I welcome your questions about what I've said and what I've not said above. I'm also interested in hearing your opinions about the new structure. Let me hear from you.

I prefer email, next best for me is texts. If you call, please leave a voicemail. Even better, text me your contact info - then we can connect. Either of those may evolve to a phone conversation when helpful.

I'm in eastern time zone.

E-mail wbbjimm5@gmail.com

Phone Number (704) 430-9192

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Please review the following statements and check the corresponding boxes to reflect your acceptance.

Terms and Conditions Accepted

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Upload a high-resolution picture of yourself, a minimum of 300 dpi. It is recommended that the photo you submit should be front-facing, well-lit, and clearly show what you look like. It is also suggested to wear appropriate attire in the photo.



Watch candidate video