

Corporate Voting System

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a system for facilitating and monitoring voting at a corporate event.

5 More particularly, this invention relates to processes performed by computer systems to register participants, tally votes, and report results of votes on resolutions at a corporate event. Still more particularly, this invention relates to processes executed by computer systems which provide paper ballots with unique identifiers that are issued to participants during a registration period. The ballots may be printed in accordance with voting information from a shareholder and may be invalidated by
10 the system during vote tallying as identified by the unique identifier.

Description of the Prior Art

In today's society, corporations often hold shareholder meetings to vote on many resolutions affecting the governance of the corporate business in accordance with the laws in many jurisdictions
15 and customs of corporate governance. Votes on these issues are often decided by casting of paper ballots by participants at a meeting. However, the use of paper ballots presents many problems. A first problem is the recognition of the position on a resolution voted by a shareholder. Recognition is a problem associated with the difficulties in reading the shareholder's handwritten vote from a submitted ballot.

20 A second problem is that it is also often difficult to determine the participants that are entitled to vote on a resolution and how many shares are represented by the vote of the participant. This may be a particular problem in jurisdictions in which a paper record of the vote is required by law. In these jurisdictions, a shareholder often has to designate a proxy to go to the meeting in place of the shareholder to cast a vote on the resolution. This can cause problems in determining the proper
25 person designated to act as the proxy for the shareholder in the vote. Also, the shareholder cannot be assured that the proxy has voted the shares in the manner the shareholder desires on the resolution.

A third problem is that a participant often acts in one or more capacities at an event. For example, one participant may vote his own shares as a shareholder, vote the shares of a corporation
30 as a corporate representative, and/or vote the shares of another shareholder as a proxy. Thus, the

participant will often have to register in each different capacity often requiring queuing at different registration stations for each capacity. Thus, the registration process is often time consuming and inefficient.

5 A fourth problem is that tallying of the paper ballots is also a lengthy process and it is often some time before the results of the vote on a resolution are known and announced at the shareholder's meeting.

To alleviate these problems, many systems that provide a means of electronic voting at meetings have been proposed. A first electronic system is simply electronic tallying of the votes. However, electronic tallying of the votes does not solve the problem of determining participants
10 eligibility to vote. A second proposal is registration of participants and the use of handheld electronic devices to record the votes. However, this solution may not comply with laws in some jurisdictions for recording the vote. These systems also offer no way of tracking voters, invalidating the votes of ineligible participants, or allowing the change in the person designated to vote for particular shares. Others have proposed using networked devices to record votes on a control system connected to the
15 network. However, these systems also do not provide paper records required by many jurisdictions. Furthermore, the networked systems often require each participant to have a networked device and each device to include the proper software, hardware, or firmware to communicate over the network adding to the expense and support needed for the meeting.

Thus, those skilled in the art are constantly striving to provide a system that manages
20 corporate votes at an event that is easy to implement, and complies with the recording requirements in various jurisdictions.

Summary of the Invention

The above and other problems are solved and an advance in the art is made by a corporate
25 event voting system in accordance with this invention. A first advantage of a corporate voting system in accordance with this invention is that paper ballots are provided to event participants and an electronic tallying system is used to count the ballots. This improves the speed and accuracy of determining and/or reporting of the results. A second advantage is that the system provides a manner in which a shareholder may provide voting instructions that are printed onto a proxy's ballot to assure
30 that the shareholder's position is properly represented by the proxy. A third advantage is that each

ballot has an identifier. The identifier allows ballots to be invalidated and disregarded during a vote tallying process. Thus, a shareholder may designate multiple proxies with differing levels of priority and only the proxy with the highest proxy priority is allowed to vote. A fourth advantage is that a registration process allows a participant to receive ballots for each capacity that participant holds
5 concurrently instead of making a participant register at different stations for each capacity. A fifth advantage is that a system in accordance with this invention may be implemented by software instructions loaded into various computer systems with minimal implementation costs and with no additional burdens on the participants.

In accordance with embodiments of this invention, a system, provided by applications
10 executed by one or more computer systems, for handling voting by participants at a corporate event operates in the following manner. The system maintains databases storing information regarding a resolution to be voted on during the event, information regarding shareholders of the corporate entity, and information regarding participants authorized to vote shares held by each of the shareholders. To register a participant to vote at an event, the system receives an input of an identification from the
15 participant. The system determines whether the participant is a proxy designated by one of the shareholders from the identification. If the participant is a proxy, the system reads a number of shares that the proxy is authorized by the shareholder to vote on a resolution. The system then reads any voting instructions provided by the shareholder that direct a manner in which the proxy is to vote the number of shares on the resolution and prints a ballot slip having indicia indicating a vote in the
20 manner directed by shareholder in the voting instructions.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the system may determine whether the participant is a proxy for two or more of the shareholders and print ballot slips including indicia of the number of shares designated to the participant as a proxy and the voting instructions provided by each of the two or more shareholders. Thus, the participant may be provided voting slips to act as a
25 proxy for each of multiple shareholders.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the system may determine whether a previously registered participant has been issued a ballot as a proxy for one of the shareholders. If the system determines that a previous participant is registered as the proxy of the shareholder, the system then determines if the current participant is the preferred proxy. If the current participant is the

preferred proxy, the system invalidates the ballot slips printed for the previous participant responsive to printing the ballot for the current participant.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the voting instructions may direct that the participant is a proxy that is authorized to vote less than a total amount of shares of a shareholder and the printed ballot indicates the number of shares the proxy is authorized to vote. A second participant may also be designated a proxy by the shareholder and be authorized to vote a portion or all of the remaining number of shares. The second participant receives a printed ballot with indicia indicating the portion of shares that the second participant is authorized to vote from the system.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the system may determine that the participant is a shareholder from the received identification. If the participant is determined to be a shareholder, the system determines a number of shares held by the participant as a shareholder from stored shareholder information. A ballot is then printed indicating the number of the shares that are to be voted on the resolution by the participant as a shareholder. In accordance with some of these embodiments, the system determines whether a ballot has been printed for a previously registered participant as a proxy for the shareholder. If a ballot has been printed for a proxy of the shareholder, the ballot of the proxy is invalidated in response to the printing of the ballot for participant as a shareholder.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the system may determine the participant is a corporate representative for a shareholder that is a corporate entity. The system then determines the number of shares of the corporate entity shareholder and prints a ballot indicating the number of shares for use by the participant. The system may also determine if a ballot has been printed for a previously registered participant as a proxy authorized by corporate shareholder and invalidate the ballot of the proxy in response to the printing of the ballot for the participant acting as the corporate representative of the corporate shareholder. Furthermore, the participant may act as a corporate representative for two or more corporate shareholders. The system then determines the number of shares of each corporate share holder and prints ballots for each corporate shareholder for use by the participant. Each ballot indicating the number of shares held by one of the corporate shareholders.

In accordance with other embodiments of this invention, a participant may act as more than one of a shareholder, a corporate representative, and/or a proxy at an event. The participant is printed a ballot for each role that a participant acts. Further, a ballot is printed for each role that the participant acts for each resolution for which a vote will be held at the event.

5 In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the votes on a resolution are tallied in the following manner. First, a marked ballot is received from a participant and is scanned by the system. The system then determines whether the ballot is valid. If the ballot is valid, the number of votes for a position on the resolution are determined from the ballot. The system then adds the votes for a position to a count total for the position. The validity of a ballot may be determined by a unique
10 identifier assigned to the ballot. The unique identifier may be determined from indicia printed on the ballot. The validity of the ballot is then determined by comparing the identifier to a list of either valid and/or invalid identifiers. In accordance with some embodiments, the system may determine a ballot to be invalid if the votes of shares on a position cannot be determined from the ballot. This may be due to marking errors or other readability issues.

15 In accordance with some embodiments, the ballot is marked as invalid when the system determines the ballot is invalid. The scrutineer may then review the invalid ballot and input a correction to validate the ballot using his best judgement taking into account the nature and gravity of the error.

In accordance with some embodiments of this invention, the system determines the result of a
20 vote on a resolution after the votes have been tallied. If the vote on the resolution results in a tie, an input of a vote from the Chairman of the event may be received and used to determine the result. The system then generates reports. The reports may then be transmitted over a network, printed, displayed, and/or stored by the system.

25 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

The above and other features and advantages of a corporate voting system in accordance with this invention are described in the Detailed Description below and are shown in the following drawings:

Figure 1 illustrating a conventional computer system that includes a corporate voting system
30 in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 2 illustrating a typical processing system included in the computer and other related systems in Figure 1 for performing the processes to provide a voting system in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 3 illustrating a flow diagram of processes performed by a corporate voting system in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 4 illustrating a flow diagram of a process for storing corporate information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figures 5 and 6 illustrating a flow diagram of a process for storing shareholder and other participant information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figures 7 and 8 illustrating a flow diagram of a process for storing event information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 9 illustrating a flow diagram of a process for registering participants for a corporate event in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 10 illustrating a flow diagram of a ballot printing process for a shareholder participant in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 11 illustrating a flow diagram of a ballot printing process for a corporate representative participant in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 12 illustrating a flow diagram of a ballot printing process for a proxy participant in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 13 illustrating a flow of a process for tallying results of a vote in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 14 illustrating a first sample ballot in accordance with an embodiment of this invention;

Figure 15 illustrating a second sample ballot in accordance with an embodiment of this invention; and

Figure 16 illustrating shareholder database records storing shareholder information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention.

Detailed Description

This invention relates to a system for facilitating and monitoring voting at a corporate event. More particularly, this invention relates to processes performed by computer systems to register

participants, tally votes, and report results of votes on resolutions at a corporate event. Still more particularly, this invention relates to processes executed by computer systems which provide paper ballots with unique identifiers that are issued to participants during a registration period. The ballots may be printed in accordance with voting information of a shareholder and may be invalidated by the system during vote tallying as identified by the unique identifier.

This invention relates to a system for handling votes on one or more resolutions at a corporate event. The invention is provided by processes performed by processing systems in one or more computer systems connected by a network. The processes are provided by instructions executed by the processing system. These instructions may be stored as hardware, software, or firmware in the system. One skilled in the art will recognize that any number of programming languages and conventional applications may be used to provide the system without departing from the invention. Furthermore, one skilled in the art will recognize that steps performed in the processes described need not be performed in the order presented to provide a voting system for an event in accordance with this invention.

Figure 1 illustrates a computer network 100 that executes various processes to provide a corporate voting system in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. Computer network 100 includes a database server 110, a printer 120, and a computer terminal 130 connected to one another via intranet 140. Database 110 is a conventional server that executes software and firmware instructions to maintain databases that store information used by a corporate voting system. The exact database and/or databases may be provided and maintained using conventional software to configure and store database records to store and access the information needed as described below. It is left as a design choice as to the exact server and/or database applications used to maintain databases used by a system in accordance with this invention.

Printer 120 is a conventional printer that prints data transmitted to the printer over intranet 140. The exact configuration of the printer is unimportant to this invention and is left as a design choice to those skilled in the art. Computer terminal 130 is a conventional computer system 130 with a scanner/ optical reader 135 connected as a peripheral device to perform the processes such as participant registration, ballot printing, vote tallying and result processing. One skilled in the art will recognise that the scanner/ optical reader may be more than one device and may provide functions such as generating electronic copies of documents, reading and translating of barcodes or other

indicia, and/or input of other information. Furthermore, a signature pad and stylus 137 or other such device may also be provided to capture information from a participant for registration or other functions in accordance with this invention. The exact type and configuration of computer terminal 130, scanner/ optical reader 135, and other connected devices are left to those skilled in the art as long as the processing requirements of the corporate voting system are met.

Intranet 140 is a conventional Local Area Network (LAN) for connecting devices in a network for communication. The exact configuration and devices provided and connected to Intranet 140 being left as a design choice. Furthermore, Intranet 140 connects all connected devices to Internet 150 for communication with Internet connected devices outside Intranet 140.

Figure 2 illustrates an exemplary processing system including the components needed to execute the applications from instructions stored in a memory to perform the processes provided in accordance with this invention. One skilled in the art will recognize that the exact configuration of each processing system may be different and the exact configuration executing processes in accordance with this invention will vary and the figure is given by way of example only.

Processing system 200 includes Central Processing Unit (CPU) 205. CPU 205 is a processor, microprocessor, or any combination of processors and microprocessors that execute instructions to perform the processes in accordance with the present invention. CPU 205 connects to memory bus 210 and Input/Output (I/O) bus 215. Memory bus 210 connects CPU 205 to memories 220 and 225 to transmit data and instructions between the memories and CPU 205. I/O bus 215 connects CPU 205 to peripheral devices to transmit data between CPU 205 and the peripheral devices. One skilled in the art will recognize that I/O bus 215 and memory bus 210 may be combined into one bus or subdivided into many other busses and the exact configuration is left to those skilled in the art.

A non-volatile memory 220, such as a Read Only Memory (ROM), is connected to memory bus 210. Non-volatile memory 220 stores instructions and data needed to operate various subsystems of processing system 200 and to boot the system at start-up. One skilled in the art will recognize that any number of types of memory may be used to perform this function.

A volatile memory 225, such as Random Access Memory (RAM), is also connected to memory bus 210. Volatile memory 225 stores the instructions and data needed by CPU 205 to perform software instructions for processes such as the processes for providing a system in accordance with this invention. One skilled in the art will recognize that any number of types of

memory may be used to provide volatile memory and the exact type used is left as a design choice to those skilled in the art.

I/O device 230, keyboard 235, display 240, memory 245, network device 250 and any number of other peripheral devices connect to I/O bus 215 to exchange data with CPU 205 for use in applications being executed by CPU 205. I/O device 230 is any device that transmits data to and/or receives data from CPU 205. Keyboard 235 is a specific type of I/O that receives user input and transmits the input to CPU 205. Display 240 receives display data from CPU 205 and display images on a screen for a user to see. Memory 245 is a device that transmits and receives data to and from CPU 205 for storing data to a media. Network device or driver 250 connects CPU 205 to a network for transmission of data to and from other processing systems.

Figure 3 illustrates a process 300 for providing a corporate voting system for an event in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. Process 300 begins in step 305 with generating and maintaining corporate information. The corporate information is information regarding the corporation for which the system is providing a voting system for an event. A description of the information that may be included in corporate information and a process for updating the information is described with respect to Process 400 shown in Figure 4. Preferably, the corporate information is maintained in a corporate database in the memory of a database server. However, other data structures and other devices may be used to store the corporate information without departing from this invention.

In step 310, shareholder and other participant information is generated and maintained. Preferably, the shareholder information is maintained in a shareholder database in the memory of a database server. Information for other participants, such as proxies and corporate representatives may be maintained in shareholder records and/or records in separate databases without departing from this invention. A description of the information that may be stored for shareholders and other participants and a process for updating the information is described below with respect to Figures 5, 6 and 16. However, other databases data structures, and/or devices may be used to store the information without departing from this invention.

In step 315, event information is generated and maintained. Preferably, the event information is maintained in an event database in the memory of a database server. A description of the information that may be included in the event information and a process for updating the information is

described below with respect to Figures 7 and 8. However, other databases, data structures, and devices may be used to store the corporate information without departing from this invention.

In step 320, event registration functions are performed. As described below, event registration includes verifying participants in the event and issuing of ballots for participants to use to
5 vote on resolutions at an event. Processes included in the event registration functions are described below with respect to Figures 9-12. In step 325, tallying of the votes on resolution from the ballots is performed. A description of a process for tallying the results is given below with respect to Figure 13. In step 330, the results of the vote on a resolution are determined from information about the resolution stored in event data and stored. Any necessary reports are then generated and/or printed in
10 step 335 and process 300 ends.

Figure 4 illustrates process 400 for storing corporate information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. Corporate information includes information about the corporation that may include, but is not limited to, corporate name, corporate offices, authorized contact for the corporation, and any other corporate information that may be needed to generate necessary reports
15 for an event. Preferably, the corporate information for a particular corporation that uses the system for voting at an event is stored as a corporate record in a corporation database in a memory of a storage server. However, those skilled in the art will recognize that other data structures and/or memory components, and devices may be used without departing from this invention.

In step 405, process 400 begins by determining whether an input of the corporate name has
20 been received for a corporate record. One skilled in the art will recognize that the corporate name may be a necessary information needed to create a record in the database, the first time the corporate information is input. The corporate name and other corporate information may be received as input from an I/O device or from another source such as data imported from another source and/or scanning of a document. In step 410, the corporate name for the corporate is updated and/or stored
25 in a memory. Preferably, the corporate information is stored as a corporate record in the corporation database. In step 415, process 400 determines whether an input of a new authorized contact for a corporation has been received. If a new contact has been received, the new contact is stored in the corporate information. Preferably, the new contact is updated into a corresponding field of the corporate record stored in the corporation database.

In step 475, process 400 determines whether other corporate information has been received. The other corporate information may be any information necessary for record keeping and/or generating reports for the resolutions voted on at an event. If other corporate information has been received, process 400 updates or stores the information in the proper position in the corporate information in step 480. Preferably, process 400 stores the new corporate information in an appropriate field in the corporate record in the corporation database. After step 475 or step 480 process 400 ends.

Figures 5 and 6 illustrate process 500 which is a process for storing and updating shareholder and other participant information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. Shareholder information may include, but is not limited to, shareholder name; contact information; verification information and a number of shares held; designated proxies and/or corporate representatives; a priority of preference for the proxies; and voting directions. Preferably, shareholder information for each shareholder is stored as a record in a shareholder database.

Figure 16 illustrates an exemplary shareholder database 1500 in accordance with an embodiment of this invention showing various options available in accordance with embodiments of this invention. In a first record in database 1500, shareholder Paul Somebody controls 100,000 shares of the corporation and has appointed no proxies to vote his shares at the event. A second record in database 1500 shows Small Bank Corporation controls 268,346 shares and has designated Paul Somebody as the corporate representative to vote the shares at the event. A third record shows that Ivan Doe controls 300,000 shares and has appointed Paul Somebody as a proxy to vote the shares at the event. Ivan Doe has further provided voting instructions directing Paul Somebody to vote all of the shares in favour of resolutions 1 and 2. From the above example, it is clear that one party (Paul Somebody) may act in multiple roles. In the above example, Paul Somebody may act as a shareholder to vote his shares, a corporate representative to vote the shares of Small Bank Corp., and as a proxy to vote Ivan Doe's shares. Further, the above records show that a shareholder may designate the manner in which the shares are to be voted using the voting instructions.

A fourth record shows Charley Moneybags controls 1,000,000 shares; has appointed Ron Greater and Lester Lower as alternate proxies; and has given priority to Ron Greater over Lester Lower. Thus, Lester Lower is only entitled to participate as a proxy for Charley Moneybags if Ron Greater fails to register for the event.

A fifth record shows John Deer controls 600,000 shares; has appointed Samuel Vines and Sybil Rankin and the event Chairman as proxies; and has included voting instructions that Samuel Vines is to vote 60% of the shares and Sybil Rankin is to vote 40% of the shares. Further the instructions state that the Chairman receive the proxy of either Samuel Vines and/or Sybil Rankin in the event that one or both do not register for the event. From this example, one can see that the system can handle the splitting of the votes of controlled shares to multiple proxies and priority between different proxies.

A sixth shareholder record shows Dennis Moolah controls 1,000,000 shares; appoints Kelly Prose and the Chairman as proxies; and has given a proxy priority of Kelly Prose over the Chairman. As can be seen in the above example, the voting information may be used to designate multiple proxies and/or establish proxy priority.

A seventh record shows a Chairman of the event has 500,000 and has not designated a proxy. However, from the previous records, it is clear the Chairman may act in multiple roles to vote shares for different shareholders. An eighth record shows Paul Somebody and Samuel Joint are joint shareholders of 1,000 shares. The voting rights for the shares in the case of a joint shareholder may be determined by voting instructions (if given) corporate by-laws, jurisdictions laws as described below. The following figures will show how the designation of shares to votes in the above records are handled to provide ballots to the correct participants.

Returning to Figures 5 and 6, process 500 begins in step 505 by determining whether shareholder information has been received. The shareholder information and participant information received in process 500 may be received as input from an I/O device or from another source such as data imported from another source. In step 510, the shareholder information for a particular shareholder is updated in a memory. Preferably, the shareholder information is updated and stored in a shareholder record in the shareholder database. One skilled in the art will recognize that certain shareholder information may be required to create a new shareholder record without departing from this invention.

After step 510 or step 505, process 500 determines whether the shareholder is a corporate entity in step 515. If the information is a corporate entity, process 500 determines whether corporate representative information has been received in step 520. If corporate representative information is received, the corporate representative information is updated in the shareholder information for the

shareholder in step 525. One skilled in the art will recognize that a record in a corporate representative database may also be updated and/or created from this information without departing from this invention. Preferably, the corporate representative information is inserted into the proper fields in the shareholder record stored in the shareholder database and/or a corporate representative record in a corporate representative database.

If the shareholder is not a corporate entity or after step 520 or 525, process 500 determines whether the input includes new proxy information in step 530. If process 500 determines new proxy information is included, process 500 retrieves and/or creates a corresponding proxy record for the shareholder in the proxy database in step 532. In step 535, process 500 determines whether a new proxy designation has been made by the shareholder. If a proxy designation has been received, process 500 stores the new proxy information in appropriate field in a shareholder record in the shareholder database and the a corresponding proxy record in a proxy database in step 540. One skilled in the art will recognize that although described as a proxy database, other data structures and/or systems may be used to store the proxy information without departing from this invention.

Otherwise or after step 540, process 500 determines whether voting instructions for a proxy have been received from a shareholder in step 542. If voting instructions for a proxy have been received, process 500 updates the voting instructions in the proxy record of the proxy in the proxy database in step 545. If no voting instructions are received or after step 545, process 500 determines whether alternate proxy information is received in step 550. Alternate proxy information is information that directs the order or priority in which two or more designated proxies are to be allowed to participate at an event. Typically, alternate information states a first proxy that is to participate in the event and an ordering of alternate participants if the previously named proxies fail to register for the event. If alternate proxy information is received, process 500 updates a shareholder record and proxy records for each of the proxies named in step 552.

If there are no alternate proxy or after step 552, process 500 determines whether the input is proxy vote splitting information in step 555. Proxy vote splitting information is information detailing a splitting of the votes of shares held by a shareholder among two or more proxies. If proxy vote splitting information is received, the proxy record of each proxy accorded portion of the shares to vote is updated accordingly in step 560.

If there is no joint proxy information or after step 560, process 500 determines if the input includes information about another proxy in step 565. If so, process 500 repeats from step 530. Otherwise, process 500 ends.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate a process 600 for receiving event information in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. Event information may include event time, event location, event date, issue to resolve, issue determination, and any other information for an event needed to provide the process of corporate voting system in accordance with this invention. Preferably, the event information for a particular event is stored as an event record in an event database in a memory of a storage server. However, those skilled in the art will recognize that other data structures, memory components, and/or devices may be used without departing from this invention.

In step 605, process 600 begins by receiving an initial input or change of event information for an event record. The event information may be received as input from an I/O device or from another source such as data imported from another source. In step 610, the information for the event is updated in the event record stored in a memory. Preferably, the event information is stored as an event record in the event database. Further, one skilled in the art will recognize that some information may be required to be received if the record is new record. In step 615, process 600 determines whether an input of a Chairman information for an event is received. If Chairman information is received, the Chairman information is updated in the event record in step 620. In step 625, process 600 determines if an input of an estimated number of attendees or participants is received. If information on the estimated number of attendees is received, the estimated number is updated in the appropriate field of the event record in the event database in step 630.

In step 635, process 600 determines whether an input of scrutineer information has been received. For purposes of this discussion, a scrutineer is a person authorized to oversee and manage the votes on resolutions during an event. If scrutineer information is received, the event record is updated with the scrutineer information in step 640.

If there no scrutineer information or after step 640, process 600 determines whether an input of shares issued by the corporate entity holding the event has been received in step 642. If an input of share information has been received, the share information for the corporate entity is updated in the event record in step 645.

If there is no share information, process 600 determines whether there is quorum information in step 647. A quorum is the amount of participants, shareholders or votes needed to vote at an event to make a resolution binding. The quorum may be determined by the number of shareholder and/or amount of shares held in accordance with corporate by-laws and/or jurisdictional requirements.

5 If quorum information is received, the quorum information is updated in the event record in step 650.

If there is no quorum information or after step 650, process 600 determines whether information regarding a resolution has been received in step 655. For purposes of this discussion, a resolution is a proposal being voted during the event. More than one resolution may be voted on at an event without departing from this invention. Furthermore, an event may serve as two or more
10 meetings for a corporate entity, where each meeting may include separate resolutions to be voted upon. If resolution information has been received, the event record and/or a resolution record in a resolution database may be updated in step 660. In step 665, process 600 determines whether other information for other resolutions for the event has been received. If so, process 600 repeats from step 660 for the next resolution. This loop is repeated until information for all of the resolutions is updated.
15 Process 600 ends after all, if any, of the resolution information has been updated.

Figure 9 illustrates process 800 that is process to register a participant for an event and provide ballots to vote on the resolutions during the event. One skilled in the art will recognise that more than one resolution may be voted upon at an event. Process 800 begins in step 805 with receiving verification information from the participant. Verification information is either read from or
20 input from a government or other identification that is used to determine an identity of and verify a participant. In some embodiments, a signature may be captured from the participant and compared to a reference sample to verify identification. In accordance with this invention, a participant may act in more than one of the roles of shareholder, corporate representative, and proxy. Furthermore, the participant may be a proxy or corporate representative for each of multiple shareholders. In each of
25 these situations, the participant must receive a ballot for each role that the participant is performing and for each shareholder the participant is representing. For example, the participant is a corporate representative for one shareholder and a proxy for another shareholder. In this case, the participant must receive a ballot to vote as a corporate representative and one to vote as a proxy. In a further example, the participant is a proxy for two different shareholders. In this case, the proxy must receive
30 two ballots, one for each of the two different shareholders.

If the participant is a verified participant, process 800 determines if the participant is a shareholder in step 810. This may be done by searching for a record in the shareholder database that includes the verification information provided. If the participant is a shareholder, process 800 performs a shareholder ballot printing process in step 815. An embodiment of the ballot printing process is described below respect to Figure 10.

Next, process 800 determines if the participant is a corporate representative of a corporate shareholder in step 820. If so, process 800 performs a corporate representative ballot printing process in step 825. An embodiment of a corporate representative ballot printing process is described below with respect to Figure 11. Process 800 then determines if the participant is a proxy in step 830. If so, a proxy printing process is performed in step 835 and process 800 ends. An embodiment of a proxy printing process is described below with respect to Figure 12.

Figure 10 illustrates process 900 that is an embodiment of a shareholder ballot printing process in accordance with this invention. Process 900 begins in step 905 by retrieving the shareholder record of a participant identified as a shareholder. In step 910, process 900 determines whether a proxy designated by the shareholder has registered and been issued a ballot. If so, process 900 invalidates the ballot issued to the proxy in step 915. If there is no proxy for the shareholder previously registered or after step 915, process 900 determines the number of shares the shareholder controls in step 920. One skilled in the art will recognize that priority and/or voting rights of joint shareholder may be determined in accordance with prior instructions, corporate by-laws, and/or jurisdictional laws in step 920 as well.

A ballot is then printed for the shareholder in step 925. The ballot includes indicia of a unique identifier of the ballot and may further include indicia indicating the event, and/or the resolution the ballot is to be used to vote upon. For purposes of this discussion an indicia is any particular marking in a particular area of a ballot that conveys specific information. Exemplary ballots are described below with respect to Figure 14 and 15. The unique identifier of the ballot and the assignment of the ballot to the shareholder are stored in this step for use in ballot validation as described below with respect to Figure 13. After the ballot is printed, process 900 determines if there are other resolutions to be voted on at the event in step 930. If so, process 900 repeats from step 910 for each resolution being voted upon at the event. When ballots have been printed for all of the resolutions, process 900 ends.

Figure 11 illustrates process 1000 that is an embodiment of a corporate representative ballot printing process in accordance with this invention. Process 1000 begins in step 1005 by retrieving the shareholder record of corporate shareholder that designated the participant identified as a corporate representative. In step 1010, process 1000 determines whether a proxy designated by the shareholder has registered and been issued a ballot. If so, process 1000 invalidates the ballot issued to the proxy in step 1015. If there is no proxy for the shareholder to register or after step 1015, process 1000 determines the number of shares held by the corporate shareholder from the shareholder record in step 1020.

A ballot is then printed for the corporate representative in step 1025. The ballot includes indicia of a unique identifier of the ballot and may further include indicia indicating the event, and/or the resolution the ballot is to be used to vote upon. Exemplary ballots are described below with respect to Figure 14 and 15. The unique identifier of the ballot and the assignment of the ballot to the corporate representative are stored in this step for use in ballot validation as described below with respect to Figure 13. After the ballot is printed, process 1000 determines if there are other resolutions to be voted on at the event in step 1030. If so, process 1000 repeats from step 1010 for each resolution being voted upon at the event. When ballots have been printed for all of the resolutions, process 1000 determines whether the participant has been designated as a corporate representative by another corporate shareholder in step 1035. If so, process 1000 is repeated from step 1005 for each corporate shareholder that has designated the participant as a corporate representative. After all of the ballots that the participant is authorized to vote as a corporate representative have been printed, process 1000 ends.

Figure 12 illustrates process 1100 that is an embodiment of a proxy ballot printing process in accordance with this invention. Process 1100 begins in step 1105 by retrieving the corresponding shareholder record for the shareholder designating the participant as the proxy and proxy record for the participant acting as the proxy from the respective databases. In step 1110, process 1100 determines whether another proxy designated by the shareholder has registered and been issued a ballot. If another participant has registered as proxy for the shareholder, process 1100 determines whether the participant has a higher priority as a proxy than the registered proxy in step 1115. If the participant has a higher priority, process 1100 invalidates the ballot of previously registered proxy in step 1120.

If there is no other proxy for the shareholder register or after step 1120, process 1100 determines the number of shares the participant is authorized to vote as a proxy in step 1125. If the vote of a shareholder's shares is split between multiple proxies, the allocation of shares to vote may be stored in the voting instructions or in a "shares to vote" field in the shareholder and/ or proxy records. In step 1130, process 1100 determines whether the shareholder has issued voting instructions as to how the proxy is to vote the shares. If so, the voting instructions are read in step 1135.

A ballot is then printed for the corporate representative in step 1140. The ballot includes indicia of a unique identifier of the ballot and may further include indicia indicating the event, and/or the resolution the ballot is to be used to vote upon. Furthermore, the ballot is printed with votes in accordance with the voting instructions printed on the ballot to assure that the shareholder's wishes are followed. Exemplary ballots are described below with respect to Figure 14 and 15. The unique identifier of the ballot and the assignment of the ballot to the proxy are stored in this step for use in ballot validation as described below with respect to Figure 13. After the ballot is printed, process 1100 determines if there are other resolutions to be voted on at the event in step 1145. If there are other resolutions, process 1100 repeats from step 1110 for each resolution being voted upon at the event. When ballots have been printed for all of the resolutions, process 1100 determines whether the participant has been designated as a proxy by another shareholder in step 1150. If another shareholder has designated the participant as a proxy, process 1100 is repeated from step 1105 for each shareholder that has designated the participant as a proxy. After all of the ballots that the participant is authorized to vote as a proxy have been printed process 1000 ends.

Figure 13 illustrates process 1200 that is a process for tallying results of a vote on a resolution in accordance with an embodiment of this invention. After a vote on a resolution, the ballots issued to participants for the resolution are collected. Process 1200 then begins in step 1205 by scanning of the ballots with an appropriate I/O device to retrieve information indicated by the indicia and other markings on the ballot. One skilled in the art will recognize that the ballots may be scanned in one ballot at a time instead of as a batch without departing from the invention. Further, all the ballots for all of the resolutions voted on at an event may be scanned at the same time and separated out during processing using indicia on the ballots indicating the resolution being voted on

with the ballot without departing from this invention. In step 1210, the information from one of a scanned ballot of a resolution is retrieved.

In step 1210, process 1200 determines whether a ballot is valid. In some embodiments, validation is performed by reading a unique identifier from the ballot information and determining
5 whether the unique identifier indicates the ballot is valid. The validity of the ballot may be determined by comparing the unique identifier of the ballot to identifiers on a valid and/or invalid ballot list. In a particular one of these embodiments, the validation determination further includes determining whether the shares represented by the participant in the particular role represented by the ballot are voted on the ballot, and or whether the number of shares voted for each position on a resolution are
10 determinable from the scanned information.

If the ballot is invalid, the ballot record stored in a ballot database, is updated with an error code or other indication of invalidity and questionable information in the ballot is in some way indicated in step 1220. If the ballot is determined to be valid, the ballot record is updated as valid and the votes on the ballot for each position are added to appropriate vote counters. After the ballot and
15 other appropriate records are updated for the ballot in steps 1220 and 1225, process 1200 determines whether unprocessed ballots for the resolution remain in step 1230. If unprocessed ballots for the resolution remain, process 1200 repeats from step 1210 until all ballots for the resolution are processed.

After a determination that all of the ballots of a resolution are processed, process 1200
20 determines whether the ballots have been verified in step 1235. If the ballots have not been verified, process 1200 waits to receive an input from the scrutineer or another authorized official that verifies a ballot or ballots in step 1240. The verification input can include an input of data correcting the read information from a ballot or may be a simple input that indicates all or a portion of the ballots processed are determined to be valid.

25 Process 1200 then determines if the input includes correction data for a ballot to verify a ballot in step 1245. If the input includes correction information, process 1200 updates the ballot information and the ballot record accordingly and verifies the ballot in step 1250. After step 1245 or 1250, process 1200 returns to step 1235.

If it is determined that the ballots are all verified in step 1235, process 1200 waits to receive
30 an input requesting a recount for the resolution in step 1255. If a request is received, process 1200

repeats from step 1205. Otherwise, process 1200 confirms the ballots and updates the appropriate databases with the resolution results in step 1260. After the resolution results are determined from the votes in step 1260, process determines if the vote count from the valid ballots resulted in a tie in step 1265. If the resolution result is determined to be a tie, process 1200 receives an input of the
 5 Chairman's vote to break the tie in step 1270. Process 1200 then updates the resolution results in step 1275. If the result of the resolution from the vote count was not a tie or after step 1275, process 1200 ends.

Figures 14 and 15 illustrate ballots 1300 and 1400 showing two examples of printed ballots in accordance with this invention. Ballot 1300 is issued to participant Jenny Chia, who is a proxy for
 10 shareholder Ambrose William Dorai as indicated by voter information 1330. The Shareholder information for Mr. Dorai indicates that all of his shares are to be voted in favour of resolution 1. Thus, a ballot 1300 is printed with indicia in vote location 1340 indicating that all shares are voting "for" or in favour of the resolution. Ballot 1300 also includes event information in location 1320, an event identifier 1370, a resolution number identifier 1310, and a unique identifier 1360. In accordance with
 15 this embodiment, the indicia identifiers 1310, 1360, and 1370 are bar codes. However other machine readable indicia may be used without departing from this invention. The unique identifier is stored by the system to correspond the ballot with Jenny Chia in case the ballot is later to be invalidated. The participant may endorse the ballot in signature box 1350 in accordance with local jurisdiction law and/or corporate by-law requirements, and the ballot is cast and returned to the scrutineer or other
 20 event official.

Ballot 1400 is an illustration of a second embodiment of a ballot that may be issued. The ballot is issued to participant Peter Tay, who is a proxy/corporate representative for shareholder ABC Bank as indicating voter information 1430. The Shareholder information for ABC Bank indicates that 37,000,000 of its shares are to be voted in favour of resolution 2 and 904,299 of its shares are to be
 25 voted against resolution 2. Thus, a ballot 1400 is printed with indicia in vote location 1440 indicating that 37,000,000 of the voted shares are to be voted in favour of resolution 2, the first voting option and 904,299 shares are to be voted against resolution 2, the second voting option. Ballot 1200 also includes event information in location 1420, an event identifier 1470, a resolution number identifier 1410, and a unique identifier 1460. In accordance with this embodiment, the indicia identifiers 1410,
 30 1460, and 1470 are bar codes. However other machine readable indicia may be used without

departing from this invention. The unique identifier is stored by the system to correspond the ballot with Peter Tay in case the ballot is later to be invalidated. The participant may endorse the ballot in signature box 1450 in accordance with local jurisdiction law and/or corporate by-law requirements, and the ballot is cast and/or returned to an event official.

- 5 The above are descriptions of embodiments of process performed in a corporate voting system in accordance with this invention. It is envisioned that those skilled in the art can and will design alternatives based upon this description that infringe on this invention as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for handling voting by participants at an event by a processing system comprising:
 - maintaining an event database storing information regarding a resolution to be voted on during said event;
 - 5 maintaining a shareholder database storing information regarding a plurality of shareholders of an entity and participants authorized to vote shares held by each of said plurality of shareholders;
 - receiving an input of an identification of said participant into said processing system;
 - determining said participant is a proxy designated by one of said plurality of shareholders;
 - reading a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote on said resolution for said one of
 - 10 said plurality of shareholders from said shareholder database;
 - reading voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of shares on said resolution;
 - printing a ballot slip having indicia indicating a vote in said manner directed by said voting instructions;
 - 15 determining a previous participant has been issued a ballot as said proxy of said shareholder designating said previous participant as said proxy;
 - determining said participant is a preferred proxy;
 - invalidating said ballot of said previous participant prior to printing said ballot for said participant.
- 20 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - determining said participant is a proxy for two or more of said plurality of shareholders;
 - reading of a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote for each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and
 - printing two or more ballots each indicating said number of shares said proxy is authorized to
 - 25 vote for one of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:
 - determining each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders providing voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of share of said each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and

printing each of said two or more ballots corresponding to each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders having indicia indicating said shares voted are voted in said manner indicated by said voting instructions of said each of said two or of said plurality of shareholders.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said number of said shares said participant is authorized to vote is less than a total amount of shares of said one of said plurality of shareholders designating said participant as a proxy.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein a second participant is designated a proxy by said one of said plurality of shareholders and is authorized to vote a portion of a difference between said number of shares said participant is authorized to vote and said total number of shares.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

determining said participant is a shareholder;

determining a number of shares held by said shareholder from a record of shareholder in said shareholder database; and

printing a ballot for said number of shares for said participant.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising:

determining a proxy authorized by said participant to vote said shares of said participant has been issued a ballot; and

invalidating said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said participant as said shareholder.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares held by said participant as said shareholder.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

determining said participant is a corporate representative for one of said plurality of shareholders that is a corporate entity;

determining a number of shares held by said one of said plurality of shareholders; and

printing a ballot indicating said number of shares of said one of said plurality of shareholders for use by said participant.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

determining a proxy authorized by said one of said plurality of shareholders; and

invalidating said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said participant as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

determining said participant is a corporate representative of each of two or more of said plurality of shareholders that are corporate entities including said one of said plurality of shareholders;

determining a number of shares held by each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and

printing a ballot for each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders wherein each ballot indicates said number of shares of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders said participant is voting for use by said participant.

12. The method of claim 9 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative.

13. The method of claim 9 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

14. The method of claim 9 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative, and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein a plurality of resolutions including said resolution are to be voted upon at said event, said method further comprising:

printing a ballot for each of said plurality of resolutions in accordance with said method.

16. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

scanning said ballot as marked by and received from said participant;

determining whether said ballot is valid;

determining said number of shares on said ballot voted for a position with regards to said position in response to said ballot being determined valid;

updating a total count for said position by said number of shares for said position voted.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

assigning said ballot a unique identifier;

printing indicia on said ballot representing said identifier; and

storing a record corresponding said unique identifier to said ballot printed for said participant.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

5 maintaining a list of unique identifiers of valid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identifier of said ballot is in said list.

19. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

maintaining a list of unique identifiers of invalid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identifier of said ballot is not included in said list.

10 20. The method of claim 16 wherein said step of determining said ballot is valid comprises:

determining whether said votes of said share for a position on said resolution on said ballot may be determined said ballot; and

determining said ballot is valid in response to a determination that said votes on said position may be determined.

15 21. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

indicating said ballot is invalid.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising:

receiving an input from a scrutineer correcting information in a ballot to validate said ballot in response to said ballot being determined invalid.

20 23. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

determining an outcome of said resolution.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising:

generating a report of said outcome.

25. The method of claim 23 further comprising:

25 storing a record of said outcome.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein said step of determining said outcome of said resolution comprises:

determining a tie between positions of said resolution from said counted votes;

receiving an input of a vote of said Chairman on said resolution; and

30 determining said outcome of said resolution from said vote of said Chairman.

27. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
maintaining a record of a corporation in a corporate database.

28. A computer program product for handling voting by participants at an event by a processing system comprising:

5 instructions for directing a processing unit to:
maintain an event database storing information regarding a resolution to be voted on during said event,
maintain a shareholder database storing information regarding a plurality of shareholders of an entity and participants authorized to vote shares held by each of said plurality of shareholders,
10 receive an input of an identification of said participant into said processing system;
determine said participant is a proxy designated by one of said plurality of shareholders,
read a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote on said resolution for said one of said plurality of shareholders from said shareholder database,
15 read voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of shares on said resolution,
print a ballot slip having indicia indicating a vote in said manner directed by said voting instructions,
20 determine a previous participant has been issued a ballot as said proxy of said shareholder designating said previous participant as said proxy,
determine said participant is a preferred proxy, and
invalidate said ballot of said previous participant prior to printing said ballot for said participant; and
25 a media readable by said processing unit to store said instructions.

29. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein said instructions further comprise:
instructions for directing said processing unit to:

determine said participant is a proxy for two or more of said plurality of shareholders,
read of a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote for each of said two or
30 more of said plurality of shareholders, and

print two or more ballots each indicating said number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote for one of said two or more of said plurality of share holders.

30. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein said instructions further comprise:
instructions for directing said processing unit to:

5 determine each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders providing voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of share of said each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders, and

10 print each of said two or more ballots corresponding to each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders with indicia indicating said shares voted are voted in said manner indicated by said voting instructions of said each of said two or of said plurality of shareholders.

31. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein said number of said shares said participant is authorized to vote is less than a total amount of shares of said one of said plurality of
15 shareholders designating said participant as a proxy.

32. The computer program product of claim 31 wherein a second participant is designated a proxy by said one of said plurality of shareholders and is authorized to vote a portion of a difference between said number of shares said participant is authorized to vote and said total number of shares.

33. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein said instructions further comprise:
20 instructions for directing said processing unit to:

 determine said participant is a shareholder,

 determine a number of shares held by said shareholder from a record of shareholder in said shareholder database, and

 print a ballot for said number of shares for said participant.

- 25 34. The computer program product of claim 33 wherein said instructions further comprise:
instructions for directing said processing unit to:

 determine a proxy authorized by said participant to vote said shares of said participant has been issued a ballot, and

30 invalidate said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said participant as said shareholder.

35. The computer program product of claim 33 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares held by said participant as said shareholder.

36. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein said instructions further comprise:

5 instructions for directing said processing unit to:

determine said participant is a corporate representative for one of said plurality of shareholders that is a corporate entity,

determine a number of shares held by said one of said plurality of shareholders, and

print a ballot indicating said number of shares of said one of said plurality of

10 shareholders for use by said participant.

37. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein said instructions further comprise:

instructions for directing said processing unit to:

determine a proxy authorized by said one of said plurality of shareholders, and

invalidate said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said

15 participant as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders.

38. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein said instructions further comprise:

instructions for directing said processing unit to:

20 determine said participant is a corporate representative of each of two or more of said plurality of shareholders that are corporate entities including said one of said plurality of shareholders,

determine a number of shares held by each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders, and

25 print a ballot for each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders wherein each ballot indicates said number of shares of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders said participant is voting for use by said participant.

39. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative.

40. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

41. The computer program product of claim 36 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative, and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

42. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein a plurality of resolutions including said resolution are to be voted upon at said event, said instructions further comprise:

instructions directing said processing unit to print a ballot for each of said plurality of resolutions in accordance with said method.

43. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to:

scan said ballot as marked by and received from said participant;

determine whether said ballot is valid;

determine said number of shares on said ballot voted for a position with regards to said position in response to said ballot being determined valid;

update a total count for said position by said number of shares for said position voted.

44. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions further comprise:

instructions for directing said processing unit to:

assign said ballot a unique identifier,

print indicia on said ballot representing said identifier, and

store a record corresponding said unique identifier to said ballot printed for said participant.

45. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions further comprise:

instructions for directing said processing unit to maintain a list unique identifiers of valid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identifier of said ballot is in said list.

46. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions further comprise:

instructions for directing said processing unit to maintain a list of unique identifiers of invalid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identified of said ballot is not included in said list.

47. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions to determine said ballot is valid comprise:

instructions directing said processing unit to:

determine whether said votes of said share for a position on said resolution on said ballot may be determined from said ballot, and

determine said ballot is valid in response to a determination that said votes on said position may be determined.

48. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to indicate said ballot is invalid.

49. The computer program product of claim 48 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to receive an input from a scrutineer correcting information in a ballot to validate said ballot in response to said ballot being determined invalid.

50. The computer program product of claim 43 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to determine an outcome of said resolution.

51. The computer program product of claim 50 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to generate a report of said outcome.

52. The computer program product of claim 50 wherein said instructions further comprise: instructions for directing said processing unit to store a record of said outcome.

53. The computer program product of claim 50 wherein said instructions to determine said outcome of said resolution comprise:

instructions for directing said processing said processing unit to:

determine a tie between positions of said resolution from said counted votes,

receive an input of a vote of said Chairman on said resolution, and

determine said outcome of said resolution from said vote of said Chairman.

54. The computer program product of claim 28 wherein a record of a corporation is maintained in a corporate database.

55. An apparatus for handling voting by participants at an event by a processing system comprising:

circuitry configured to maintain a event database storing information regarding a resolution to be voted on during said event;

5 circuitry configured to maintain a shareholder database storing information regarding a plurality of shareholders of an entity and participants authorized to vote shares held by each of said plurality of shareholders;

circuitry configured to receive an input of an identification of said participant into said processing system;

10 circuitry configured to determine said participant is a proxy designated by one of said plurality of shareholders;

circuitry configured to read a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote on said resolution for said one of said plurality of shareholders from said shareholder database,

15 circuitry configured to read voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of shares on said resolution;

circuitry configured to print a ballot slip having indicia indicating a vote in said manner directed by said voting instructions;

circuitry configured to determine a previous participant has been issued a ballot as said proxy of said shareholder designating said previous participant as said proxy;

20 circuitry configured to determine said participant is a preferred proxy; and

circuitry configured to invalidate said ballot of said previous participant prior to printing said ballot for said participant.

56. The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

25 circuitry configured to determine said participant is a proxy for two or more of said plurality of shareholders;

circuitry configured to read of a number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote for each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and

circuitry configured to print two or more ballots each indicating said number of shares said proxy is authorized to vote for one of said two or more of said plurality of share holders.

30 57. The apparatus of claim 56 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders providing voting instructions directing a manner in which said proxy is to vote said number of shares of said each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and

circuitry configured to print each of said two or more ballots corresponding to each of said two
 5 or more of said plurality of shareholders with indicia indicating said shares voted are voted in said manner indicated by said voting instructions of said each of said two or of said plurality of shareholders.

58. The apparatus of claim 55 wherein said number of said shares said participant is authorized
 10 to vote is less than a total amount of shares of said one of said plurality of shareholders designating said participant as a proxy.

59. The apparatus of claim 58 wherein a second participant is designated a proxy by said one of said plurality of shareholders and is authorized to vote a portion of a difference between said number of shares said participant is authorized to vote and said total number of shares.

15 60. The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine said participant is a shareholder;

circuitry configured to determine a number of shares held by said shareholder from a record of shareholder in said shareholder database; and

circuitry configured to print a ballot for said number of shares for said participant.

20 61. The apparatus of claim 60 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine a proxy authorized by said participant to vote said shares of said participant has been issued a ballot; and

circuitry configured to invalidate said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said participant as said shareholder.

25 62. The apparatus of claim 61 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares held by said participant as said shareholder.

63. The apparatus of claim 60 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine said participant is a corporate representative for one of said
 30 plurality of shareholders that is a corporate entity;

circuitry configured to determine a number of shares held by said one of said plurality of shareholders; and

circuitry configured to print a ballot indicating said number of shares of said one of said plurality of shareholders for use by said participant.

5 64. The apparatus of claim 63 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine a proxy authorized by said one of said plurality of shareholders; and

circuitry configured to invalidate said ballot of said proxy in response to said printing of said ballot for said participant as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders.

10 65. The apparatus of claim 63 further comprising:

circuitry configured to determine said participant is a corporate representative of each of two or more of said plurality of shareholders that are corporate entities including said one of said plurality of shareholders;

circuitry configured to determine a number of shares held by each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders; and

circuitry configured to print a ballot for each of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders wherein each ballot indicates said number of shares of said two or more of said plurality of shareholders said participant is voting for use by said participant.

66. The apparatus of claim 63 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative.

67. The apparatus of claim 63 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said corporate representative of said one of said plurality of shareholders and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

25 68. The apparatus of claim 63 wherein said participant is printed said ballot as said proxy of said one of said plurality of shareholders and said ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as said corporate representative, and a ballot for said shares to be voted by said participant as one of said plurality of shareholders.

69. The apparatus of claim 55 wherein a plurality of resolutions including said resolution are to voted upon at said event, said apparatus further comprising:

circuitry configured to print a ballot for each of said plurality of resolutions in accordance with said method.

70. The apparatus of claim 55 further comprising:

circuitry configured to scan said ballot as marked by and received from said participant;

5 circuitry configured to determine whether said ballot is valid;

circuitry configured to determine said number of shares on said ballot voted for a position with regards to said position in response to said ballot being determined valid; and

circuitry configured to update a total count for said position by said number of shares for said position voted.

10 71. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

circuitry configured to assign said ballot a unique identifier;

circuitry configured to print indicia on said ballot representing said identifier; and

circuitry configured to store a record corresponding said unique identifier to said ballot printed for said participant.

15 72. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

circuitry configured to maintain a list unique identifiers of valid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identifier of said ballot is in said list.

73. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

20 circuitry configured to maintain a list of unique identifiers of invalid ballots wherein said determining said ballot is valid is performed by determining said unique identified of said ballot is not included in said list.

74. The apparatus of claim 70 wherein said circuitry configured to determine said ballot is valid comprises:

25 circuitry configured to determine whether said votes of said share for a position on said resolution on said ballot may be determined from said ballot; and

circuitry configured to determine said ballot is valid in response to a determination that said votes on said position may be determined.

75. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

30 circuitry configured to indicate said ballot is invalid.

76. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

circuitry configured to receive an input from a scrutineer correcting information in a ballot to validate said ballot in response to said ballot being determined invalid.

77. The apparatus of claim 70 further comprising:

5 circuitry configured to determine an outcome of said resolution.

78. The apparatus of claim 77 further comprising:

circuitry configured to generate a report of said outcome.

79. The apparatus of claim 77 further comprising:

circuitry configured to store a record of said outcome.

10 80. The apparatus of claim 77 wherein said circuitry to determines said outcome comprises:

circuitry configured to determine a tie between positions of said resolution from said counted votes;

circuitry configured to receive an input of a vote of said Chairman on said resolution; and

circuitry configured to determine said outcome of said resolution from said vote of said

15 Chairman.

81. The apparatus of claim 57 wherein a record of a corporation is maintained in a corporate database.