CITY OF MINNETONKA

CHARTER COMMISSION AGENDA

Mar. 17, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.

CHARTER COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINNETONKA COMMUNITY CENTER

1. Call to order
2. Approve minutes of Nov. 12, 2019 meeting and Jan. 28, 2020 meeting
3. Question and answer session with election officials regarding ranked choice voting:
   - David Maeda, Director of Elections, Minnesota Secretary of State's Office
   - Ginny Helms, Elections Manager, Hennepin County
   - Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk, City of St. Louis Park

3 Provide direction to staff regarding next steps

4. Schedule next meeting

Attachments:

a. Draft minutes, Nov. 12, 2019 meeting
b. Draft minutes, Jan. 28, 2020 meeting
c. Memo from City Attorney Corrine Heine dated Mar. 6, 2020 with the following attachments
   1) Summary of Sep. 9, 2019 council study session
   2) Minneapolis report analyzing 2013 municipal election
   3) Excerpts of Minneapolis report analyzing 2017 municipal election
   4) Memo from Administrative Services Manager Moranda Dammann dated Mar. 5, 2019
   5) H.F. 3365

UNAPPROVED DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE

MINNETONKA CHARTER COMMISSION

Nov. 12, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Northrup called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Karen Anderson, John Cheleen, Sandal Hart, David Larson, John Northrup, Terry Schneider, Linnea Sodergren, LuAnn Tolliver, Brad Wiersum.

Members absent: None.

Staff present: City Attorney Corrine Heine; City Manager Geralyn Barone, Administrative Services Manager Moranda Dammann, City Clerk Becky Koosman, and Elections Specialist Kyle Salage.

Chair Northup noted a correction to Agenda Item 4, which should have indicated the 2020 meeting schedule rather than the 2019 meeting schedule.

2. MINUTES: NOV. 20, 2018

Schneider moved, Larson seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of the Nov. 20, 2018 charter commission meeting. All voted "aye."

3. REPORT OF CITY ATTORNEY

The city attorney provided her report regarding legislation and court decisions in 2019 that had a bearing on city charter matters.

4. RANKED CHOICE VOTING AND 2020 MEETING SCHEDULE

Chair Northrup opened by indicating that the city council had held a study session in September 2019 and had asked the charter commission to consider studying the possible use of ranked choice voting. He asked what the commission members wished to do.

Anderson commented that it might be appropriate to have a subcommittee of four or five people study the issue and report to the commission. Schneider stated his preference

that the entire commission undertake the study rather than a subcommittee.

Sodergren stated a preference to hear from a panel of experts on the subject. Hart indicated that the commission should hear from St. Louis Park regarding its experience, since that city just completed its first election with ranked choice voting.

Wiersum indicated that the League of Women Voters would be holding an event in December at which David Maeda from the Secretary of State's Office would be speaking. Attorney Heine reminded the commission that they could attend an outside meeting but should not participate in the discussion if a quorum or more of the commission was in attendance, due to Minnesota Open Meeting Law concerns.

Commission members asked about costs associated with studying ranked choice voting. Administrative Services Manager Dammann introduced the elections staff in attendance and explained that the costs that were identified in the city council study session staff report were determined based on the assumption that the study would be fast-tracked, which would have required the city to hire temporary help to assist with elections duties. Dammann explained that 2020 would be a busy year for elections staff, with a presidential primary in March, state primary in August and state general and presidential election in November.

Wiersum stated that the commission should objectively look at the upsides and downsides of ranked choice voting, and ask itself whether there is a problem that needs to be solved. Wiersum mentioned special elections as an area of inquiry, and Schneider agreed. Sodergren questioned whether no-excuse absentee voting has increased participation and stated her desire to get more people involved and voting. Dammann stated that absentee voting has increased and that voter turnout in the recent municipal election was 15 percent. She did not have information as to whether the turnout in St. Louis Park increased over past years.

Tolliver asked whether it was possible to provide in the charter for multiple voting methods but to let the selected method be determined by ordinance. Heine responded that may be possible.

Wiersum suggested that commission members should be thinking of questions that they would like answered and that they could forward those questions to the chair and city attorney. Northrup suggested the commission should: first, learn what ranked choice voting is; second, review what the city charter provides; and third, determine whether ranked choice voting is preferable. The commission could then discuss how to implement ranked choice voting and how to educate voters.

Anderson indicated it is important to hear pros and cons and to hear from both sides of

the issue. The process should be deliberative and inclusive of a variety of viewpoints. Wiersum suggested that the commission should also consider, at least in a cursory fashion, other possible voting methods.

Schneider suggested that the commission direct staff to prepare a plan and process for studying ranked choice voting and bring it back to the commission. The commission discussed who might participate in providing information, including the FairVote group, representatives from cities that had decided not to pursue ranked choice voting, a political science professor or someone familiar with voting methods.

Tolliver moved, Anderson seconded, a motion to direct the city attorney to identify potential experts who could provide information to the commission on ranked choice voting and other voting methods, and to work with the chair in scheduling a special meeting of the commission within the next several months. All voted "aye."

Chair Northrup indicated that the commission needed to set a date for its annual meeting in November 2020. Wiersum moved, Hart seconded, a motion to schedule the annual meeting for Nov. 10, 2020. All voted "aye."

5. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO SECTIONS 5.08 AND 5.09 OF THE MINNETONKA CITY CHARTER

The city attorney reviewed the draft amendment to Sections 5.08 and 5.09 of the charter. She indicated that the amendment was consistent with the amendments made to Section 2.06, which the city council approved in early 2019. Like Section 2.06, Sections 5.08 and 5.09 include requirements that elections be held within a specified time period – in this case, 60 days. However, because the Legislature adopted legislation in 2017 that sets five uniform dates for holding municipal elections, the 60-day time requirement conflicts with that legislation. In addition, the 60-day time period conflicts with state election laws, which require the city to give 74 days' notice to the county of any ballot issues.

Under the proposed language, a special election must be held at the earliest date allowed under state law. Schneider moved, Anderson seconded, a motion to recommend that the city council approve the amendment by ordinance. In response to a question from Chair Northrup regarding the wording of "earliest date possible under state law," Heine suggested that the word "permissible" could be substituted for "possible." Schneider and Anderson consented to the substitution as a friendly amendment to the motion. All voted "aye."

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Hart moved, Anderson seconded the following slate of candidates: John Northrup, Chair; Linnea Sodergren, Vice-Chair; and LuAnn Tolliver, Secretary. All voted "aye."

7. ANNUAL REPORT

The city attorney provided the draft annual report and indicated that relevant information from the Nov. 12 meeting would be added. Wiersum moved, Anderson seconded, a motion to authorize the city attorney to submit the annual report. All voted "aye."

8. OTHER BUSINESS

The chair asked whether there were any issues that the commission wanted to review in the upcoming year. Commissioner Wiersum asked whether the commission would want to consider an amendment to address the filing requirements that candidates for office must meet. Wiersum commented that a neighboring city requires candidates to pay a higher filing fee and also submit a nominating petition signed by at least 50 voters. He suggested that the current filing fee of $5 may be so low that candidates could file without having a strong desire for the office. Anderson questioned whether the need to verify signatures on the petition would create an administrative burden. The city attorney offered to report to the commission in November 2020 whether a petition requirement could be addressed by ordinance or would require a charter amendment.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Anderson moved, Hart seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All voted "aye." The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

LuAnn Tolliver
Secretary

UNAPPROVED DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE

MINNETONKA CHARTER COMMISSION

Jan. 28, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Northrup called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: John Cheleen, David Larson, John Northrup, Terry Schneider, Linnea Sodergren, LuAnn Tolliver, Brad Wiersum. Commissioner Karen Anderson participated remotely from Naples, Florida, pursuant to the interactive television exception to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

Members absent: Dick Allendorf.

2. PRESENTATIONS ON VOTING METHODS AND RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Chair Northrup stated that the meeting would be a listening session, designed to provide information to the commission regarding voting methods and ranked choice voting. He introduced the first speakers: David Haeg, a Minnetonka resident who is coordinating the local community education effort for the use of ranked choice voting in municipal elections; Jeanne Massey, the executive director of FairVote Minnesota, a nonprofit organization that advocates for the use of FairVote Minnesota and an election judge in Minneapolis.

David Haeg stated that he has observed ranked choice voting being adopted in other cities and had seen positive results. About a year ago, he began meeting with council members to discuss the possible use of ranked choice voting in Minnetonka. He indicated that there were already several hundred people in Minnetonka who were interested in ranked choice voting.

Haeg said that the benefits of ranked choice voting are that it guarantees more complete voter participation, saves money and time, results in winners that are supported by a majority, and encourages more competitive elections and dialog with residents.

The problems that ranked choice voting is trying to address are low turnout and primaries, uncompetitive elections and single day elections without a majority winner. The city has approximately four percent turnout for primaries. Ranked choice voting

would eliminate primaries. The city has uncompetitive elections. In the past November, two races were competitive and three were not. Ranked choice voting would address some of the things that keep people from running for city offices. Single day special elections are also problematic.

Haeg explained what a ranked choice voting ballot looks like. He has shown the ballot to over 1,000 people in Minnetonka, and everyone understands how voting works. Ranked choice voting requires a majority winner. The candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated, and the votes of people who voted for the eliminated candidate are re-allocated to the remaining candidates. The same process continues until there is a majority winner. Haeg provided a demonstration using choices for different types of food.

Haeg pointed out that under the current system, the city could have a special election with multiple candidates, where one candidate could win with a small percentage of the overall vote. The city council opted instead to appoint a temporary replacement rather than hold a special election.

Minnetonka also has a history of low turnout for primaries. Historically, it has a four percent turnout, and that is not representative of Minnetonka. Primaries are also expensive – a city-wide primary costs $50,000 or more that could be used for other primaries. St. Louis Park went to ranked choice voting because of the cost of primaries. Primaries also make it more challenging for candidates and could discourage them from running.

He indicated that St. Louis Park candidates reported that it changed how they ran. The conversations were more positive than negative and more issues-based.

Who likes ranked choice voting? People who don't want to go to polls twice – seniors, disabled persons, people who are busy. People who prioritize low taxes and efficiency. People who want Minnetonka to think ahead and who value engagement and inclusivity.

Northrup opened the floor to questions. Schneider asked what percentage of voters actually vote for only one versus ranking their votes. Haeg indicated that it would depend upon the city.

Northrup stated that Hennepin County takes the position that ranked choice voting cannot be used in conjunction with a state election. He asked what problems would be raised by the ability to use ranked choice voting for some elections but not others, and what are possible solutions. Jeanne Massey stated that administrators have a huge preference not to use a second ballot, but it is an option available under state law. It is

rare occurrence, but it did happen in a St. Paul election, and the ranked choice ballot was put on the reverse side of the ballot. In addition, there is legislation pending that would address the issue, and she was hopeful it would be enacted within the next year or two.

In response to Schneider's question, Massey said that competitive races, like a mayoral race, there is a slightly higher number of exhausted ballots. In smaller elections, maybe only 10 percent choose to vote for only one voter. Massey reported that voter confidence regarding ranked choice voting is high. Over 90 percent of voters say it is simple to use.

Wiersum asked about the time lag that occurs before the results of a ranked choice election are known. David Schultz answered that he would address that issue in his presentation.

Cheleen asked if, where ranked choice voting is in use, have unique new ways been used for candidates to meet the public. Massey responded that the increase in number of candidates created more interest, and people sponsored more candidate forums. It also caused candidates to work harder and knock on more doors.

Schneider stated that Minnetonka prides itself on nonpartisan elections. What happens when there are seven or eight running and someone decides they want to get party endorsements to help. Massey responded that candidates who tend to go negative tend to get fewer votes. Ranked choice voting provides an incentive to stay nonpartisan and focus on the issues. It is not to any candidate's advantage to play to their base, because they need to appeal to the majority of voters.

Northrup introduced David Schultz, a professor of political science and legal studies at Hamline University and a visiting professor at the University of Minnesota. Schultz indicated that he was asked to perform the initial evaluation of how ranked choice voting rolled out when it was first used in Minneapolis. He is also working on a book about ranked choice voting as an election system.

Schultz explained that election systems are about values and goals. For example, nonpartisanship is a value and goal. Election systems create incentives for voters and candidates. Ultimately, each community has to think about its values and goals in order to determine what its voting system should be.

There are lots of things to think about for voting. For example, the mechanics of voting – paper, optical scan, etc. Another question is the districting system – do candidates run

at large or in districts. Most common voting system in the United States is called “first past the post.”

In terms of goals, goals can include: maximize voter choice; maximize turnout; be simple to use for voters; be simple to administrate; easy to figure out voter preferences; makes sure that everybody’s vote counts; ensure majority rule and minority rights; and minimize voter confusion.

In a first past the post system, it has the virtues of being simple and familiar. There are criticisms, too. It generally produces limited set of choices and creates incentive for only two parties. It is an all or nothing perspective, especially if there is a block of people that only support one candidate. That is especially true on a national level and in partisan areas. Minorities feel left out, and there is the potential for someone winning with less than a majority.

With respect to ranked choice voting, there are many variations used across the world. It was used commonly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For example, the city of Hopkins used it. It gradually went away because the two parties kind of pushed it out, and there were some concerns at the time that it was a corrupt practice.

Schultz explained how ranked choice voting works, using an example of ordering food at a restaurant. Voters intuitively know how to rank choices. There is some evidence that it creates incentives for people to run and addresses the spoiler effect. Ranked choice voting tends to incentivize candidates to appeal to other voters and not trash their opponents. Generally it produces a majority winner, although there can be quirks

The criticisms of ranked choice voting are that it is too complex, but it actually is not. There is a time lag in election results, but even now elections are not over until the votes are canvassed. In a close election, it can take time to work out the results. There is no evidence that it hurts people of color in the core. There is some evidence it increases turnout and some that it stays the same. There is mixed evidence of whether it encourages third party development. There is little evidence of voter confusion. The study he did after the Minneapolis election indicated that there is a need for better voter education and there is a learning curve for administrators.

Home rule charter cities can implement ranked choice voting. The Minnesota Supreme Court determined that ranked choice voting does not violate the “one person, one vote” principle.

Sodergren asked how the costs for voter education costs compare to the cost savings from eliminating a primary. Schultz responded that he had not found that the costs of

voter education costs exceeded the cost of a primary. He didn't see that the transitional costs of moving to ranked choice voting would outweigh the costs of eliminating a primary. He said that there was a concern about possible voter confusion because voters have to flip back and forth between a ranked choice vote election and the first past the post system for other elections. However, he had not found voter confusion.

Schneider stated that he couldn't recall any candidate for city office attacking another candidate. Right now, the city has four wards and eight candidates. People don't have a lot of candidates to research. But if you get a lot of candidates running in a ranked choice voting system, are voters intimidated by having to research more candidates? Isn't that intimidating? Schultz responded that the city could address ballot access and qualification for the ballot; for example, Minneapolis had 38 people on the ballot the first time and then increased its filing fee. Schultz felt that voters were able to filter out the candidates to determine which candidates were viable and which were not. Schultz is not completely convinced that ranked choice voting increases the number of candidates significantly.

Anderson asked if Schultz had examples of elections where someone who would have been a third party candidate actually won. Schultz said it was hard to speculate. He deferred to Massey. Massey said it is not uncommon to see elections where the initial second place finisher ends up winning the majority vote. Where ranked choice voting has really mattered is that candidates find that a primary is a deterrent to running. Voter turnout is trending upward across the country and locally. In addition, ranked choice voting doesn't change the nature of nonpartisan elections; with the exception of Maine, it has only been implemented for nonpartisan elections.

Wiersum said that a reason that the city is having this conversation is that the state hasn't taken action on ranked choice voting. He asked what the likelihood of that happening might be. Schultz said that the DFL seemed to be embracing ranked choice voting but has cooled on it. The legislature has other priorities, and ranked choice voting has no champions at legislature. He believed there was a low likelihood of state action.

Wiersum queried whether this was a solution looking for a problem. He said that a former council member had pointed out that even-year elections would improve voter turnout. Wiersum asked for Schultz's perspective on those two alternatives. Schultz indicated that there is better evidence that ranked choice voting encourages new faces to run. There there is only some evidence that ranked choice voting increases voter turnout, but not as much as we think. Election is even years will result in more voter turnout, but cities have to balance voter turnout with keeping a focus on local issues. City has to decide how that balance comes out. If the city's sole goal is to get larger voter turnout, the answer would be to go to even year elections. Wiersum indicated that

voter turnout in Minnetonka is not a problem, but it is important to keep a focus on what the problem is that needs to be solved.

Sodergren asked whether there was information about a specific type of education that really worked with younger voters. Schultz said that Minneapolis used a combination of approaches -- newspaper, door to door, neighborhood outreach, and social media. Different audiences get information from different sources.

Massey indicated that each city that has adopted ranked choice voting has done more than the last. St. Louis Park did a whole range of things – mobile voting, website, mailing sample ballots, voter outreach at community events. Outreach and education is an essential component. With respect to the counting process, when Minneapolis first used ranked choice voting, they were using old voting equipment that has since been replaced. It took a few days the first time and took a few days. In 2013 Minneapolis reduced the delay by half, and in 2017 had it done by the next day. Software exists to make the process automated. If that software is certified, the process could be fully automated.

Larson asked whether there is some critical mass for implementing ranked choice voting. Schultz said that if the single most important value was increasing voter turnout, there could be a variety of different mechanisms to accomplish that result. For example, go to even year elections. But there is no real indication is that there is a cost curve that creates a cut-off for implementing ranked choice voting. But if the city wants to keep odd-year elections, then there is some indication that ranked choice voting might create an increase in voters and might bring a more diverse mix of voters.

Northrup called a close to the discussion. Schultz offered to provide the commission with a copy of the report that he prepared for the City of Minneapolis.

3. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

City Attorney Corrine Heine reported that March 17 was available for the next meeting of the commission. Representatives from Hennepin County, St. Louis Park and Minnetonka elections staff are available to provide information about election administration. Northrup indicated he was interested in the tabulation process. Larson moved, Tolliver seconded, to set the meeting for 7 p.m. on March 17, 2020. All voted "aye."

4. ADJOURNMENT

Wiersum moved, Schneider seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All voted “aye.” The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

LuAnn Tolliver
Secretary

CITY OF MINNETONKA

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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952-939-8266 | eminnetonka.com

To: Minnetonka Charter Commission

From: Corrine Heine, City Attorney

Date: Mar. 6, 2020

Subject: Meeting of Mar. 17, 2020 – Staff report

The Mar. 17, 2020 meeting will be the second listening session conducted by the charter commission on the topic of ranked choice voting.

Discussions to date

The city council discussed the topic of ranked choice voting at a Sept. 9, 2019 study session and referred the issue to the charter commission. The staff report for that meeting is available at the city website, and the meeting summary is attached for information. At its annual meeting on Nov. 12, 2019, the charter commission agreed to undertake a study of ranked choice voting in comparison to other voting systems. The minutes of that meeting are part of the agenda packet for the upcoming March 17 meeting.

On Jan. 28, 2020, the charter commission heard presentations by three speakers: Prof. David Schultz from Hamline University and the University of Minnesota; Jeanne Massey, Executive Director of FairVote Minnesota; and David Haeg, Minnetonka resident and representative for FairVote Minnetonka. The minutes of that meeting are part of the agenda packet for the March 17 meeting.

Invited Guests

For the March 17 meeting, the elections officials listed below will attend. They will not give a presentation but will be available to answer the commission's questions regarding election processes and requirements, and how ranked choice voting works within those processes. The invited officials are:

- **David Maeda** has served as the director of elections for the Minnesota Office of the Secretary of State since January 2019. As the director of elections, he works with county, city, township, and school district election administrators throughout the state to ensure all elections are secure and accessible. Prior to joining the Secretary of State's office, Mr. Maeda was the Minnetonka city clerk for 11 years. Previously he was the elections supervisor for Hennepin and Washington counties. He is knowledgeable about the state laws related to ballot conformity, the process required to certify voting equipment, the availability of software that could automate the ranked choice voting tabulation process, and pending legislation that would authorize the use of ranked choice voting.

- **Ginny Gelms** is the elections manager for Hennepin County. She supervises all election activities at the county level. She can explain the county's role with respect to municipal elections, how the county handles municipal elections for Minneapolis and St. Louis Park (the two cities in Hennepin County with ranked choice voting) as compared to municipal elections for other cities, the tabulation process for ranked choice voting, the county's position with respect to use of ranked choice voting for elections held in August or November of even-numbered years, and the current costs for putting an issue on the ballot or using a second ballot.

- **Melissa Kennedy** is the city clerk for the City of St. Louis Park, which just completed its first municipal election using ranked choice voting.

- **Moranda Dammann, Becky Koosman and Kyle Salage** are the City of Minnetonka elections staff. Ms. Dammann is the administrative services manager and oversees election operations. Becky Koosman is city clerk and Kyle Salage is the elections specialist, and they administer elections at the city level. The elections staff can provide information on the city's past experience with special elections and primaries and the costs associated with special elections or primaries.

Minneapolis information

Minneapolis amended its charter to provide for RCV in 2006. The issue was submitted to the voters at the Nov. 7, 2006 election, and it passed 78,741 (64.95%) to 42,493 (35.05%). The city has used ranked choice voting in the 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2019 elections. Minneapolis has extensive information available at its website for Election Committee Reports. Excerpted copies the reports analyzing the 2013 and 2017 RCV elections are attached to this attached to this staff report. The following sections were removed from the 2017 report, to reduce the size of this packet: Section III Election Judges & Seasonal Staff; Section V Precincts & Polling Places; Section VI Absentee Balloting; a report on the Student Election Judge Program. The following information is taken from the 2017 report:

- In 2009, final unofficial results from the first RCV election were available 15 days after the election, with a voter turnout of 45,968 (roughly 20 percent). Because automated equipment was not available, the process required full manual tabulation of vote results. (See p. 1.)
- In 2013, final unofficial results were available 3 days after the election, with an increase in voter turnout to 80,099 (roughly 33 percent). The improvement in tabulation time was attributed to a new election system and policy refinements. (See p. 1.)
- In 2017, results were announced within 24 hours of polls closing, and voter turnout was 105,928 voters (roughly 42 percent). (See p. 1.)
- Minneapolis has made improvements in its voting system and equipment that has improved the time to tabulate results. (See pp. 2-3.)
- Minneapolis amended its ordinance on ranked choice voting in 2014 to allow for multiple candidates to be eliminated in a single round of tabulation, which improved the time to tabulate results. (See p. 3.)
- Minneapolis' voter outreach and education efforts are described at section IV of the 2017

report (pp. 10-15.)
- The city has adopted policy guidance to address RCV-specific ballot errors, which are described at pages 27-30.
- The city conducted a survey of ranked choice voting, which is described at pages 36-38. The survey, consisting of 52 pages, is attached at the back of the 2017 report.

Minnetonka information

An informational memo by Administrative Services Manager Moranda Dammann is attached. The memo addresses the following topics: the number of municipal primaries and municipal special elections that have been held in the last 20 years in Minnetonka; ballot conformity requirements; vote tabulation process; anticipated changes in election administration and voter outreach; estimated costs.

Pending Legislation

Rep. Steve Elkins, who represents portions of Bloomington, Edina and Minnetonka, has introduced H.F. 3365. If adopted, the bill would authorize all cities, counties, townships and school districts to adopt ranked choice voting. A copy of the bill is attached. A companion bill in the Senate has been introduced, and one of its authors is Sen. Melisa Franzen, who also represents portions of Bloomington, Edina and Minnetonka.

Attachments to this report:
- Summary of Sep. 9, 2019 council study session.
- Minneapolis report analyzing 2013 municipal election
- Excerpts of Minneapolis report analyzing 2017 municipal election
- Memo from Moranda Dammann
- H.F. 3365

Staff Summary
City of Minnetonka
City Council Study Session
Monday, Sept. 9, 2019

Council Present: Susan Carter, Mike Happe, Tim Bergstedt, Bob Ellingson, Deb Calvert, Rebecca Schack and Mayor Brad Wiersum.

Staff: Geralyn Barone, Corrine Heine, Mike Funk, Moranda Dammann, Becky Koosman, Joel Merry, Scott Boerboom, Andy Gardner, Shelley Petersen, John Vance, Kevin Maas.

Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

1. Report from the City Manager

Geralyn Barone welcomed Assistant City Manager Mike Funk. She explained the City of Minnetonka has been accepted into the Xcel Energy program. Geralyn also congratulated the communications staff on a national award.

2. City charter and elections

Corrine Heine discussed City Charter rules**.**

David Haeg (FairVote MN) gave his presentation on Rank Choice Voting. PowerPoint Presentation included in the agenda packet.

Moranda Dammann discussed Minnetonka elections and council vacancies in the past 20 years. She discussed how voting procedures effect all residents and that the city must educate residents on any changes that may come, so that on Election Day voters have a great voting experience.

She explained the Presidential Nomination Primary in March has historically been done by the parties and will now be done by the city. There will also be a State Primary and General Presidential Election in 2020, along with the census. The city will be looking at redistricting and/ or ward changes based on those results.

Council gave informal direction, indicating that they would like the Charter Commission to look at rank choice voting and elections. A number of suggestions from council members were discussed on the scope of the commissions inquiry including; to look at elections in even numbered years, to look at all other voting system including but not limited to rank choice voting, looking at data to see if voter participation does increase with RCV, and to discuss if RCV could be done for special elections only.

Funding for the study was discussed as it could change the preliminary levy. The council left open the possibility of finding funds later, after the commission takes an initial look and develops its work plan. The Charter Commission will meet in November and set a work plan for moving forward.

Staff Summary
City of Minnetonka
City Council Study Session
Monday, Sept. 9, 2019

3. Public Safety Facilities Update

Presentation by: Kraus- Anderson Construction.

Discussion tonight is that the twenty five million dollar fire and police facility is over budget due to increases in material and labor. Staff is looking for a recommendation.

Council discussed and all were all in support of the proposed increase of five million dollars for the public safety facilities project. They are in support of the funding structure provided that the project still meets the needs and safety for the future.

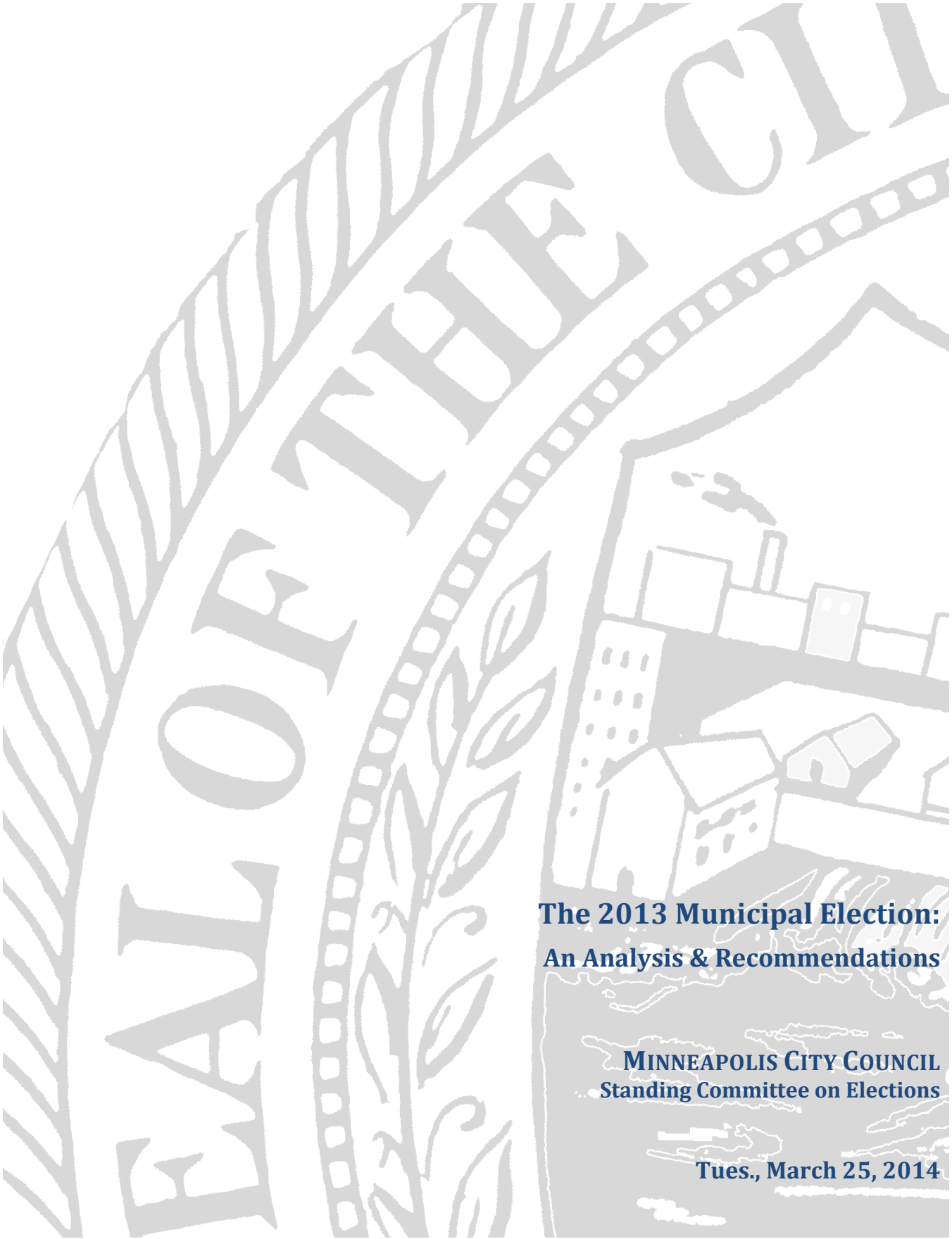
4. Adjournment

Staff adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Koosman

Becky Koosman
City Clerk



The 2013 Municipal Election:

An Analysis & Recommendations

MINNEAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL
Standing Committee on Elections

Tues., March 25, 2014

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List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A - Post-Election Survey by Morris Leatherman and Company
Exhibit B - November 2013 Municipal Election Analysis by Connie Schmidt

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes experiences and lessons learned from the 2013 Municipal Election. Based on these experiences and lessons, staff proposes additional ordinance amendments to clarify certain terms and definitions, to amend the process of determining mathematical elimination and vote transfers using Ranked-Choice Voting, and to increase municipal filing fees (*see pages 33-36 for details*). Additionally, this report highlights a series of process improvements staff recommends in preparation for the regularly-scheduled 2014 Gubernatorial Election (*see page 36 for details*).

II. RCV: SYSTEMS, PROCEDURES & IMPROVEMENTS

In 2006, Minneapolis voters approved the use of Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) to elect municipal offices. RCV was first used in 2009. Based on experiences and lessons learned in 2009, as well as observations during St. Paul's RCV implementation in 2011, a series of process improvements was implemented for the 2013 Municipal Election. These improvements resulted in a substantial reduction in the time required to release final results in all races: in 2009, final results were available 15 days after the election with a voter turnout of 45,968; in 2013, final results were available 3 days after the election, with an increase in voter turnout to 80,099. Following is a summary of the changes which allowed the City of Minneapolis to achieve those improvements.

A. Ordinance Changes

On May 24, 2013, City Council approved amendments to the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Chapter 167 [*Municipal Elections: Rules of Conduct*]. These amendments included:

❖ USE ELECTION NIGHT TOTALS OF FIRST-CHOICE RESULTS TO DECLARE UNOFFICIAL WINNERS

The original RCV ordinance required a full hand-count of all races, even when Election Night results were sufficient to declare winners based on first-choice results. This required significant time and resulted in unnecessary delays in announcing final results. The 2009 mayoral race best illustrated the need to streamline this process, since a full hand-count was conducted even though the winning candidate received 73.6% of all first-choice votes on Election Night. Unofficial winners could have been declared on Election Night in 2009 in 15 out of 22 races based on first-choice votes alone. The 2013 amendment allowed candidates who met or exceeded the established threshold based on first-choice vote totals on Election Night to be declared winners. As a consequence, in 2013, winners were declared on Election Night in 14 out of 22 races on the ballot—roughly 64 percent of the entire ballot—simply based on first-choice vote totals.

❖ COUNT ONLY DECLARED WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

In 2009, across all races and rankings, a total of 3,221 write-in candidates had to be individually documented, hand-counted, processed, and reported. This consumed a significant amount of time and did not affect the outcome of any race. The 2013 amendment eliminated this requirement, providing identical treatment allowed under state law for write-in candidates in federal, state, and county elections.[1] Specifically, write-in candidates wishing to have their votes tabulated individually (known as "declared write-in candidates") must file a written request no later than 7 days before a general election; all other write-in candidates are reported in aggregate. The cities of St. Paul and Blaine have also adopted this requirement for municipal elections. In 2013, there were no declared write-in candidates for any races on the ballot.

[1] Minn. Stat. §204B.09, Subd. 3.

❖ IMPROVE POLICY GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING VOTER INTENT

In any election, regardless of the system used, it is possible for voters to mark ballots in a manner that does not allow all choices to be automatically tabulated by voting equipment. For example, a voter may circle a candidate's name rather than filling in the oval next to the candidate's name. State law requires election administrators to make every effort to accurately count all votes on a ballot and prohibits the rejection of a ballot when it is possible to determine a voter's intent.[2] To that end, state regulations provide detailed guidance on interpreting and determining voter intent for errors common in plurality voting systems. However, there is no guidance for errors unique to RCV. In RCV, these types of errors include:

1. Overvoting, which is choosing more than one candidate at a single ranking;
2. Repeating a candidate in multiple rankings; and
3. Skipping a ranking, but choosing a candidate at a lower ranking.

Therefore, additional policy direction is required to address RCV-specific voter errors in order to provide voters the maximum ability to participate in an election. That policy direction is included in the City's RCV ordinance.

The 2009 RCV ordinance was inconsistent with respect to the treatment of ballots with voter errors. In the case of an overvote, repeat candidate, or multiple skipped rankings, the City's voter intent guidelines did not allow the ballot to count towards any candidate in current or subsequent rounds. In the case of a single skipped ranking, the guidelines allowed the ballot to be counted towards the next highest-ranked continuing candidate, if any. The 2013 amendment eliminated this inconsistent treatment in each instance, requiring that the particular ballot count towards the next highest-ranked, continuing candidate, if any. As a result, all voters received the maximum opportunity of having their ballots count towards a preferred candidate despite any technical error(s), consistent with state law.

For more details, see Section III. Voting Patterns, beginning on page 7.

❖ CHANGE THE THRESHOLD FOR AUTOMATIC RECOUNTS

Recognizing the accuracy of modern voting systems, the State Legislature in 2013 lowered the vote difference triggering an automatic recount in municipal elections.[3] Specifically, in races with more than 50,000 votes cast, the vote difference is now one-fourth of 1 percent instead of one-half of 1 percent. The following chart shows when a recount will be required:

STATUTORY CHANGES RELATED TO ELECTION RECOUNT TRIGGERS	
Total Votes Cast	**Recount Required When Difference Is…**
400 or less	10 votes or less
More than 400, less than 50,000	1/2 of 1% of total votes for office or less
50,000 or more	1/4 of 1% of total votes for office or less

Previously, the City's ordinance stated a flat threshold of 1/2 of 1 percent, which aligned with the state law at the time the original ordinance was passed. The amended ordinance simply references state statute, which

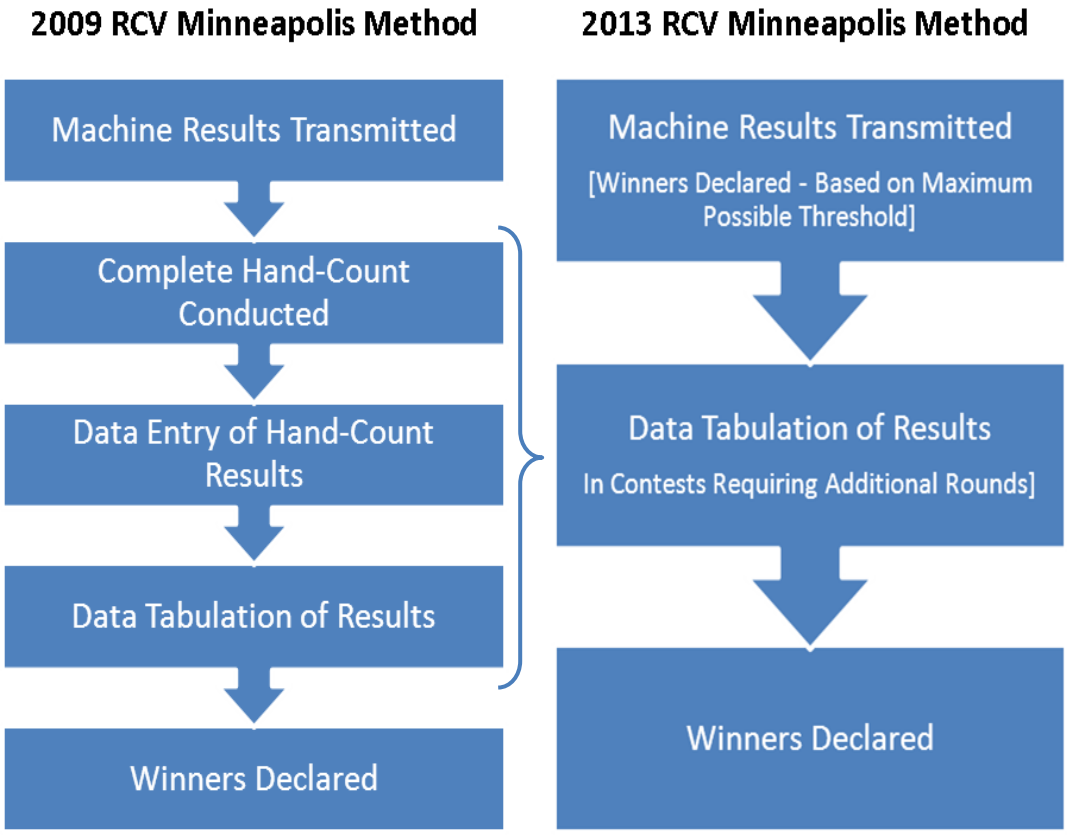
[2] Minn. Stat. § 204C.22.

[3] Minn. Stat. § 204C.36

assures that the recount trigger in the City's ordinance matches state law and eliminates the need for future amendments if the State Legislature changes the law in the future.

B. New Voting System & Equipment

On April 23, 2013, Hennepin County awarded a contract for a new voting system and related equipment to Election Systems & Software, Inc. (ES&S). The new voting system includes an enhancement related to RCV; specifically, it produces a Cast Vote Record which streamlines tabulation processes and eliminates the need for a protracted hand count. In 2009, the voting system did not support any aspect of RCV tabulation, necessitating a full hand-count using the Minneapolis Method.[4] The new voting system and use of the Cast Vote Record exportable file streamlined the tabulation process, as illustrated by the following chart.



As shown, the 2013 process eliminates the hand count and data entry steps used in 2009, which were the most time-consuming and costly components in the original process. By exporting the Cast Vote Record file in Microsoft Excel, the elections team was able to immediately begin data tabulation, thereby achieving substantial time and cost savings.

While this technological enhancement has improved the use of RCV, it is nevertheless important to emphasize that there is no fully automated solution available which tabulates an RCV election.

[4] For a more detailed description of the Minneapolis Method, see *Status Report on Plans & Preparations for the 2013 Municipal Election,* presented to the City Council Elections Committee on June 12, 2013.

In Minnesota, voting systems must be certified by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission[5] (EAC) and by the Minnesota Secretary of State, the State's chief election official.[6] The new voting system and equipment purchased by Hennepin County in 2013 is certified for use in Minnesota. However, neither the EAC nor the State of Minnesota have standards for, nor test for, the vote transfers and tabulation processes unique to Ranked-Choice Voting, and no vendor of voting equipment systems has submitted RCV tabulation software for certification at federal or state levels. In large part, this is due to the lack of a fully functioning EAC. The existing federal standards for system certification were last approved in 2005—four years before the City of Minneapolis first used RCV in its 2009 Municipal Election. As a consequence of political gridlock at the federal level, it has been impossible to appoint new EAC Commissioners; thus, an update to current federal voting system standards has not been possible. The practical consequence to the City of Minneapolis is that, until new federal and state certification standards are adopted which recognize alternative voting systems, RCV elections will require some element of hand-counting to tabulate any race where first-choice Election Night results cannot determine a winner.

The Cast Vote Record files for every race on the 2013 ballot were posted to the City's elections website and were updated, where necessary, at each round of tabulation. All files can be accessed and downloaded from the website at:

http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/results/2013/index.htm

For more information, see sub-section E. Results Tabulation, on page 5.

C. Independent Analysis

Because there are no federal or state standards for the use of the Cast Vote Record (CVR) exportable data file, the City retained the services of Freeman, Craft, McGregor Group, Inc. (FCMG) —a Florida-based corporation with expertise in testing and evaluating election systems—to conduct an independent analysis of the new voting system and equipment, specifically the use of the exportable CVR data file to support the City's tabulation of RCV ballots. Through extensive testing and review, FCMG found the new election system produced accurate CVR data files and verified that the City's tabulation procedures generated accurate results that could be consistently replicated. A full copy of the FCMG analysis was submitted to the City Council's Elections Committee as part of a separate report entitled "*The 2013 Municipal Election: A Report on Final Plans & Preparations*" dated October 30, 2013.

D. Mock Election

To test its revised procedures, in conjunction with the independent analysis conducted by FCMG, the City conducted a mock election from September 5 – 16. The mock election served two purposes: first, it enabled election administrators to fully test all new procedures prior to Election Day; second, as part of voter outreach programming, it allowed voters to learn about RCV and how to properly cast an RCV ballot. In addition to daily mock voting opportunities at City Hall, the City's elections team provided voting opportunities at four community-based locations:

- September 9, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Roosevelt High School cafeteria, 4029 28th Ave. S.

[5] The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with developing guidance to meet federal requirements established under the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). The EAC adopts voluntary voting system guidelines with the advice and assistance of a standards board and board of advisors as well as a technical guidelines development committee. It also serves as a national clearinghouse of information on election administration. The EAC also accredits testing laboratories and certifies voting systems as well as audits the use of HAVA funds. Other responsibilities of the EAC include maintaining the national mail voter registration form developed in accordance with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. The EAC consists of four commissioners appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

[6] Minn. Stat. § 206.57.

- September 10, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Patrick Henry High School cafeteria, 4320 Newton Ave. N.
- September 11, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Washburn High School cafeteria, 201 W. 49th St.
- September 12, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Edison High School small gym, 700 22nd Ave. NE

The mock election allowed participants to rank and vote on various park-themed issues in races designed to mimic the actual 2013 municipal ballot, including single-seat and multi-seat races. The mock ballot also included two ballot questions, mirroring the two charter amendment questions that were submitted as part of the 2013 Municipal Election. The exercise confirmed that proper procedures were in place to securely transfer results to Hennepin County and to receive from Hennepin County the Cast Vote Record data files for each race.

E. Results Tabulation

At 8 p.m. on Election Night the polls closed and vote data was wirelessly transmitted from each of the City's 117 polling places to Hennepin County. The County merged this precinct-level vote data with the absentee ballot vote data provided by the City's Elections & Voter Services Division and provided a complete copy of the entire data set for the 2013 Municipal Election results to the City. This complete data set showed the total votes for each candidate in each race by first, second, and third choice rankings; the total number of write-in candidates in each race; and the total number of overvotes and undervotes. This data was used to determine unofficial winners on Election Night. The Cast Vote Record (CVR) featured by the new voting system generates a report in a Microsoft Excel format which ties together each voter's first, second, and third choices in each race. This report was used for tabulation in races that a winner could not be declared.

Using the complete results data provided by Hennepin County, the City's Elections & Voter Services Division first determined if any candidate in any race had met or exceeded the established threshold of votes needed to be elected. In 14 of the 22 races on the ballot, the City was able to declare unofficial winners on Election Night based on first-choice vote totals. In 8 races, a definitive winner could not be identified, and additional rounds of tabulation were required. Tabulation was scheduled to begin the following day, Wednesday, November 6, beginning with the mayoral race.

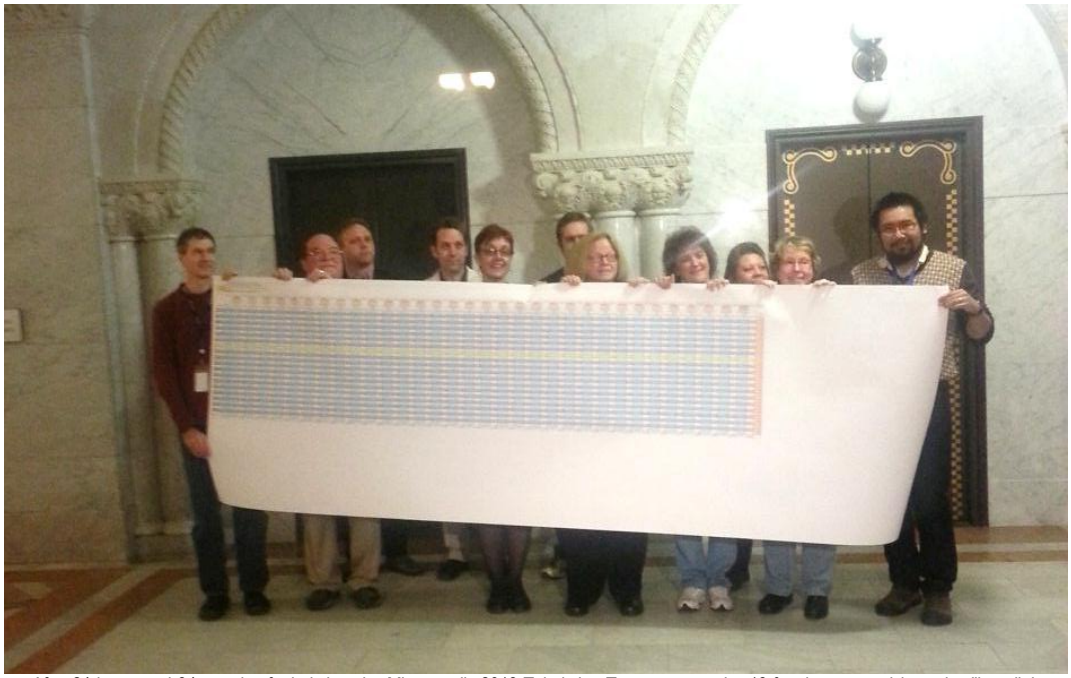
The tabulation team for the 2013 election consisted of six tabulators and one recorder, working under the direction of the Assistant City Clerk/Director of Elections & Voter Services. The recorder observed the process to confirm all procedures were followed and documented potential process improvements for future RCV elections. The six tabulators—working in teams of two—calculated election results: one tabulator operated the computer to sort, copy, and paste data results in Microsoft Excel following detailed instructions; the second tabulator verified each step was followed and ensured no errors were made. A total of two teams (four tabulators) worked simultaneously on each race, proceeding in ballot order. At specified checkpoints, the teams compared results to assure no mistakes had been made. A perfect match of results had to be achieved at each checkpoint before the teams proceeded. This built-in redundancy assured the tabulation was done accurately.

The Microsoft Excel workbook used by tabulators was designed to mimic the physical counting stations which would have been used in a hand-count process of paper ballots, based on the Minneapolis Method. For each race on the ballot, a "workspace" sheet was used to sort and transfer vote data, extracted from the Cast Vote Record file. There was a page for each candidate. A separate results page in the workbook added the vote totals for each candidate in each round and a mathematical elimination page was used to determine which candidate(s) were defeated in each round.

Tabulation occurred in in the training room located in the secure Emergency Communications Department (911 Center), located in the basement of City Hall. This location provided a secure, quiet work environment. A live feed of the tabulation room was broadcast to a monitor located in the City Hall Rotunda to allow public viewing of the tabulation process. At the conclusion of each tabulation round, printed copies of the results were printed

and posted in the City Hall Rotunda and electronic copies of the results were simultaneously posted to the City's website and released via social media tools.

For the mayoral race, tabulation began at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 6, the morning after Election Day. After 12 hours of tabulation, 14 rounds had been completed, resulting in the elimination of write in candidates and 13 of the 35 mayoral candidates on the ballot. Another full day (12 hours) was required the following day to complete all tabulation in the mayoral race, ending at approximately 11:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 7, following 34 rounds of tabulation.



After 24 hours and 34 rounds of tabulation, the Minneapolis 2013 Tabulation Team presented a 13-foot long spreadsheet detailing all the data in each tabulated round for the mayoral race. [*Photo credit: Anissa Hollingshead*]

On the third day of tabulation (Nov. 8), the tabulation team took 10 hours to complete the remaining seven races where winners could not declared on Election Night. The entire election was completed within 72 hours after the close of the polls on Election Night.

F. Post-Election Review

A post-election review (PER) involves a hand-count of ballots from randomly selected precincts to verify election equipment accurately counted votes on scanned ballots. Because a full hand-count was done in 2009, the 2013 election marked the first time that a post-election review was required in a Minneapolis RCV election. The PER was conducted on November 21, 2013, and was open to public observation.

The exportable Cast Vote Record (CVR) data file in each race—which ties together voters' first, second, and third choices—was the source information used in the RCV tabulation. Therefore, the PER was designed to verify the CVRs matched what was actually marked on ballots in selected precincts. As specified in the ordinance, the City Council race was counted for two randomly selected precincts and the Board of Estimate & Taxation[7] race was counted for two different randomly selected precincts. Election judges worked in party-balanced pairs sorting ballots by all three rankings and recording the number of ballots cast for each possible

[7] The ordinance specified that a multi-seat race, selected at random, be counted in the PER. Board of Estimate & Taxation was the race selected in 2013.

combination of candidates.[8] This count was compared to the results for each combination in the CVR data file. No discrepancies between the CVR data files and the actual ballots were discovered in any of the four precincts included as part of the PER.

III. VOTING PATTERNS

A. Voter Errors

The issue of voter errors has attracted much attention, both prior to and in the wake of the 2013 Municipal Election. There are three primary types of errors a voter may make that are specific to an RCV election: overvoting, skipped rankings, and repeat candidates.

"Overvoting" occurs when a voter chooses more than one candidate at a single ranking. In 2013, overvotes occurred on 0.19% of the races voted.[9] Overvoting was higher in multiple-seat races (0.25%) than in single-seat races (0.16%). This can perhaps be explained by the fact that in multiple-seat races in non-RCV elections voters are used to voting for multiple candidates for the office. It is possible that the issue of overvoting could be addressed through changes in ballot design which would eliminate the need to repeat candidate names in multiple columns. This is an issue the City should explore prior to the next regularly-scheduled municipal election in 2017. The new ballot counters can alert a voter to an overvote, thereby allowing the voter a chance to correct the error. The ballot counter does not alert voters to the other two types of errors unique to RCV.

A "skipped ranking" occurs when a voter skips a ranking but goes on to choose a candidate at a lower ranking on the ballot. For example, if a voter chooses a first-choice candidate and a third-choice candidate but does not select a candidate as a second choice, that would be a skipped ranking. Skipped rankings occurred on 0.35% of the races voted. About half of this total consisted of voters who skipped the first ranking (0.17%), with the remainder evenly split between voters who skipped the second ranking only and voters who skipped both the first and second rankings (0.09% each). It is possible voters misunderstood how to mark an RCV ballot correctly, or that voters believed they were voting strategically in favor of a preferred candidate by skipping rankings. In either case, the City should be prepared to address this issue as part of voter outreach and education plans in advance of the next regularly-scheduled municipal election in 2017.

A "repeat candidate" occurs when a voter chooses the same candidate at multiple rankings in the same race on the ballot. For example, in a single race, if a voter ranked a candidate as his or her first, second, and third choice (or any combination of multiple rankings), that would be a repeat candidate. Repeat candidate errors occurred on 3.28% of the races voted. This error occurred on 2.26% of races where there were three or more candidates, and on 6.84% of races in which there were two or fewer candidates in a race. This discrepancy perhaps indicates that some voters felt the need, and perhaps believed it was a requirement, to complete all three rankings on the ballot, despite clear instructions to the contrary—both printed on the ballot and issued orally by election judges in the polling place. Again, this highlights the need for voter education efforts to explain how to properly mark an RCV ballot.

Also noteworthy is the fact that repeat candidate errors were experienced at a much higher rate than either overvoting or skipped rankings. This reflects a common theme identified during voter outreach efforts, where many voters expressed the belief that "bullet voting" would help a preferred candidate to advance in a race where additional rounds of tabulation were required. "Bullet voting" is another term for the repeat candidate error; however, it generally refers to a ballot error in which a voter selects the same candidate in all rankings in a given race (e.g., first, second, and third choices). The City lacks further data which would determine if repeat

[8] This process was identical to the Minneapolis Method hand count developed to tabulate results in 2009.

[9] There were five races on each ballot, so each ballot is considered five instances to make an error or vote correctly. However, if a voter decided not to vote in a particular contest, that race was disregarded in this analysis.

candidate errors occur at a higher rate than the other two types of RCV-specific errors specifically because voters intentionally chose to repeat a candidate despite knowing this is not the correct way to mark an RCV ballot or if voters misunderstood this particular aspect of casting an RCV ballot. In reality, bullet voting weakens a voter's ballot and decreases his or her ability to affect the outcome in a particular race. Where bullet voting is encountered, the first-choice ranking for a preferred candidate is processed, and the repeat rankings for the same candidate are eliminated. Regardless of the reason behind the higher levels for repeat candidate errors, the City must be prepared to address this issue when designing future RCV ballots and developing voter education initiatives.

The following table summarizes the RCV-specific errors occurring in the 2013 Municipal Election.

SUMMARY OF RCV BALLOT ERRORS		
Type of Error	**Type of Race**	**Percentage**
Overvote	Single-seat	0.16%
Overvote	Multi-seat	0.25%
Overvote	All races	0.19%
Skipped Ranking	All races	0.35%
Repeat Candidate	1-2 candidates	6.84%
Repeat Candidate	3+ candidates	2.26%
Repeat Candidate	All races	3.28%

B. Choice Drop-off

Another issue which has received attention is the question of how many choices—that is, the total number of rankings—should be available to voters as part of the ballot. Because of limitations with the new voting system purchased in 2013, the decision was made to retain the minimum required number of rankings provided under the City's ordinance, which is three rankings per race. Additionally, due to vendor limitations, the City opted to retain a portrait-orientation for the ballot, which impacted the layout and design of the ballot while still complying with statutory requirements related to font size, spacing, and pagination. There were a total of 22 races on the ballot to elect a total of 25 municipal officers. Of that total, 9 races had two or fewer candidates (3 council/ward races and 6 park/district races). At the opposite end of the spectrum, the mayoral race had a total of 35 candidates. The City was able to keep all 22 races on the ballot to a single 17-inch page, front and back, for the 2013 Municipal Election. It was one of the longest municipal ballots produced in the City's history.

The 2013 election data show that few voters used more rankings than there were candidates in a specific race on the ballot. Voters could have done this by repeating a candidate (an RCV error) or by choosing a write-in candidate for one or more choices (not a voting error). The data show that the majority of voters chose to use all three ranking opportunities in only 6 of the 22 races — that is less than one-third of the total number of races on the ballot. Those races in which all three rankings were used by a majority of voters included: Mayor (35 candidates); City Council Ward Five (4 candidates); Ward Nine (6 candidates); Ward Twelve (5 candidates); Ward Thirteen (5 candidates); and Park Board At-Large (10 candidates). In all of the remaining 16 races, the majority of voters chose not to use all three rankings.

Of course, caution should be used in drawing conclusions based on the experiences of one election. Still, the data seem to suggest two general conclusions.

First, voters appear to understand how to use the ranking process and are much more likely to take advantage of ranking opportunities in races with a large number of candidates. Ballot position did not appear to negatively impact voters' decisions to take advantage of ranking opportunities. For example, the number of voters choosing all three rankings for the Park Board At-Large race (with 10 candidates and displayed as the fourth race on the ballot) was higher than all but one City Council race (all of which had six or fewer candidates and was displayed second on the ballot) and the Board of Estimate & Taxation race (which had four candidates and was listed third on the ballot, immediately before the Park Board At-Large race).

Second, the data suggest that providing three rankings may be sufficient for the majority of voters to express their preferences. In 16 of the 22 races on the ballot in 2013, a majority of voters chose to rank fewer than three candidates—opting not to take advantage of opportunities to rank additional candidates in those races. Furthermore, in the other six races, a substantial number of voters chose to rank fewer than three candidates. Further supporting this hypothesis is the fact that 42% (6,495 of 15,573) of the exhausted ballots in the mayoral race had fewer than three different candidates ranked. In the mayoral race, the number of exhausted ballots was 19.6% of the total vote. But if the ballots with unused choices are excluded the exhausted ballot rate would have been 11.4%. In essence, the data suggest that additional rankings were not of value to at least 8 out of 9 voters, despite 35 candidates to choose from in the 2013 mayoral race.

The chart below shows how frequently voters chose to use all three choices, two choices, or only one choice.

Summary of Choice Drop-off

Race	3 Choices	2 Choices	1 Choice
Mayor (35 candidates)	76.3%	11.1%	12.6%
City Council w/ 1 candidate	2.3%	1.5%	96.1%
City Council w/ 2 candidates	3.9%	26.7%	69.4%
City Council w/ 3+ candidates	44.5%	22.1%	33.4%
Board of Estimate (4 candidates)	42.6%	29.2%	28.2%
Park At Large (10 candidates)	60.6%	15.0%	24.4%
Park District w/ 1 candidate	1.6%	1.0%	97.4%
Park District w/ 2 candidates	3.1%	36.9%	59.9%

Although allowed for under the ordinance, providing more than three choices has some significant drawbacks for both the voter and election administrators. Producing a ballot with more than three choices in each race could require additional ballot pages. We know from past experience that multiple-page ballots reduce voter participation in races on the second (and any succeeding) page, and leads to an increase in the number of abandoned ballots in the polling place. Finally, the decision to retain a three-choice ballot design was due to technical limitations within the new voting system software. Staff proposes the formation of a workgroup of elections administrators and key stakeholders to evaluate and make recommendations on improved ballot designs and options prior to the next regularly-scheduled municipal election.

IV. PRECINCTS & POLLING PLACES

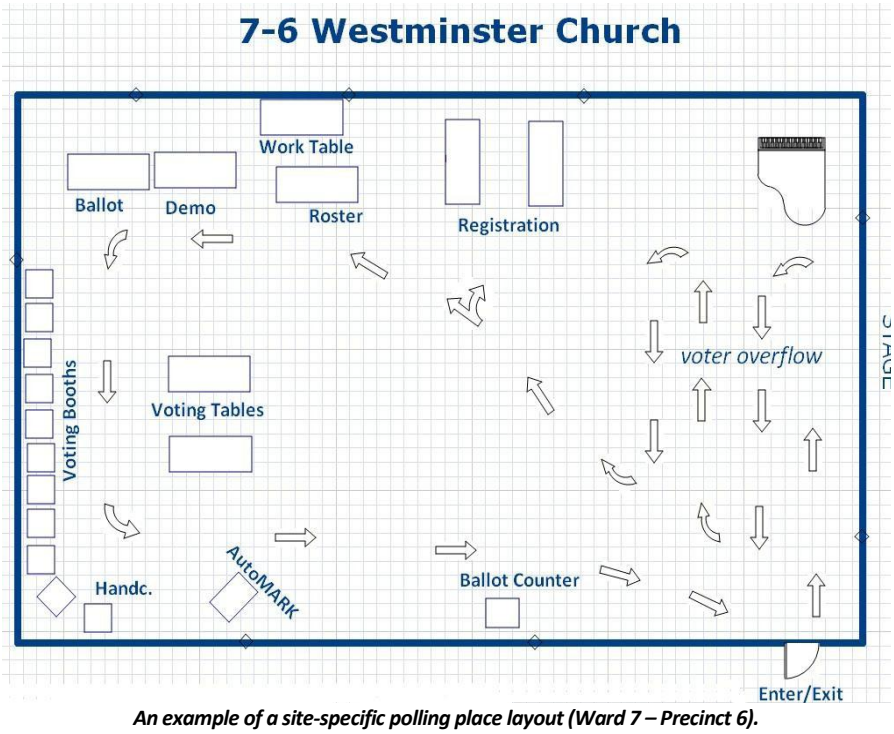
A. Changes in 2013

A handful of polling place locations were changed in 2013, largely in response to experiences in the 2012 Presidential General Election. Those changes are reflected in the following chart.

Ward-Precinct	Old Location	New Location
2-4	Coffman Union	Weisman Museum
2-9	Seward Towers East	Augsburg College Oren Gateway Bldg.
6-2	Seward Square Apartments	Seward Towers East
8-2	Painter Park	Lyndale Community School
8-5	Watershed High Charter School	St. Joan of Arc Church (also serves 8-4)
10-2	Ballentine VFW Post	Jefferson School (also serves 10-1)

B. Polling Place Assessments & Accessibility Issues

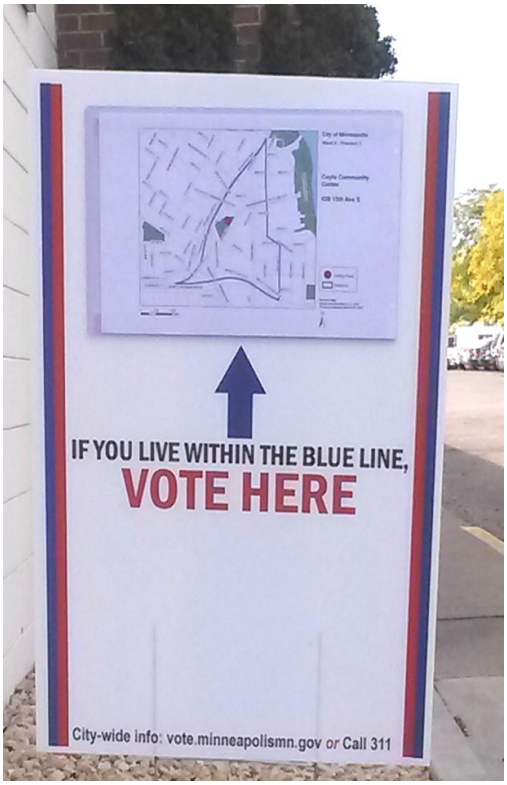
In response to a directive from City Council, the Elections & Voter Services Division convened a Polling Place Work Group to engage community stakeholders in a comprehensive assessment of the City's polling places and the development of a *Polling Place Assessment Guide*. This guide identified a number of desirable characteristics and specific recommendations to inform the selection of polling place locations, which complemented the legal mandates addressing overall accessibility. In advance of the 2013 election, staff used this guide to conduct on-site assessments of all 117 polling place locations to identify and address potential accessibility barriers or challenges and to identify potential new polling place locations, including the option of using one polling place to serve multiple precincts. As a result, polling places in a handful of precincts were changed prior to the 2013 election (*see above*). Additionally, staff prepared site-specific polling place layouts for all 117 locations.



An example of a site-specific polling place layout (Ward 7 – Precinct 6).

These customized layouts were intended to maximize the best use of space in each unique polling place. Staff is incorporating feedback from election judges in the layout designs to reflect their hands-on knowledge about specific sites. These site-specific layouts will streamline the organization and set-up of polling places in the early morning hours on Election Day and enable the teams of election judges to serve voters effectively and in a timely manner, while minimizing long lines and wait times, and allowing most voters to wait to vote inside the polling place rather that outdoors in possibly inclement weather.

The Elections Division expanded efforts to assist voters with Election Day parking. Partnering with the Public Works Department, hundreds of **VOTER PARKING ONLY** signs were deployed across the city at more than 40 polling locations, where parking had been identified as a critical issue following the 2012 Presidential Election. Existing signs were modified to serve this purpose in 2013. New black-on-yellow, election-specific signage has been purchased and will be used in 2014 and beyond, including both staked **VOTER PARKING** signs as well as meter hoods for both voter and election judge parking purposes (*shown right)*.



Also new in 2013, Elections staff designed a series of signs to be used at polling places to better assist voters. In 40 precincts, large-scale signs were deployed with the tag **IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE BLUE LINE, VOTE HERE** (*shown left*). These signs were placed in outdoor areas leading up to the polling place to help voters confirm that they were in the right precinct and polling place before getting in line and waiting to vote. An oversized map of the specific precinct clearly outlining the territory served by the polling place was attached to the sign. Within designated polling places, **START HERE** signs were also deployed to help manage voter flows and to direct voters toward the registration/roster area, especially in larger-sized polling places (e.g., gyms and auditoriums) where the queuing area may not be immediately visible or obvious. In precincts known to have larger voter populations with limited English proficiency, all directional and voter assistance signs were translated into the primary non-English language(s) spoken in that precinct (e.g., Spanish, Hmong, and/or Somali), as well as information about how to access translation assistance or language support. The Elections & Voter Services Division plans to supply all polling places with this signage for the 2014 Gubernatorial Election.

C. Precinct & Polling Place Recommendations for 2014

Minneapolis currently has 117 precincts, with a total of 28 sites serving more than 2,500 registered voters. The result is that several precincts are simply too large, and this contributes to long lines and wait times, especially in elections with high turnout, like the 2012 Presidential Election.

In 1990, Minneapolis had a total of 182 precincts with a median of 1,237 registered voters. In contrast, the current median is 2,088 registered voters. The overall downward trend in the number of precincts over the intervening years reflects cost-savings efforts aimed at preserving critical operating resources (staff, election judges, equipment and supplies, the warehouse, etc.) which are required to plan, organize, and conduct elections during the regular, four-year cycle of federal, state, and local elections. As part of the City's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget, the number of precincts was further reduced from 131 to 117. The City has reached a tipping point with respect to the number of its precincts. In light of strategic goals to grow the city and increase its population over the next several years, it is imperative that additional (new) precincts as well as changes in polling place locations be pursued.

Staff estimates that the "average polling place" costs approximately $7,400 per year to operate. This reflects ballot production and printing; expenses related to recruiting, training, and staffing the polling place with election judges; supplies and materials; additional voting booths and signage; maintenance, storage, programming, and transport of equipment and supplies to and from the warehouse; facility rental and ancillary facility-related costs; and costs for postage and a variety of mailings. This estimate does not include additional "start-up" costs for new ballot tabulators and AutoMARK equipment which would be required for each new precinct/polling place.

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 204B.14, changes in polling places must be completed no less than 90 days prior to an election. The Elections & Voter Services Division plans to submit recommendations on the potential for new precincts and/or changes in polling place locations for 2014 at a later date, following preparations for the 2014 Special Election for the Hennepin County Commissioner, District 3 seat.

V. ELECTION JUDGES

A. Recruitment and Deployment

A successful Election Day cannot be accomplished without the citizens willing to staff the polls as election judges. Staffing needs are primarily based on the rubric of one election judge per 150 voters, in addition to the following variables:

1. Type of election--- local, state or federal; and primary or general.
2. Voter turnout analysis from previous similar elections.
3. Ballot content---offices, candidates and ballot question(s).

Moreover, based on experiences from the 2012 election, the basic staffing model was changed to separate head and assistant head judges from the required number of team judges per precinct.[10] In the past, the head and assistant head judges were included in the base formula and were expected to perform team judge duties. The analysis of the 2012 election revealed that expecting these leadership positions to perform team judge duties compromised their ability to manage the polling place—which reduced service to voters, resulted in inefficiencies, contributed to long lines and wait times, and increased the potential for errors. By accounting for head and assistant head judges separate from the base number of team judges per precinct, the City was able to empower these leadership positions to focus exclusively on their management responsibilities: they were accessible at all times to team judges; they were able to supervise activities throughout the polling place; they were able to handle situations requiring more expertise; and they were able to focus on managing voter queuing lines and provide better voter service.

[10] The statutory minimum coverage is four judges per polling place. Minn. Stat. § 204B.22. Five is the practical minimum to allow for election judges to take breaks.

Taking into consideration the foregoing basic formula and variables, staffing for the 2013 Municipal Election was calculated based on a potential turnout of 60% of registered voters. Staff justified the use of that higher potential turnout for several reasons:

1. The 2013 election was the first in two decades to have an open seat in the mayoral race;
2. There were two charter amendments included on the ballot, both pertaining to the proposed Plain Language Charter Revision, and the Minneapolis Charter Commission had mounted a strong outreach and get-out-the-vote campaign in support of those questions;
3. It was only the City's second experience with RCV, with an increased number of competitive races compared to 2009;
4. Prior municipal elections had achieved higher-than-average turnouts, as seen in 1993 (47% turnout), which was also the last year in which no incumbent mayor was on the ballot, and 1997 (48%); and
5. In the aftermath of an historic 81% turnout in the 2012 Presidential Election, staff believed it was prudent to set the bar higher than in past municipal years in terms of expected voter participation.

Given all of these factors, and in planning for a 60% turnout, staff calculated that 1,137 team election judges would be required in addition to 234 head and assistant head judges to properly staff the City's 117 polling places. That equated to a total of 1,371 election judges.[11]

The table below summarizes polling place staffing levels according to the number of pre-registered voters as of February 4, 2013.

Staffing Needs Based on Projected Voter Turnout				
60% Registered Voters (2/4/13)	No. of Precincts	Team EJs (FTE = 16 hours)	Head & Asst. Head Judges	Total Staffing
<625	11	5	2	7
626-775	13	6-7	2	8-9
776-900	13	8	2	10
901-1,025	16	9	2	11
1,026-1,150	16	10	2	12
1,151-1,275	13	11	2	13
1,276-1,400	22	12	2	14
>1,400	13	13-16	2	15-18
TOTALS	**117**	**1,137**	**234**	**Avg. = 11.7**

B. Language Support & Translation

One in five Minneapolis residents speaks a language other than English at home.[12] Consequently, in addition to assuring a sufficient numbers of team election judges, there is an increasing need for the City to recruit, train,

[11] Figures refer to full time equivalents

[12] City of Minneapolis. Neighborhood and Community Relations Department. *Minneapolis in Any Language: Policies and Procedures to Ensure Equal Access to City Services for People with Limited English Proficiency*. 2012. Print. <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@ncr/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-098636.pdf>.

and deploy workers to provide language support for voters at the polls. In the past, the City relied primarily on the services of Minneapolis 311 to assist voters with translation needs. And while that practice continues and meets needs in many instances, relying solely upon that agency for translation support can be a time-consuming and frustrating task because over-the-phone interpretation requires both the election judge and the voter to interact with the off-site interpreter in an alternating pattern. Efforts to engage bilingual election judges over the past few years have had varying levels of success, and have primarily been hampered by a lack of permanent resources to identify, recruit, and train potential translators to serve as election judges.

Recognizing these challenges, and with full support from the City Council, the Elections & Voter Services Division identified precincts where at least 15% (or more) of the registered voting population speaks one (or more) of the top three foreign languages that are spoken in Minneapolis; specifically, Hmong, Spanish, and Somali. Those identified precincts were targeted to receive additional language support in the form of 588 bilingual election judges during the 2013 Municipal Election. These bilingual election judges provided on-site interpretation and translation services, in addition to regular team election judge duties. In addition, 24 qualified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were deployed in those precincts with a demonstrated need for such support. Additional translation support was provided by 35 bilingual student election judges.

All judges providing language support and translation assistance in the polls were identified with special nametags that included the judge's name and the second language that he or she spoke. In total, 647 bilingual election judges served in the 2013 election, as reflected in the following chart.

Language Skills Among Elections Judges		
Language	**Regular EJs**	**Student EJs**
American Sign Language	24	0
Hmong	58	11
Oromo	18	0
Somali	172	17
Spanish	340	7
TOTALS	**612**	**35**

In addition to on-site personnel, the Elections & Voter Services Division, working in conjunction with the Neighborhood & Community Relations Department, assured that key signage and other election-related materials in polling places were available in English, Hmong, Spanish, and Somali.

An ongoing initiative to increase polling place language support includes the **ADOPT-A-POLLING PLACE** program, which ran as a successful pilot in the 2013 election. The Adopt-A-Polling Place program is an election judge recruitment strategy in which a local organization or business "adopts" a specific precinct by finding volunteers to staff a particular voting location on Election Day. Their recruits then donate their pay back to the organization. The Minneapolis Adopt-a-Polling Place program gives local, community-based organizations and businesses the opportunity to be civically active, engage the community, and enrich Minneapolis voters' experience at the polls, while helping Minneapolis achieve recruitment targets for election judges. The Adopt-a-Polling Place program is a unique, donation-based fundraising opportunity and an occasion to build a lasting relationship with a specific community in Minneapolis. Participants benefit from a hands-on, interactive experience and real-life exposure to the electoral process.

C. Student Election Judges

The 2013 Student Election Judge Program was a highly successful endeavor that engaged 162 students from seven local schools. In addition to regular election judge duties, a large number of students provided language support and translation assistance in the polling place (*see above*). Last year, the following improvements to the program were instituted, designed to enhance the quality and commitment of participating students:

- Recruitment re-focused on students seeking community service credit. Paid service was still available, but was de-emphasized in recruitment and training strategies. This increased the percentage of students serving who were actively engaged and saw the opportunity to be an election judge as more than just a paycheck.
- Student shifts were changed to match those of regular election judges (6 a.m. – 2 p.m. or 2 – 8 p.m.), creating more continuity in the polling place. Previously, all student election judges started at 8 a.m. Having all election judges begin at the same time assured a smoother start on Election Day. Students who wished to remain after the polls closed were allowed to do so, but were not allowed to work past 10 p.m.
- Students with desired second-language skills were given priority placement in scheduling to better support those identified precincts where language support was critical.

In 2014, student election judges will be invited to work in both the primary and the general election. This will help the City secure a sufficient number of election judges for both events, and also provide more continuity and an experienced workforce for the primary as well as the general election. Student election judges will also receive equal opportunities to perform all functions allowed by law as other team judges. This provides student election judges with on-the-job training and experience, builds self confidence in performance, and respects the contributions and capability of all election judges.

D. Election Judge Training

In order to further develop the leadership skills of the City's cadre of head and assistant head election judges and precinct support judges, the Elections & Voter Services Division created a specific manual and training class in 2013. Previously, separate training classes were provided to team election judges, to head and assistant head judges, and to precinct support judges. Beginning in 2013, head and assistant head judges and precinct support judges were all required to attend the same basic team judge training class.[13] In addition, these individuals—who serve in critical leadership positions—were also required to attend a new class focused on leadership, polling place management, and team supervision. A new *Head & Assistant Head Election Judge Manual* was prepared that included information, tips and tools, and supplemental resources specifically for head and assistant head election judges, such as step-by-step instructions, voter flow and line management techniques, and guidelines for monitoring and mentoring team election judges.

In preparation for the regularly-scheduled 2014 Gubernatorial Election, the Elections & Voter Services Division intends to include all student election judges in the basic judge training class. This further supports the goal of building a unified corps of election judges, rather than treating student judges differently. Previously student judges attended a separate, abbreviated training session. Including student election judges in regular training classes alongside other judges will allow for informal interaction, cross-training, and team-building opportunities that will be beneficial for the entire Election Day team.

Building on the success of the new *Head & Assistant Head Election Judge Manual*, the Elections & Voter Services Division intends to create a customized manual for team election judges in 2014. This new manual will consolidate many informational resources into a single binder addressing topics such as polling place

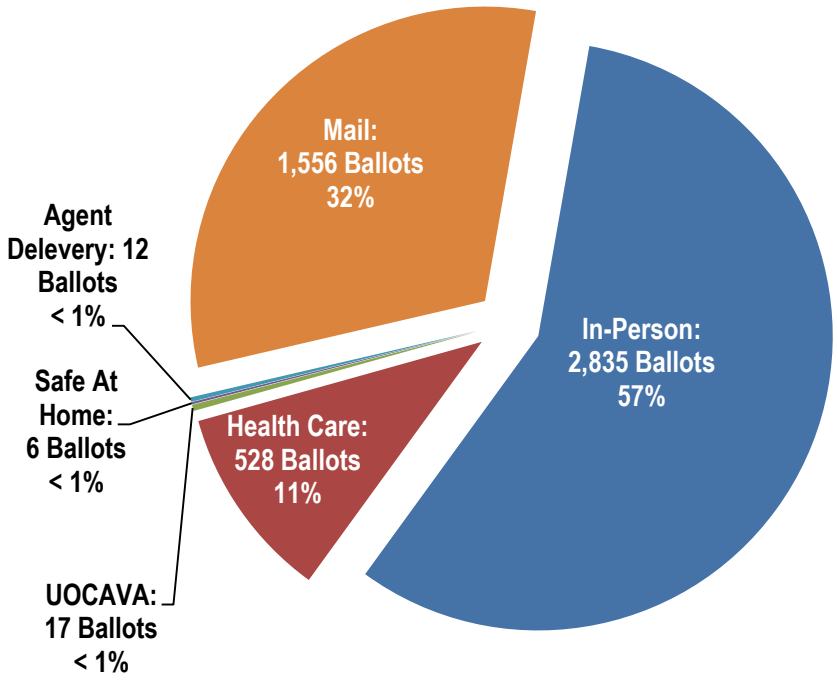
[13] Minn. Stat. § 204B.25 and Minn. Rule 8240.1350

organization and set-up, core responsibilities during voting hours, vouching, curbside voting, and emergency situations, as well as various policies and procedures which team judges may need to reference quickly during the hectic hours that so often characterize Election Day.

VI. ABSENTEE VOTING

A. Overview of 2103

The period for absentee voting begins 46 days before Election Day. In 2013, absentee voting began September 20 and continued through November 4. During that period, a total of 4,954 absentee ballots were accepted—setting a new record for the number of absentee ballots in a municipal election. The following chart provides a breakdown of the total number of absentee ballots among the different types of absentee balloting.



Type	Number
In-person	2,835
Mail	1,556
Health Care[14]	528
UOCAVA[15]	17
Agent Delivery	12
Safe At Home[16]	6
TOTALS	4,954

On the first day of in-person absentee voting (September 20), more than 100 voters arrived at City Hall to cast absentee ballots. The Elections Division responded to assure all in-person absentee voters were treated to a pleasant, fair, and efficient process, using the rotunda space in conjunction with the existing office (Room 1B) as an on-site polling place. Due to the unanticipated high in-person turnout during the absentee voting period, additional resources had to be recruited and trained to serve these voters. Working with partners in the Information Technology and Finance & Property Services departments and the Municipal Building Commission,

[14] Residents of certain health care facilities are visited by specially trained election judges to do absentee voting in their residence (Minn. Stat. § 203B.11)

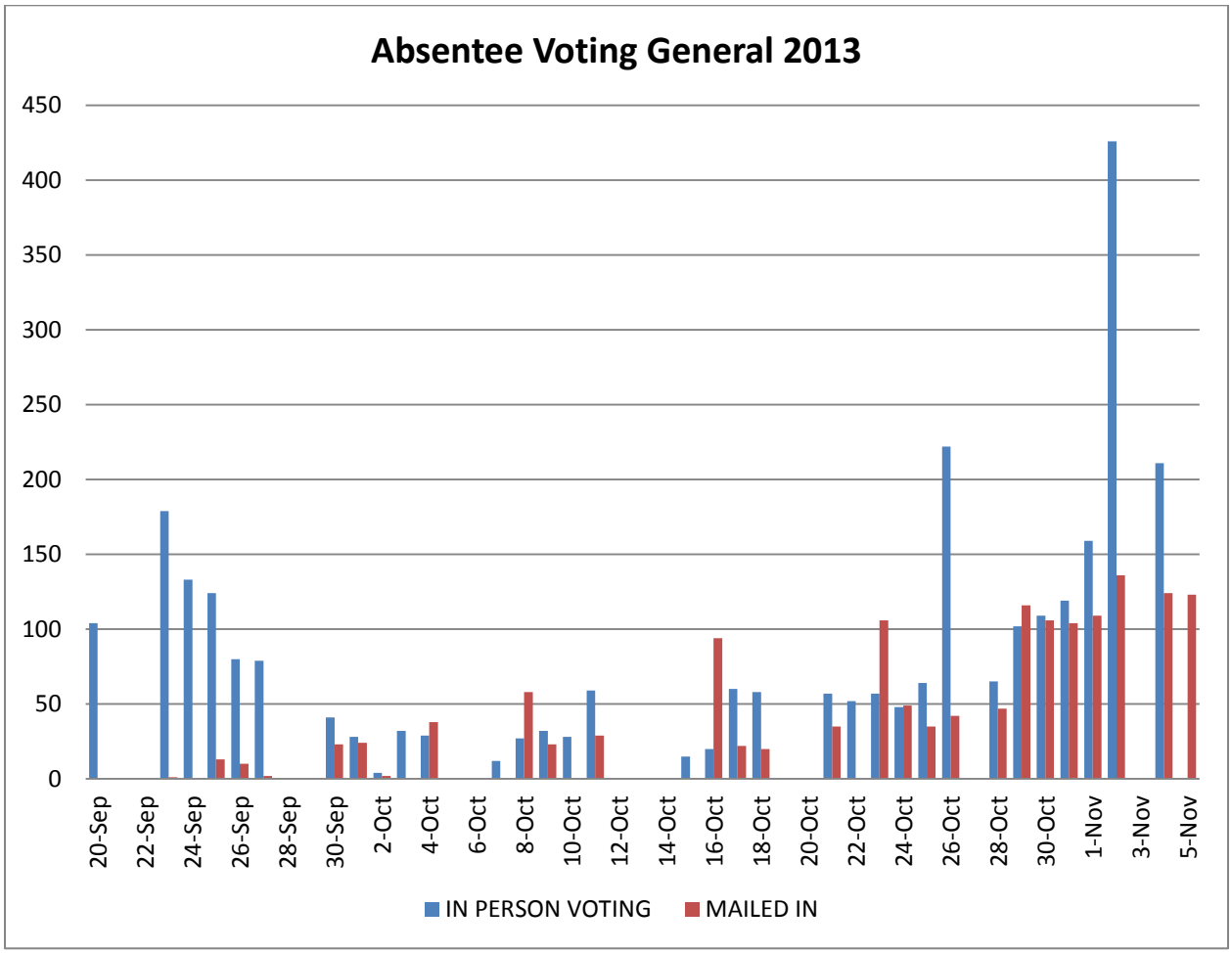
[15] Overseas voters

[16] Safe At Home voters vote by an anonymous absentee process through the Office of the Secretary of State which keeps their voting history out of the public record.

the Elections & Voters Services Division staged a full-scale polling place at City Hall to better serve in-person absentee voters throughout the advance voting period.

Election staff also engaged with community liaisons to plan and coordinate the timing of group arrivals during the in-person absentee voting period. This allowed staff adequate time to assure sufficient resources (including election judges) were available to serve large groups of in-person voters. Frequently, the existing personnel resources were enhanced by "borrowing" employees from other departments to act as interpreters. A Somali-speaking seasonal employee was also recruited to ensure language support was available. Finally, working with community liaisons provided an opportunity for the Elections team to educate those organizing get-out-the-vote campaigns about voter assistance and permissible activities under Minnesota election law, which assured the voter independence and fairness of the election.

During the first full week of absentee balloting, 75-175 in-person voters were served each day. The volume of in-person absentee voters dropped after that first week, but picked back up in the final days prior to Election Day, with more than 100 voters in 7 of the last 8 days of the in-person absentee voting period. More than 400 in-person absentee voters were served on Saturday, November 2, 2013, which was significantly higher than the total volume of in-person absentee voters served on the corresponding day in the 2012 Presidential Election. The following chart provides a breakdown of the volume of in-person absentee voters served each day during the advance voting period.



B. Absentee Balloting Initiatives in 2014

❖ "NO EXCUSE" ABSENTEE BALLOTING

In 2014, "no excuse" absentee balloting will become effective.[17] Previously, a voter had to identify one of five statutory reasons to justify his or her eligibility to cast an absentee ballot. In 2013, the State Legislature authorized the use of "no excuse" absentee balloting which eliminates the requirement for a voter to select one of the five statutory reasons; instead, beginning with the August 2013 Primary, any eligible voter may choose to vote absentee for any reason—and need not specify that reason to election administrators. While this is an important benefit to voters, it is anticipated to result in an increase in the overall number of absentee ballots that must be received, processed, and included in final election results. The Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services Division is planning for up to a 40% increase in the volume of absentee ballots for 2014. This will also have a significant budgetary impact on the City since absentee voting depends on three things: people, paper, and postage.

Absentee balloting is a paper-intensive process. Absentee ballots (specific to a voter's ward and precinct), ballot instructions, and a series of envelopes must be gathered in response to each absentee ballot request. These materials must be mailed to the voter and includes a postage-paid, return envelope. Absentee ballots returned to the City must be processed by the Absentee Ballot Board, which is charged with:

1. Verifying the accuracy and completeness of the data provided by the voter, or accepting the ballot.
2. Updating the State Voter Registration System (SVRS) to acknowledge receipt of the voted ballot.
3. Opening the series of enclosed envelopes.
4. Preparing the ballot for tabulation (unfolding, flattening, and duplicating as needed)
5. Securing voted ballots to ensure accuracy and chain of custody in the delivery of the voted ballots to the county for tabulation.

Of course, ballots, papers, envelopes, postage, and workers all cost money.

Elections staff are working with the Hennepin County elections team to ensure the central count of absentee ballots goes smoothly. In Minnesota, counties are responsible for tabulating absentee ballots. This requires close coordination with cities, since cities accept and process absentee ballots and must submit all absentee ballots to the county-administered central count center where they run through a high-speed ballot counter. Hennepin County and its cities are partnering to improve the efficiency of this centralized process with the goal of handling the expected higher volume of absentee ballots in 2014 with no delays in releasing results on Election Night. Fortunately, the State Legislature authorized local jurisdictions to begin processing absentee ballots earlier in the process. Previously, cities and counties could not begin to process absentee ballots until 3 days before the election. With the passage of "no excuse" absentee balloting, that timeframe was increased to 7 days prior to the election. This additional time should alleviate some bottlenecks in the process of tabulating thousands of absentee ballots.

❖ ELECTION DAY RUNNERS

In 2014, the Elections & Voter Services Division plans to use "runners" to update polling place rosters on Election Day. These rosters—which are produced by the Secretary of State's office and sent to polling places the day before Election Day—must be manually updated to reflect voters who have cast an absentee ballot after the rosters have been printed and, therefore, are ineligible to cast a ballot at the polls. It is an arduous task,

[17] Minn. Stat. § 203B

made more difficult by the fact that state law requires election administrators to accept absentee ballots as late as 3 p.m. on Election Day.[18] In the past, phone calls were made from election headquarters to the head judge in each polling place to update and confirm these details; however, that took valuable time and created delays in serving voters in the polls.

In 2013, the Elections Division experimented with using runners to physically go to each polling place with an updated list of absentee voters to update rosters. Feedback from election judges showed a strong preference to continue this new practice as it was less disruptive to the polls, saved time, reduced mistakes, and did not interfere with service to voters. Beginning in 2014, this practice will be standardized and a team of runners will be recruited specifically to handle roster updates. It is expected that this will help address administrative challenges posed by the increased in expected absentee voters.

VII. VOTER OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

A. Plan Development

The Voter Outreach & Education Plan was a key component of the preparations for and conduct of the 2013 Municipal Election. With little in the way of existing outreach and education resources, the team had to create the entire campaign from scratch. To begin, staff reviewed plans and preparations for the first RCV election in 2009, when an outside contractor was hired to handle all outreach and education. Staff also conferred with members of the City's 2010 Census Complete Count Committee to learn more about its outreach work, researched best practices in election engagement work across the country, and sought to build strong internal partnerships with other City departments. The primary goal was to assure all voters were "election ready," which focused message development on three key elements:

1. *FOCUS*: The basics of the 2013 Municipal Election.
   CORE MESSAGE(S): The 2013 Municipal Election is November 5. Polls will be open to serve voters from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Verify your polling place location (there are 117 locations, and some have changed). Build awareness about ballot content, including specific races and questions.

2. *FOCUS*: How to vote in an RCV election.
   CORE MESSAGE(S): Verify registration status, and register in advance if possible. If necessary, register on Election Day (with details on how to do so). Instructions on properly marking an RCV ballot reflecting voter preferences.

3. *FOCUS*: Voting in the municipal election matters.
   CORE MESSAGE: Every vote counts—both on Election Day as well as for the next four years, and will affect the governance and direction of the community and the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the City of Minneapolis.

The 2013 Class of Urban Scholars contributed to the success of the Voter Outreach & Education Plan. The entire class participated in a group project which aimed at developing various components of the full plan, including targeted campaigns focused on specific populations: college students, immigrant and new American communities, and youth. Several of the recommendations developed by the Urban Scholars were implemented in 2013, and plans are in place to deploy additional strategies in future years.

[18] If the voter had been found to have voted in person, their absentee ballot would be rejected.

B. Internal Partnerships

The Elections team partnered with colleagues in the Communications, Neighborhood & Community Relations, Information Technology, 311, and other departments to ensure it was possible to make a significant and meaningful impact in this first formal foray into voter outreach and education.

In collaboration with the Communications Department, a comprehensive communications plan was designed as part of the Voter Outreach & Education Plan, including a new "brand" for the municipal election:

YOUR CITY. YOUR VOTE.

As part of this plan, the Communications Department provided expertise in the design and creation of a variety of educational materials in a variety of media and formats, helped identify multiple channels for distributing key messaging, and facilitated media contacts.

Working with the Neighborhood & Community Relations Department supported voter outreach and education work in two main facets. First, NCR facilitated the translation of educational materials. Then, Elections staff worked with both Access & Outreach and Neighborhood Support divisions within NCR to gain insight, develop strategies, and access networks of contacts through these partners.

Other significant internal partners included Minneapolis 311 and Information Technology. 311 is a long-time partner to the Elections & Voter Services Division. In 2013, 311 added an elections component to its successful mobile application helping provide voters with timely access to election information and support. The IT Department provided instrumental support in the development and maintenance of the new election website. All of these internal partners played a crucial role in the successful deployment of voter outreach in 2013. Just as importantly, Elections staff gained additional insight into capacity throughout the organization that will enable increasingly effective internal collaboration going forward.

C. Outreach Strategies

Building on the City's core education messages, specific strategies were developed to maximize outreach to as many potential voters as possible. This work was primarily carried out by Elections staff and an Urban Scholar assigned full-time to the Elections & Voter Services Division. Additionally, in partnership with the University of Minnesota's Service Learning program, two U of M students participated in a fall internship focusing on outreach with university students. The Elections team also collaborated with FairVote Minnesota on outreach and education efforts to ensure consistent messaging.

❖ **WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

NEW ELECTION WEBSITE: A new election website was designed to provide a single portal to accurate, up-to-date information about the current election. As the site was developed, content was focused on the 2013 Municipal Election and, for ease of navigation by users, was centered around key "audiences," including voters, candidates, election judges, volunteers, and students. There was also a prominent section featuring information

vote.minneapolismn.gov

about the Ranked Choice Voting process, featuring both a dynamic video explaining how RCV works and an interactive ballot allowing voters to practice ranking three candidates in a sample race, and then demonstrating how those rankings are tallied.

Other key components and areas of content accessible through the website included (but were not limited to):

1. **YOUR VOTE.GUIDE** toolkit of quick links (*pictured at right*) to key content areas found on each page of the website;
2. Precinct-specific sample ballots voters could use to determine first, second, and third choices in each race and use for reference in the polls on Election Day;
3. Basic voting instructions, fact sheets, an interactive practice ballot, and a multitude of instructional videos, brochures, and fliers demonstrating RCV ranking and tabulation processes;
4. PDF copies of each candidate's affidavit of candidacy, which provided the candidate's name, party affiliation or political principle, and campaign contact details;
5. Tools to look-up or confirm assigned polling places, pre-register or verify registration status, and request and track the status of absentee ballots;
6. An all-inclusive calendar of non-partisan, election-related community events, including information about ambassador and election judge trainings; and
7. Voter resource information, including rideshare information for those who needed assistance getting to the polls, details about curbside voting options, proper vouching procedures, and information about rights for all voters under Minnesota election law.

This site has been updated for the 2014 Gubernatorial Election, and will be updated annually, so that is can continue to serve as an invaluable resource for both the most up-to-date election information and important historical information.

SOCIAL MEDIA: In addition to the new website, the Elections & Voter Services Division launched an aggressive campaign in 2013 using social media outlets to capitalize on additional outreach avenues. In addition to working with Communications staff to utilize the City's primary social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter to share key election information, the Elections and Voter Services Division developed its own distinct Facebook and Twitter identities. These social media sites helped inform the electorate in a timely, user-friendly, efficient manner. Staff also used these social media sites on Election Day and through Election Night on November 5 as well as the following days during tabulation in order to provide instant updates and access to results data.

Twitter – **www.twitter.com/votempls**

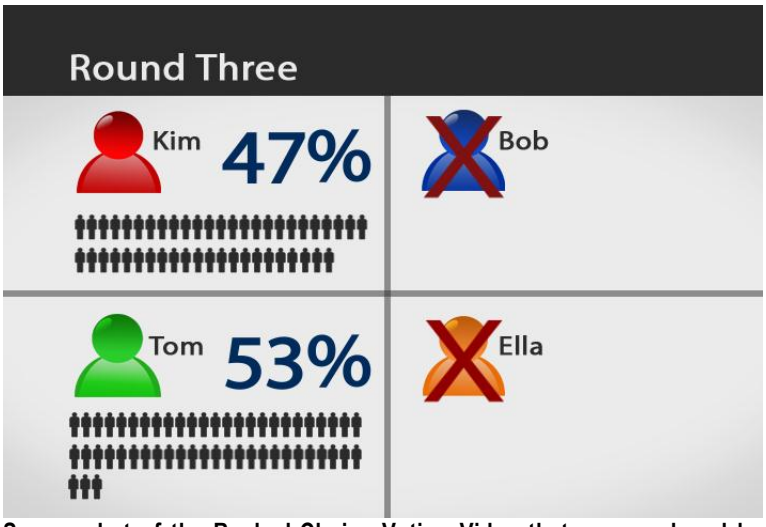
Facebook – **www.facebook.com/votempls**

INTERNET CHAT: As part of the communications plan, over the lunch hour on Thursday, October 31, the Communications Department helped deploy the City's first ever election-focused web chat session. Voters had an opportunity to log on and ask questions of Elections staffers and gain immediate responses. Although a

relatively small number of people participated in the chat session, it was another exciting foray into different options for interaction and information exchange with residents.

❖ **RESOURCES: VIDEOS, HANDOUTS, AND VOTER GUIDE**

VIDEOS: The Communications Department produced an excellent video that publicized the 2013 Municipal Election, reflecting several key messages and highlighting the new election website for additional details. Moreover, in less than 2 minutes, the video (*screenshot at right*) gave a clear, easy-to-understand graphic synopsis of how Ranked-Choice Voting works by following the results of a mock election involving Kim, Bob, Tom, and Ella. With assistance from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department, this video was also translated and produced in Spanish, Hmong, and Somali. In addition to prominent placement on the election website, DVD copies of this video were distributed widely to community groups and organizations.



Screen shot of the Ranked-Choice Voting Video that was produced by the Minneapolis Communications Department.

An additional video was produced by several members of the 2013 Urban Scholar class demonstrating what voters can expect at the polling place. This video was also placed on the election website, and both videos were shared through the City's YouTube channel, on social media, and via broadcast on Channel 79.

HANDOUTS: Printed materials were a key tool for voter education. The core handout developed was a one-page flier outlining how RCV works. This document was translated into Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Oromo, Vietnamese, and Lao, while most other materials were translated into Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. With assistance from FairVote Minnesota, a double-sided half sheet flier was also developed as an additional option for ease of handing out in a variety of settings. This flier featured content about how to vote using RCV on the front side, and a brief explanation of how RCV ballots are counted on the back side. Other handouts developed included an RCV FAQ, a Roadmap to Voting explaining the three steps to getting ready to vote, a double-sided 11x17 inch polling place list and map, a one-page handout explaining how to complete an RCV ballot that was also distributed at polling places, and a more in-depth flier explaining how a Ranked-Choice Voting election is counted. In addition to placing all materials produced on the election website for download, color copies of materials were also available and provided to organizations and groups wishing to distribute or share them.

VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE MAILING: The Elections & Voter Services Division sent a mailer to every Minneapolis household. The mailer included three 11 x 17 inch double sided sheets: a Voter Information Guide, a map of all polling places, and a sample ballot specific to the home's assigned precinct. The Voter Information Guide described the offices and questions on the ballot, provided details on how to register to vote—both in advance or on Election Day, explained how Ranked-Choice Voting works, provided information about absentee voting, and included details about voter assistance and other resources. The inclusion of the site-specific sample ballot ensured that all potential voters had the opportunity to preview their ballot before Election Day. The Elections & Voter Services Division received significant positive feedback on the Voter Information Guide, which was identified in surveys as the single most effective outreach tool in 2013. In fact, the post-election survey commissioned by the City of Minneapolis found that nearly two-thirds of all residents—consistent among those

residents who did and did not vote—indicated the guide was the primary source of how they learned about RCV.

❖ MINNEAPOLIS VOTER AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

At the heart of the 2013 Voter Outreach & Education Plan was the Voter Ambassador Program, a grassroots initiative to engage community-based leaders in the work of publicizing the 2013 Municipal Election and ensuring all voters were "election ready." The genesis for this program is the recognition that community-based leaders have a significant impact in their civic circles and can, through person-to-person contacts, maximize the City's capacity to reach likely and potential voters. Using a train-the-trainer approach, ambassadors were given a basic education in election law as well as the procedures unique to Ranked-Choice Voting and supplied with polling place location maps; a variety of handouts, instructions, and other resources; demonstration and sample ballots; videos; and RCV-specific guides addressing frequently asked questions and common concerns. All materials were translated in multiple languages to facilitate effective outreach to all voters.[19]

Thirty-six individual ambassadors were part of this inaugural effort. A total of eight trainings were held in locations throughout the city, at afternoon, evening, and Saturday times. Candidates were also invited to have their campaign staff participate in these trainings, an offer taken up by a handful of campaigns. In addition, several community organizations allowed Elections staff to provide training and materials to their members and staff to then share with others, including the Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council, Project for Pride in Living, and the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation. Moving forward, the intent is to strengthen and enhance the capacity of the ambassador program by both refining the strategies used to build the base of community-based leaders who are involved as individual ambassadors and increasing the number of organizations that are engaged through a train-the-trainer model.

❖ DIRECT CONTACT OPPORTUNITIES

Creating opportunities for face-to-face contact with voters was a key strategy of voter outreach and education work in 2013. Elections staff sought to strategically identify opportunities with the potential to reach a range of residents throughout the city and allocated internal resources to those opportunities where possible. In addition, both Ambassador program volunteers and the partnership with FairVote Minnesota were utilized to further extend that reach.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT: In 2013, National Night Out occurred on Tuesday, August 6. Working with CCP/Safe staff, Elections staff provided RCV informational fliers to all registered block parties. Spreading the word about the upcoming municipal election and its use of RCV was one of the key information points the Communications Department highlighted to encourage all event organizers to share. FairVote Minnesota also had a number of volunteers out at events to talk to residents about RCV and to distribute fliers supplied by Elections and Voter Services.

EDUCATION SESSIONS: Elections staff conducted a number of information sessions with a variety of groups and organizations. Staff went where connections could be established and there was an interest in holding sessions. Two particular areas of focus in developing connections included organizations serving senior citizens and connecting with churches and faith communities. Working with the Senior Community Specialist in the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department, staff was able to make contact with a number of senior-focused organizations, and presented educational sessions at senior centers, senior living facilities, and through Community Education groups. The results of the post-election survey conducted on behalf of the City of

[19] With assistance from the City's Neighborhood & Community Relations Department, most voter education materials were provided in English, Hmong, Spanish, and Somali. Select materials were also translated into Lao, Oromo, Russian, and Vietnamese. Materials were available in printed form and also posted electronically for public access (or download) via the election website at: http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/language-support.

Minneapolis show older residents who voted indicated a lower level of understanding of how Ranked Choice Voting functions than other age groups, and among non-voters, were more likely to indicate a belief that the Ranked Choice Voting system is difficult. These findings point to the need to continue to target voter education efforts around RCV to seniors. Churches and faith communities were another area of focus in developing contacts for conducting education sessions in order to reach more otherwise hard to reach residents. A connection was established with a formal group of African American ministers in Minneapolis, and staff was able to make two separate presentations to that group as a whole. Handouts and information were provided to the ministers for them to share within their congregations, and staff also conducted education sessions at individual churches as requested.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND FESTIVALS: Creating a presence at community events to raise awareness about the 2013 election was very much a collaborative endeavor. Elections staff lacked the capacity to directly participate in more than a handful of such events, and thus worked closely with both volunteer Ambassadors and FairVote Minnesota. In many cases, a presence at events and festivals was accomplished through tabling and the distribution of printed materials, which the Elections and Voter Services division supplied to Ambassadors and FairVote volunteers at events they participated in. Where possible, tabling was accompanied by other measures for engaging visitors. For instance, at the Minneapolis Urban League's Family Day event on August 31, announcements from the live entertainment stage were made throughout the day to let people know there was a table at the event with more information about the upcoming election and an opportunity to register to vote.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS: By working closely with both the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and FairVote Minnesota, every neighborhood association was contacted about the opportunity to have a speaker from either the City or FairVote share information about the election and RCV at a meeting. Elections staff also prepared articles suitable for sharing on neighborhood group websites or in newsletters.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY: September 24, 2013, was the second annual National Voter Registration Day sponsored by Nonprofit VOTE. Information about this day was included on the election website, including details about how to conduct a voter registration drive on this or any other day for interested groups. The Elections and Voter Services Division also partnered with Hennepin County Elections to staff a voter registration table on the skyway level of the Government Center to conduct our own registration drive on that day.

❖ YOUTH INITIATIVES

In developing the Voter Outreach and Education Plan, Elections staff sought to include provisions focused on young people. This was done in recognition of two facts: first, that children are an excellent conduit of information to the adults in their lives, and second, that voting and political participation are patterned behaviors that have the greatest opportunity to become engrained when started early.

To reach out to elementary school students, Elections staff utilized the Vote Minneapolis Activity Book developed as part of the Urban Scholar group project. Copies were distributed to the 13 Hennepin County libraries open in Minneapolis in the fall of 2013 for library patrons to pick up. Elections staff also worked with five MPS elementary schools to provide these activity books to students. These schools were Andersen United Community School in Phillips, Lyndale Community School in the Lyndale neighborhood, and Elizabeth Hall International, Pierre Bottineau French Immersion, and Hmong International Academy all in north Minneapolis.

Elections staff was able to visit three high schools in the city to talk about the municipal elections and how Ranked Choice Voting works. At South High School, staff visited all junior and senior level social studies classrooms, sharing the RCV video, and spending about 15 minutes talking about the upcoming election. At

both Washburn High School and the Blake School, staff spent a full class period with all senior-level government classes explaining RCV and talking more in depth about the role of municipal government and elections. In every classroom visit, information was shared about how students could get involved in the election by sharing information about the election with others, registering to vote if they would be eligible, and serving as student election judges. Elections staff also communicated with the contractor working with Kids Voting Minneapolis in 2013 who was doing similar outreach work in high schools. That individual was able to visit classrooms at Henry and Roosevelt High Schools, and shared coordinated information about the opportunities for students to become involved with elections.

In ongoing voter outreach and education work, youth should continue to be an area of focus for the same reasons this aspect of work was included in the 2013 plan. The post-election survey showed non-voters in the 2013 election were significantly younger on average than voters, indicating a strong need to continue to engage young people around the importance of voting. Particularly in terms of municipal elections, voter outreach and education work needs to also include building awareness around the role of municipal government and the importance of voting for all residents. The Office of the City Clerk, encompassing both the Elections and Voter Services Division and legislative support to the City Council, is in an ideal role to work with high school classes and in other settings to help convey this information.

❖ COLLEGE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

During fall 2013, two interns from the University of Minnesota joined the Elections staff in voter outreach work. Their main focus was to recruit University students utilizing the Voter Ambassador program and to expand the program at the University of Minnesota.

They were able to reach out to many organizations using a student organization database created with Elections staff. In addition, the interns reached out within their own networks to promote and share information about the municipal election and RCV. They were able to assist students who lived on campus to register to vote with the University address and directed students to the Vote Minneapolis website to find further information. Utilizing the many skills and talents of these interns allowed for tailoring the Voter Ambassador program to fit the needs of student organizations at the University of Minnesota while maintaining the goals of the Election division. They were able to creatively present current and local issues to University students and also demonstrated the importance of voting in local elections.

During their internship, these students created original content relevant to university students and also created content focused on individuals who did not have a permanent residence or address. The content that was created during their internship has enriched the Voter Ambassador program by giving the Elections division a useful tool for attracting and targeting university students for future elections.

❖ ADVERTISING

Voter outreach and education efforts included three especially notable no or very low cost advertising opportunities in the weeks leading up to the election. First, bus cards (*pictured at left*) were designed and produced to be placed in the interior of Metro Transit routes running through Minneapolis. Approximately 50 cards were placed by Metro Transit without cost beyond the production of the physical materials. Second, available space on Clear Channel digital billboards was donated to display election-related messaging. Finally, the Communications Department put together a 30-second public service announcement about the election and RCV which was aired during donated broadcast time on

Comcast.

❖ **CANDIDATE & PUBLIC INFORMATION FORUMS**

New in 2013, the Elections & Voter Services Division conducted a total of three informational forums: two specifically geared toward candidates and campaign representatives (August 14 and September 25, both at City Hall), and one for the community at-large, including candidates and campaign representatives, the news media, and the general public (October 29, at Central Library). At the first forum, staff provided information about required candidate filings and disclosures, City resources, an overview of Ranked-Choice Voting, and responded to candidate/campaign questions. At the second forum, staff demonstrated the RCV tabulation process and responded to candidate/campaign questions. At the public forum on October 29, staff provided an overview of Ranked-Choice Voting and again demonstrated the RCV tabulation process, reviewed various voter resources provided by the City, and outlined what candidates, voters, and the news media could expect on Election Day and the following days as tabulations were completed.

VIII. POST-ELECTION SURVEY

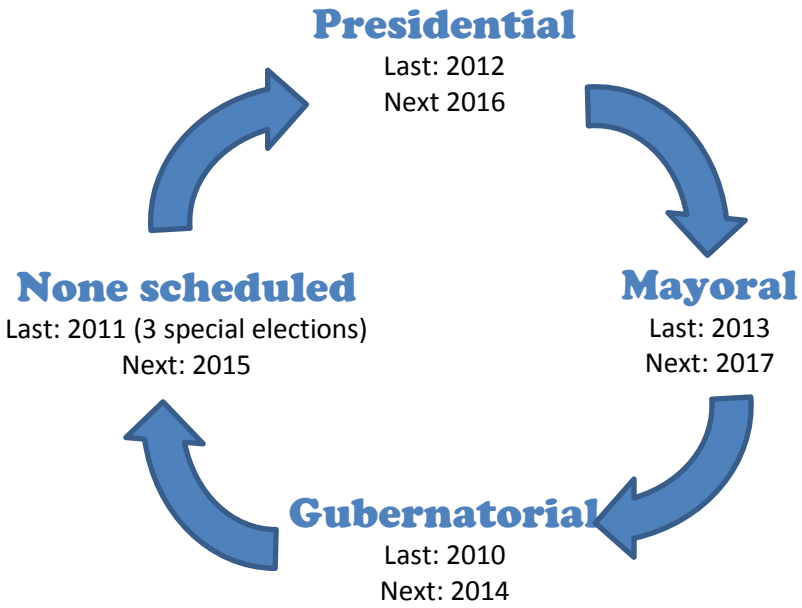
A robust post-election survey was conducted of voters, non-voters, election judges, and candidates in the 2013 municipal election. The objective was to mirror to the degree possible the post-election survey conducted in 2009, in order to provide an apples-to-apples comparison of the experiences of stakeholders in the first two municipal elections using Ranked-Choice Voting.

The 2009 survey was conducted by The SCSU Survey, a survey research center of St. Cloud State University. Elections staff contacted SCSU about conducting the 2013 survey; however, SCSU lacked the necessary resources to conduct the survey in 2013. Other potential vendors were identified, and the Elections & Voter Services Division contracted with The Morris Leatherman Company, a Minneapolis-based, full-service market and research firm, to conduct the 2013 survey, replicating the 2009 survey to the greatest extent possible.

The report presented by The Morris Leatherman Company is included in this report as Exhibit A. The report includes summary results of: the telephone survey conducted of 800 residents who voted in the 2013 election and 500 residents who did not vote, the written surveys completed by election judges who served in polling places on Election Day, and written surveys completed by candidates on the 2013 municipal ballot. Cross tabulations of the voter survey results against demographic data collected are also included, as is the analysis of these results completed by the investigator for this study.

IX. FINANCIALS

In 2013, the Elections Division, at the direction of the City Council's Elections Committee, developed budget recommendations projected against the regular, four-year election cycle. More so than other municipal functions, the cost of elections varies dramatically from year to year, influenced by many factors, including the type of election, ballot races and questions, voter engagement and turnout, among others. Thus, most jurisdictions have learned to budget according to the election cycle; in Minneapolis, this includes the presidential – mayoral – gubernatorial – and unplanned (none scheduled), as shown in the graphic below.



A. 2013 Municipal Election Budget

The following chart provides a breakdown of the requested funding, approved operating budget, and the actual expenditures associated with the 2013 Municipal Election.

ACTUAL, REQUESTED AND BUDGETED 2013			
EXPENSE CATEGORIES	REQUESTED	APPROVED	ACTUAL
CORE BUDGET	$700,000	$700,000	$636,934
SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS	$385,800	$100,000	$346,732
ELECTION EXPENSES	$598,646	$498,464	$773,272
TOTALS	**$1,684,446**	**$1,298,646**	**$1,756,938**

This chart shows actual expenditures were slightly above the original budget request, by approximately 4%. However, actual expenditures were significantly higher than the approved operating budget, by approximately 35%. Given this significant difference in approved budget versus actual expenditures, it is worth examining some of the major factors which contributed to this overage (*detailed in the following pages*).

B. Significant 2013 Budgetary Impacts

1) VOTER GUIDE MAILED TO EVERY MINNEAPOLIS HOUSEHOLD ($97,536)

The full Voter Outreach & Education Plan (*described elsewhere in this report*) was a key component of—and a contributing factor to—the preparations for and conduct of the successful 2013 Municipal Election. Indeed, the success of the City's multi-pronged outreach and education plan can be measured by the high percentage of voters (81%) who reported that they understood Ranked-Choice Voting "perfectly well" or "fairly well" before reaching the polling place. More importantly, nearly two-thirds of all voters indicated they learned about RCV through just one component of the voter outreach campaign—the voter guide that was mailed to every household in the city.

Voting is one of the most significant ways for citizens to engage and participate in their community, to influence important policy decisions, and to select individuals to represent and give voice to their needs, priorities, and concerns at national, state, and local levels. Consequently, a substantial investment in voter outreach and education should be considered a core component of every election. The experiences associated with the 2013 Municipal Election, however, emphasize the need for dedicated education funds since voters only use RCV once in each four-year election cycle. Plus, during the intervening four years, new voters from the ranks of new residents and first-time voters will increase the number of potential voters needing to be educated about Ranked-Choice Voting and its unique processes. Because the mailer to every household was demonstrably the most effective single piece of outreach work done by the City in 2013, Elections staff recommends that it be repeated in future municipal election years, requiring additional funding be allocated for this in those years.

2) RANKED-CHOICE VOTING SURVEY ($48,000 = $32,000 IN 2013 AND $16,000 TO BE BILLED IN 2014)

As in 2009, the Elections & Voter Services Division contracted with an outside agency to survey voters, non-voters, election judges, and candidates about their experiences in the 2013 Municipal Election. The insights gained from that survey will help inform future improvements, especially in regards to refinements in voter outreach, engagement, and education strategies as well as to adapt election judge training to better address voters' needs. Comparing survey results from year-to-year will also help identify trends in these areas.

3) CONNIE SCHMIDT, CONSULTANT ($48,591)

Schmidt worked closely with the City's Elections & Voter Services Division throughout the year, providing input in several aspects of election administration. For detail on her work and observations, see Section X: November 2013 Municipal Election Analysis and Exhibit B.

4) INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS OF NEW VOTING SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY FOR RANKED-CHOICE VOTING FREEMAN, CRAFT, MCGREGOR GROUP, CONSULTANT ($38,202)

The City engaged Freeman, Craft, McGregor Group, Inc. (FCMG), to conduct an independent analysis of the export utility feature of the new voting system purchased by Hennepin County which produced the Cast Vote Record (CVR) data file. This data file was essential in streamlining the City's tabulation processes; however, because no standards exist related to that utility, it was not possible for the City to secure federal or state certification for that particular component. Having tested the system's export utility and audited the City's entire tabulation process, FCMG found that "[t]he procedures used by the City to tabulate results using the RCV export file are adequate to the task. These procedures are preferable to hand tabulation in that Excel's ability to sort data eliminates the need to continually sort and resort the actual ballots as required by a hand count. When the process is complete, the Excel worksheet also provides an entirely transparent audit trail."

FCMG's full report was appended as an exhibit to the reported entitled *The 2013 Municipal Election: A Report on Final Plans & Preparations*, presented to the City Council's Elections Committee on October 30, 2013.

5) TECHNOLOGY-RELATED COSTS ($29,100)

The Elections Division incurred higher-than-usual technology-related expenses in 2013. Charges for RCV-specific requirements included: set-up and maintenance of secure network storage for RCV tabulation files; set-up and technical support for the operation of the tabulation center (in the 911 Call Center training room), including computer rental and support for live streaming video; on-site support for immediate results publication to the elections website; and computer rental for RCV training for the tabulation team. Additional technology costs not directly related to RCV included: set-up and technical support for computers in the City Hall rotunda to accommodate high volumes of in-person absentee voters; technical improvements to the Elections Management System database; an expanded Election Day call center to enhance headquarters operations, including connectivity and communications with all 117 polling places and precinct support judges; and GIS support to provide voters clearer information related to the location of their polling place and precinct boundaries. While the RCV-related expenses incurred in 2013 can be expected to occur only in municipal election years, the non-RCV technology costs should be considered on-going expenses required to improve service levels to voters and improve administrative efficiency in conducting elections.

6) CONTRACT LABOR AND LABOR FROM OTHER DIVISIONS ($77,723)

The Elections Division has only 5 permanent, full-time employees (including the director position), which is less than the average for similar-sized municipalities. Minneapolis is the largest and most-populated city in the state which boasts the highest voter engagement in the nation. In fact, Minneapolis accounts for 1 of every 13 registered voters in Minnesota. The Elections Division already makes heavy use of seasonal/temporary workers; however, some tasks are better handled by permanent employees. Consequently, the Elections & Voter Services Division relies upon the contributions of employees from other departments. In 2013, significant engagement from employees in the City Clerk's Office (not in the Elections Division) and the Communications, Information Technology, and Neighborhood & Community Relations departments, as well as a number of contractual employees, were needed to ensure a successful election. The hours spent by these employees outside the Elections Division was charged against the Elections budget. While much of this additional help was driven by the goal of providing excellent service to voters in a municipal election, including the need to educate voters about RCV, a significant portion of the work performed should be considered on-going requirements in any election year.

7) PUBLICATION OF PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT – PLAIN LANGUAGE REVISION ($69,545)

In the 2013 election, voters were presented with two related ballot questions, both pertaining to a proposed Plain Language Revision submitted by the Minneapolis Charter Commission. Under state law[20], such amendments must be published in full in the official newspaper of the municipality. The statute goes on to require that cities of the first class must publish such amendments in a newspaper having an aggregate, regular-paid circulation of at least 25,000 copies. Thus, the City of Minneapolis was required—by law—to publish the entire text of the Plain Language Charter Revision in both its official newspaper, *Finance & Commerce*, and the *Star Tribune*, a paper having an aggregate, regular-paid circulation of at least 25,000 copies. Publication of the entire text is mandated for two consecutive weeks prior to the date of the election. The notices were published in *Finance & Commerce* on October 22 and October 29, and in the *Star Tribune* on October 21and October 28.

[20] Minn. Stat. § 410.10, subd. 2

The total fiscal impact for legal publication of the Plain Language Charter Revision in both *Finance & Commerce* and the *Star Tribune* was $69,545.

8) NEW ELECTION WEBSITE ($8,960)

A new elections website was designed and launched for the 2013 Municipal Election with the help of an outside contractor, Lynn Brun, of Brun Winter Reese Communications (BWR Communications). The new website has a modern look and is visually appealing, in more intuitively organized according to the type of user (candidate, voter, election judge, media, etc.), and incorporates new social media tools that were used for the first time last year. According to the voter survey commissioned by the City, nearly one-quarter of respondents said they learned about Ranked-Choice Voting through the City's new elections website. Additionally, Minneapolis 311 makes extensive use of the elections website to answer questions. Having an up-to-date website serves the public and reduces the number of public inquiries staff must handle.

9) POLLING PLACE SUPPLY TOTES ($19,876)

With the new voting equipment purchased in 2013 came a change in how supplies are shipped to polling places. The old ballot boxes were fabricated with a heavy metal that was strong enough to hold the 75 pounds of supplies (including ballots) that must be distributed to each polling place in advance of Election Day. The new ballot boxes are fabricated from thick plastic and have a much lower weight capacity. Consequently, the Elections Division was challenged to come up with a creative way to package and deliver polling place supplies. New supply totes were purchased to meet this need. While these new supply totes do not constitute an on-going expense, they will need to be replaced at some future date due to normal wear and tear.

The foregoing unplanned expenditures represent a total fiscal impact of $410,194. If these expenditures were eliminated, the actual costs for the 2013 Municipal Election would have been $1,346,744, which is significantly closer to the approved operating budget. Obviously, some of these expenses were outside the division's control, such as the publication costs associated with the Plain Language Charter Revision; some were necessitated by outside factors, such as the need to purchase new polling place supply totes because of a change in the manufacture of new voting equipment. As noted above, however, many of these expenses reflect investments in improved voter service and administration of a core government function—free and fair elections that enable all voters to participate in their communities.

C. Financing Elections

In response to previous direction from the Elections Committee, staff had proposed dividing the elections budget into three broad categories:[21]

1. Core Expenses;
2. Election Expenses; and
3. Supplemental Expenses.

"*Core expenses*" encompass fixed operating costs required to maintain a stable Elections unit. This includes the permanent staff, office equipment and supplies, warehouse, technology and operating systems, voting equipment leases, self-insurance fund, etc. Core expenses are generally stable from year to year.

"*Election expenses*" are those which directly result from and can be attributed back to the requirements of planning and conducting a specific election. This category of expenditures would include such items as the cost of temporary/seasonal labor and election judges, administering absentee balloting, rental agreements for

[21] This proposal was outlined in a report to the Elections Committee dated February 27, 2013.

polling places and polling place supplies, and any other expense incurred as the result of a regular or special election.

"*Supplemental expenses*" offset the financial impact of unplanned events, or planned events that are not the direct result of a regular or special election and not otherwise budgeted as part of the core expense budget. Although the exact event or item funded by this expenditure category may not be known at the beginning of the year, the City has a history of using contingency funds for election-related purposes. The chart below demonstrates this trend over the past seven years, in which supplemental funds have been required.

Need for Supplemental Funds 2008-present	
Year	**Event(s)**
2008	U.S. Senate recount
2009	Ranked-Choice Voting (implementation and voter education)
2010	Gubernatorial recount
2011	3 Special Elections: Senate District 59, Senate District 61, and House District 61B
2012	Presidential: hand-count of three precincts
2013	Ranked-Choice Voting (equipment, training, and voter education)
2014	Special election - County Commissioner District 3

Based on the staff's recommended budget formula, the projected four-year operating budget for the Elections & Voter Services Division (2014-2017) is shown below.

PROJECTED MULTI-YEAR ELECTION OPERATING BUDGET (2014-2017)				
ELECTION YEAR/CYCLE →	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
EXPENSE CATEGORIES ↓	**GUBERNATORIAL**	**UNSCHEDULED**	**PRESIDENTIAL**	**MAYORAL**
CORE BUDGET	$700,000	$700,000	$700,000	$700,000
ELECTION EXPENSES	$525,000	$50,000[22]	$700,000	$700,000
SUPPLEMENTAL EXPENSES	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000
TOTALS	**$1,425,000**	**$950,000**	**$1,600,000**	**$1,600,000**

(All figures in constant 2013 dollars)

[22] The budget year that does not have a scheduled regular election has a base election specific cost of $50,000. The election unit's primary function during this year is preparation of the next four-year cycle, including strategic planning for voter education and outreach, evaluating and enhancing training materials, logistical analyses of all aspects of deploying an election, evaluation of precincts and polling places, and staff professional development and training.

X. NOVEMBER 2013 MUNICIPAL ELECTION ANALYSIS

As an additional effort to secure outside expertise for the 2013 election preparations, the Elections & Voter Services Division contracted with Connie Schmidt to consult on business processes, systems, and potential improvements during the year-long planning period. Schmidt is an associate and adjunct faculty member with the National Association of Election Officials (Election Center), a non-profit organization that provides training and professional certification for election administrators throughout the United States. She also works for the United States Election Assistance Commission, an independent, bipartisan federal commission charged with developing standards and guidance for complying with requirements under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002, including voluntary voting system guidelines. The US EAC serves as a national clearinghouse for information, industry best practices, and professional support on elections 25 administration, and is the federal accrediting agency for election system testing laboratories which certify voting systems. Schmidt received the National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award for Outstanding Service to American Democracy and was inducted into the Election Center's Hall of Fame for election administrators.

Schmidt has worked closely with the City's Elections team throughout the year, providing input on several process improvements, including the ordinance amendments which were approved by City Council, and the acquisition of the new voting equipment, as well as initiatives associated with the City's Voter Outreach & Education Program, election judge recruitment and training, and vote tabulation and reporting. She also has been involved in workflow design (and re-design) and documentation, plans related to polling place management improvements, absentee balloting processes, and post-election auditing.

Schmidt has submitted a report (Exhibit B) of her findings and observations of the Elections & Voter Services Division's performance in operating efficiently and effectively and in compliance with legal and policy requirements. This comprehensive report also identifies areas in need of further improvements with recommendations for council consideration.

The recommendations include:

- A minimum increase of two full time staff and one assistant to the Director of Elections , together with revised position descriptions and required skill sets for all election team positions
- A consolidation of all Election Division functions (public service, administration, training, and warehousing) into one physical location.
- A four year budget that reflects the financial needs of the election cycle including a contingency fund to cover special election or other unique situations such as legislative changes that arise in election administration.

Schmidt's report mentions a stated goal of the Division in 2013 to become the "Gold Standard" in the execution of a ranked choice voting election, a goal Schmidt believes was reached. This standard can be maintained in all elections by seizing opportunities for reinvestment in election administration.

As the recent Report of the Presidential Election Commission details, "[t]he electorate seeks above all modern, efficient, and responsive administrative performance in the conduct of elections…". Serving Minneapolis voters requires a sufficient number of skilled staff with adequate financial, technological, and physical resources.

XI. SUMMARY OF NEW INITIATIVES & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. RCV Recommendations for 2017

❖ CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF "TABULATION CENTER" IN THE ORDINANCE

It is standard practice, and required by law, that when ballots are being counted in a hand count or recount that the counting process be observable by the public.[23] The City's RCV ordinance includes a similar requirement, but does so in an overly broad way. As written, the RCV tabulation center "must be accessible to the public for the purpose of observing the vote tabulation."[24] This language, while applicable to a full hand-count, as done in 2009, does not address the improved process of RCV tabulation used in 2013, which did not involve the handling of ballots. In 2013, vote data was extracted and processed using an Excel spreadsheet which mirrored the hand-count process. Elections staff recommends this language be amended to specify that the tabulation center be open for public observation only when paper ballots are actually being handled.

The tabulation process in Excel is an extraordinarily detailed procedure that must be precisely followed to ensure that accurate results are obtained. A secure, quiet workspace free from distractions is essential to allow tabulators to complete their work in an accurate and timely way. The procedures implemented in 2013 are akin to the administrative processing of vote data which occurs in other (non-RCV) elections; in those cases, a substantial amount of data entry is required despite automated ballot counters, and the work is conducted in a secured (non-public) environment. Staff contends that the RCV tabulation processes, as implemented in 2013, should be treated in the same manner to ensure the accuracy of the results released. Public viewing should be restricted to full hand counts when ballots are being counted.[25]

❖ AMEND THE PROCESS OF MATHEMATICAL ELIMINATION

In Ranked-Choice Voting, mathematical elimination of a candidate is the process of comparing a candidate's potential vote total to the actual vote total of the candidate with the next greater number of votes. This process is carried out in each round and determines if it is possible for multiple candidates to be defeated in a single round. The current ordinance specifies the potential vote total of a candidate in such a way that does not take advantage of all the ballot information available from the voting equipment; the language still reflects the manual process from 2009 that addressed a full hand-count of actual ballots. In an RCV hand count, a vote is assigned to each ballot's first-choice candidate. Lower rankings on a ballot are examined only if the first choice candidate is defeated. Using the new voting equipment and the exportable Cast Vote Record (CVR) data file, it is possible to more thoroughly examine the full range of voter preferences on all ballots.

The table on the next page provides an example of how the process works under the language of the existing RCV ordinance.

[23] Minn. Stat. §

[24] Minneapolis Code of Ordinances 167.40

[25] To assure transparency, round-by-round results would still be made available as each round is completed for public viewing on web and posted in City Hall.

Candidate	Actual Vote Total	Potential Vote Total	Round status
Frank	147	--	Continuing
Ina	93	433	Continuing
Edna	79	340	Continuing
Agatha	65	261	Continuing
Jethro	54	196	Continuing
Howard	38	142	Continuing
Becky	37	104	Continuing
Gladys	34	67	Continuing
Cynthia	20	33	Defeated
Delmont	13	--	Defeated

As the candidate with the lowest number of votes, Delmont is defeated. To determine if the next lowest candidate, Cynthia, can be defeated we calculate her potential vote total. Because it is theoretically possible that all the ballots that have Delmont as a first choice have Cynthia as a second choice we add the 13 votes from Delmont to the 20 Cynthia already has. This gives her a potential vote total of 33. We then compare Cynthia's potential vote total (33) to the actual vote total of the next highest candidate, Gladys, who has 34. Because Cynthia's best case scenario doesn't allow her to pass the candidate in front of her, Cynthia is defeated in this round with Delmont.

Moving up the chart, Gladys could possibly receive all 33 votes from the defeated candidates below her, giving her a potential vote total of 67. Gladys's potential vote total is higher than the next ranked candidate's vote total (Becky, 37), so Gladys is not defeated in this round. These steps are repeated all the way up the chart in each round to determine which candidate(s) are defeated.

Under the existing tabulation process, each of these steps—in sequence—are necessary because the ordinance assumes that no further data is known about a voter's second and third-choice candidates and does not address the impact of lower rankings on defeated candidates until those ballots are sorted, as in a full hand-count process. This was an oversight in process improvements that were recommended in advance of the 2013 Municipal Election, largely due to the fact that the City had no prior experience with the new voting equipment and was, therefore, unfamiliar with the capabilities the new equipment had for more rapidly tabulating results.

With the new voting equipment, it is possible to consider first, second, and third-choice rankings in a more holistic manner, rather than focusing exclusively on specific choices at each round of tabulation to determine if one or more candidates can be eliminated based on the mathematical formula. So, when the new ballot counters are used, it is possible to quickly determine how many votes were cast for each candidate at each available ranking. Considering the previous example again, but with additional ranking information provided by new tabulators, it is possible to expedite the tabulation process to determine a winner.

Candidate	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Sum All Choices	Round Status
Frank	147	81	37	265	Continuing
Ina	93	87	67	247	Continuing
Edna	79	55	49	183	Continuing
Agatha	65	67	35	167	Continuing
Jethro	54	50	58	162	Continuing
Howard	38	17	16	71	Defeated
Becky	37	20	22	79	Defeated
Gladys	34	33	37	104	Defeated
Cynthia	20	26	25	71	Defeated
Delmont	13	13	15	41	Defeated

In this example, Frank received a total of 147 first-choice votes—the highest number of all the candidates. In examining all votes across first, second, and third choice rankings, it is clear that the four lowest-ranked candidates—Becky, Gladys, Cynthia, and Delmont—cannot possibly meet or exceed the total number of first-choice votes for Frank, even with all rankings summed across the three choices. Given this additional level of data, it is possible to determine that Becky, Gladys, Cynthia, and Delmont can all be mathematically eliminated in a single round of tabulation. Because the new voting equipment can provide this fuller understanding of voter preferences—which was not available in the 2009 hand-count process—it is possible to further streamline the tabulation process, produce results in less time, and still achieve an accurate final outcome.

If this process improvement had been in place for the 2013 Municipal Election, 32 of the 35 mayoral candidates (91%) could have been defeated in the first round of tabulation. Staff estimates that the complete results for mayoral race could have been available in the early afternoon the next day after Election Day (Wednesday, November 6). Instead, as was heavily reported in the news media, the mayoral race was tabulated over two 12-hour days and final results were not released until late in the second day following the election (Thursday, November 7). While mathematically sound, this improved method cannot currently be used because the hand-count method described earlier is specified in the ordinance. Therefore, staff recommends an amendment to allow for the faster tabulation process using new voting equipment whenever possible.

❖ **INCREASE THE FILING FEE TO BE ON THE BALLOT**

A record 35 mayoral candidates appeared on the 2013 ballot. Having so many candidates for one race on the ballot is deleterious, both for voters and for election administrators. The top complaint in the weeks leading up to Election Day in 2013 was the large number of mayoral candidates. Some problems that result from this high number of candidates include:

1. A ballot printed in smaller type in order to fit all candidates on same page, affecting voters with less than perfect eyesight;
2. Anecdotal reports of voters considering not voting in the election due to difficultly researching all the candidates; and
3. A significant increase in the time needed to obtain final results.

Lowering the bar and making access to the ballot too easy does not necessarily serve voters' needs or interests. As an example, 26 of the 35 mayoral candidates on the 2013 ballot received less than 1% of all first-choice votes, out of more than 80,000 ballots cast. Yet, tabulation of that single race required 25 rounds (in 17 hours) before a candidate with more than 1% of the first choice votes was ultimately defeated. Conversely, the top five vote-getters in the mayoral race received more than 85% of first-choice votes.

The public reasonably expects candidates to display a certain level of public support in order to appear on the ballot. Requiring a candidate to pay a filing fee higher than the current fee of $20 (or allowing ballot access if they reach a certain number of signatures on a candidacy petition[26]) achieves this goal. Consequently, the Elections & Voter Services Division supports the proposal offered by the Minneapolis Charter Commission to increase municipal filing fees.

B. Process Improvement Recommendations: 2014 & Beyond

In addition to the proposed Ranked-Choice Voting ordinance amendments outlined above, and in anticipation of the next four-year election cycle and beyond, the Elections & Voter Services is planning or recommending additional process improvements, summarized below. Those items highlighted in blue text would require formal authorization by the City Council.

1. **Clarify the definition of "tabulation center" in the RCV ordinance.**
2. **Amend the process of mathematical elimination as described in the RCV ordinance.**
3. **Increase the municipal filing fee(s).**
4. **Authorize additional precincts and polling places, or changes in polling places, as recommended by staff (at a future date).**
5. Cross-train and seek to develop all leadership, team, and student election judge to enhance the performance of all serving in the City's corps of election judges.
6. Continue and expand efforts to diversify the City's corps of election judges, including efforts to identify, recruit, and train bilingual (multi-lingual) election judges and expand the Adopt-A-Polling Place program.
7. Develop a Minneapolis-specific Election Judge Manual.
8. Finalize plans to implement and prepare for the first use of "no-excuse" absentee voting in the 2014 Gubernatorial Election, including improved service to absentee voters in the new office space (City Hall, Room 201) and the City Hall Rotunda as an in-person absentee polling place.
9. Continue and expand the Voter Outreach & Education Program for all election types in the four-year cycle, not just the municipal election. In particular, focus on engaging populations that have historically had lower voter participation rates. For municipal elections, focus on emphasizing the importance of city elections and their direct impact on the quality of life standards and governance of the community.
10. Form a Ballot Design Workgroup to identify and address ballot design, layout, and formatting issues specific to Ranked-Choice Voting in order to provide greater options and flexibility in future municipal elections.

[26] Minn. Stat. § 204B.11, subd. 2

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Report presented to:
Minneapolis City Council
Standing Committee on Elections – The Hon. Jacob Frey, Chair
Tuesday, March 25, 2014

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Recognitions
The Elections & Voter Services Unit gratefully acknowledges the participation and contribution of several partners who are engaged in preparations for a successful 2013 Municipal Election:

- The Hon. Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State
- Secretary of State's Elections Division
- Hennepin County Elections Team
- Minneapolis Election Judges & Seasonal Staff
- The City of Minneapolis Urban Scholars – Class of 2013
- Connie J. Schmidt, election consultant
- Freeman, Craft, McGregor Group, Inc. (Paul Craft and Kate McGregor, principals)
- FairVote Minnesota (Jeanne Massey, executive director)
- Election Systems & Software
- Minneapolis City Departments:
  - Communications
  - Community Planning & Economic Development
  - Finance & Property Services
  - Information Technology
  - Minneapolis 311
  - Neighborhood & Community Relations

Minneapolis
City of Lakes

The 2017 Municipal Election: An Analysis & Recommendations

Minneapolis City Council
Standing Committee on Elections & Rules

May 9, 2018

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I. Executive Summary

More than 105,000 Minneapolitans voted in the 2017 Municipal Election, the highest turnout in twenty years for an odd-year, local-only election, representing 42.45 percent participation.[1] The 2017 election marked the City's third experience with Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV). The entire election was tabulated and unofficial results announced for all races by 7:14 p.m. November 8, less than 24 hours of polls closing at 8 p.m. on November 7.

Minneapolis experienced an increase in the number of ballots cast before Election Day, reflecting national trends favoring convenience alternatives like In-Person Absentee Voting (IPV), Direct Balloting, and Vote-By-Mail (VBM). Nevertheless, the vast majority of voters—at 89 percent—cast ballots at polls on Election Day, indicating a clear preference for the traditional manner of voting at an assigned poll on the date of the general election.

Post-election polling showed the majority of voters in 2017 primarily self-identified as Caucasian with higher levels of education and income from the City's western and southern neighborhoods. Eligible but non-participating residents were more likely to self-identify as American Indian or Multi-Racial with lower levels of education and income, largely residing in neighborhoods located in north and central areas of the city. Polling also showed voters and non-voters alike were aware of the City's use of RCV for municipal elections and were prepared to rank their preferences, if any. Finally, post-election polling revealed a diminishing gap between those who favored the use of RCV and those opposed to it compared to prior years.

This report summarizes experiences and lessons learned from the 2017 Municipal Election.

II. RCV: Systems, Procedures & Improvements

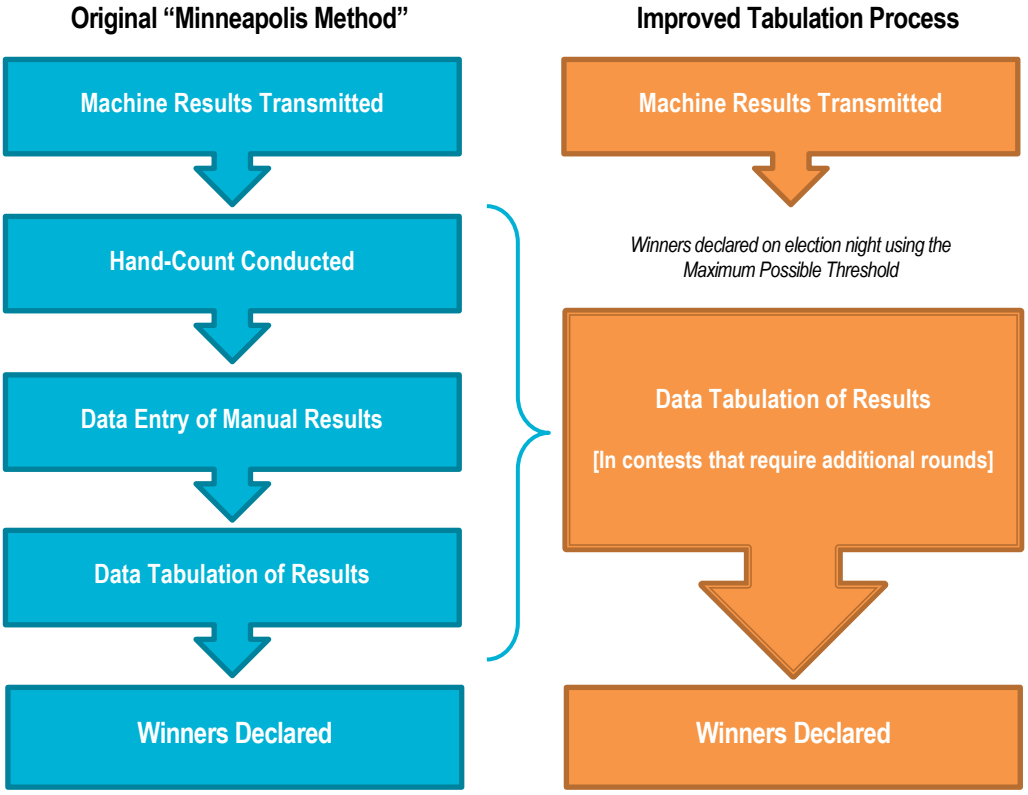
In 2006, Minneapolis voters approved the use of RCV to elect its municipal offices, a total of 22 seats on the ballot each regular election cycle. RCV was first used in 2009, which required a full hand-count to tabulate results because no automated systems were available that were compliant with federal certification standards. That first year, with a voter turnout of 45,968 (roughly 20 percent), a period of 15 days was required to complete the full manual tabulation process before unofficial results were announced. In 2013, using a new election system combined with policy refinements aimed at streamlining procedures, final unofficial results were announced in all races within 3 days, despite an increase in voter turnout to 80,099 (roughly 33 percent). In 2017, Minneapolis experienced a significant increase in voter turnout, serving 105,928 voters (roughly 42 percent), and all results were announced within 24 hours of polls closing on election night.

2009	2013	2017
Est. Population = 385,378	Est. Population = 400,137	Est. Population = 421,498
Absentee Period = Oct. 2 – Nov. 2	Absentee Period = Sep. 20 – Nov. 4	Absentee Period = Sep. 22 – Nov. 6
Absentee Total = 1,619 / 4%	Absentee Total = 4,954 /6%	Absentee Total = 11,975 / 11%
Election Day = November 3	Election Day = November 5	Election Day = November 7
Election Day Total = 44,349 / 96%	Election Day Total = 75,145 / 94%	Election Day Total = 93,953 / 89%
EDR = 2,950 / 6%	EDR = 6,634 / 8%	EDR = 9,762 / 9%
Turnout = 45,968 / 20%	Turnout = 80,099 / 33%	Turnout = 105,928 / 42%

[1] Minneapolis calculates turnout based on the percentage of registered voters participating, not on percentage of estimated voting age population.

A. Voting System & Equipment

In 2017, Minneapolis once again used the ElectionWare® voting system from Election Systems & Software, Inc. (ES&S) originally purchased by Hennepin County in April 2013. This system produces an exportable Cast Vote Record (CVR) data file that streamlines tabulation processes and eliminates the need for a manual count of all ballots. Using this exportable data file, tabulation teams are able to digitally replicate the detailed steps of the *Minneapolis Method* of processing RCV ballots, as illustrated below.[2]



The most time-consuming and costly components of the original process—specifically, the hand-count, manual data entry, and tabulation—have been consolidated as a result of the exportable CVR data file. This enables teams to begin data tabulation immediately, achieving substantial time and cost savings, both in 2013 and again in 2017.

While the exportable data file streamlined and expedited tabulation processes, it is important to emphasize that, in 2017, more than a decade after Minneapolis adopted RCV, there were no fully-automated solutions available to tabulate an RCV election. The lack of certified equipment in itself creates a significant burden to the adoption of alternative vote methods, like RCV, by other jurisdictions, and potentially isolates Minneapolis in terms of ever gaining access to a fully-automated system.

In Minnesota, voting systems must meet certification standards set by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission[3] (EAC) and by the Minnesota Secretary of State, the State's chief election official.[4] The new voting system and equipment purchased by Hennepin County in 2013 is certified for use in Minnesota. However, neither the EAC nor the State of Minnesota have standards for the vote transfers and tabulation processes unique to RCV. The EAC last adopted standards for voting systems in 2005, the year before RCV was adopted in Minneapolis, and those standards have not yet been updated to recognize any alternative

[2] For a description of the *Minneapolis Method*, see *Status Report on Plans & Preparations for the 2013 Municipal Election*, presented June 12, 2013.

[3] The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with developing guidance to meet federal requirements established under the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). For information see its website at **www.eac.gov**.

[4] Minn. Stat. § 206.57.

voting methodology at the time of this report. As a practical consequence, as of this report, no vendor of voting equipment systems has submitted RCV tabulation software for certification. Thus, until new federal and state certification standards are adopted recognizing alternative voting methodologies, vendors are not incentivized to develop new tabulation systems, and jurisdictions, like the City of Minneapolis, whose citizenry have opted to pursue alternative voting methodologies like RCV are constrained in their ability to leverage technology for fully-automated solutions.

The CVR raw data files for the 2017 election were posted to the City's elections website and can be accessed and downloaded from that site at:
http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/results/2017/index.htm

B. Batch Elimination

The original tabulation process developed as part of the *Minneapolis Method* assumed a series of round-by-round eliminations in which the candidate receiving the lowest number of rankings would be defeated, and all ballots continuing forward would be reallocated based on voters' expressed preferences. In other words, the original method codified in ordinance assumed only a single elimination in each round of tabulation. In 2013, with 35 mayoral candidates, this round-by-round elimination process necessitated 24 hours spread between two 12-hour days to complete all 34 eliminations before an unofficial winner could be announced.

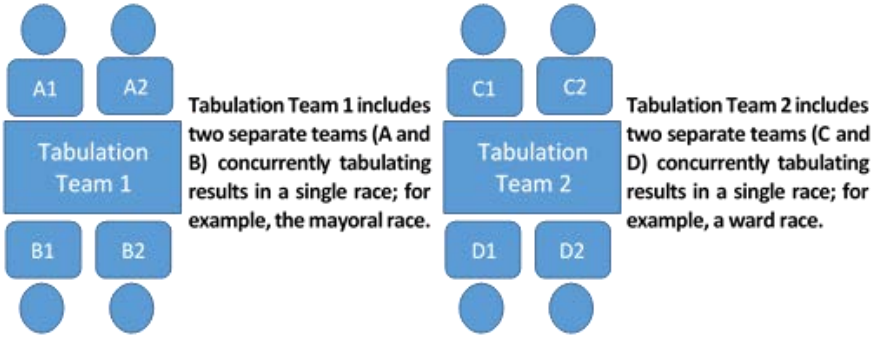
However, the CVR file makes it possible to examine the full range of voter preferences—and the cumulative totals of first, second, and third-choice rankings—for each candidate in every race on every ballot. Thus, retrospectively, in examining the full range of data available in 2013 because of the exportable data file, it would have been possible to eliminate 32 of the 35 mayoral candidates in the first round of tabulation, or approximately 91 percent of the entire field, but only if the ordinance had allowed for "batch" elimination.

Accordingly, the RCV ordinance was amended in 2014 to allow for multiple candidates to be eliminated in a single round of tabulation where it was possible, based on an assessment of the full dataset, to determine that it was mathematically impossible for those candidates to advance in further rounds of tabulation. In short, where there was no chance for multiple candidates to win an election, based on the sum of all rankings, they were collectively eliminated in a single round of tabulation.

C. Simultaneous Tabulation

In 2013, two tabulation teams worked simultaneously on a single race. This checks-and-balances was built into the core *Minneapolis Method* to ensure accuracy in every step of the process. However, a major disadvantage of tabulating only a single race at a time is the delays it creates in the timeliness of reporting unofficial results across the entire ballot, particularly when a large number of ballot races cannot be declared on election night based solely on first-choice rankings. Therefore, in 2017, the Elections & Voter Services Division (EVS) deployed two full tabulation teams working concurrently to expedite results reporting. This is best illustrated as follows—

A total of two tabulation teams (1 and 2)—each consisting of two separate units (or sub-teams: A, B, C, D)—will simultaneously process data in multiple races, leading to faster release of unofficial results across all races on the ballot.



In 2017, a total of eight tabulators, working in teams of two, completed the RCV tabulation process. Each team consisted of one tabulator who sorted, copied, and pasted results data in Microsoft Excel following detailed instructions and one tabulator who monitored and verified that each step was completed according to the instructions and that no errors were made in the process. Two teams worked simultaneously to process results in a single race, stopping at specified checkpoints to ensure a perfect match of results between teams. This built-in redundancy assured tabulation was done accurately. By increasing the number of tabulators and tabulation teams in 2017, coupled with advantages of having the entire data set available in each race, EVS was able to reduce the time to compute and post unofficial results.

III. Election Judges & Seasonal Staff

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[5] Minn. Stat. § 204B.22 requires a minimum of four judges per polling place.

IV. Voter Outreach and Education

As in prior years, the 2017 Voter Outreach & Education (VOE) program focused on assuring all voters were "election ready," thereby maximizing access to the ballot box. The VOE program consisted of a mix of traditional media, social media, an all-household mailer, and a field-based outreach team, all centered on three core messages; specifically:

1.) The basics of the 2017 Municipal Election.

CORE MESSAGE: The 2017 Municipal Election is November 7. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Verify your registration status, and register in advance if possible. If necessary, register on Election Day (with details on how to do so). Learn what will be on the ballot, including specific races and candidates.

2.) How to vote in an RCV election.

CORE MESSAGE: Instructions on properly marking an RCV ballot reflecting voter preferences. Details about voter rights and responsibilities, including assistance available to voters. Critically, repeated messaging on using a sample ballot to practice and using the sample ballot as a "guide" in the polls when marking the official ballot (allowed by state law).

3.) Voting in the municipal election matters.

CORE MESSAGE: Every vote counts—both on Election Day as well as for the next four years, and will affect the governance and direction of the community and the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the City of Minneapolis. Emphasis was placed on promoting the three ways to vote: (1) Vote-By-Mail; (2) Early In-Person; or (3) at the polls on Election Day.

The Elections team partnered with the Communications, Neighborhood & Community Relations, Information Technology, 311, and other City departments—as well as Hennepin County Elections and the Office of Secretary of State—to ensure the broadest impact possible. The Elections team also collaborated with FairVote Minnesota on outreach and education efforts to ensure consistent messaging.

A. EVS Website & Social Media

Website

The Elections & Voter Services website was the primary vehicle for public information about the election, providing a single point-of-access to accurate, up-to-date details and data. The site offers navigation based on defined user groups: voters, candidates, and election judges, with additional tabs for results, resources, and a separate section specifically focused on Ranked-Choice Voting (including a historical archive).

vote.minneapolismn.gov
www.twitter.com/votempls
www.facebook.com/votempls

Other key components of the EVS website included:

- **YOUR VOTE. YOUR GUIDE.** A quick reference guide to the key information most requested by voters, streamlining access from every page on the EVS website.
- Tools to look up or confirm voter registration status, the location of assigned polling places, and the ability to request and track the status of absentee ballots.
- Precinct-specific sample ballots—also referred to as "practice ballots"—that voters could use to determine first, second, and third choices in each race and later use as reference material in the polls on Election Day to facilitate marking the official ballot with confidence.

- A variety of information sheets with details on basic voting instructions, an interactive practice RCV ballot, and a multitude of instructional videos, brochures, and fliers demonstrating RCV ranking and tabulation processes, offered in a variety of languages.
- Copies posted in PDF format of each candidate's affidavit of candidacy, which provided the candidate's name, party affiliation or political principle, and campaign contact details.
- An all-inclusive calendar of non-partisan, election-related community events, including information about ambassador and election judge trainings.
- Voter assistance resources and a copy of the Minnesota "Voter's Bill of Rights."

Social Media

Complementing its website, EVS increased its presence through two social platforms—Twitter and Facebook—to build awareness and generate interest in the municipal election. Although both accounts had been active in prior years, the level of activity was deliberately (and significantly) enhanced in 2017, which resulted in an increase in both new followers and regular traffic to these sites, which positively reflected that concentrated effort.

Throughout the year, EVS produced original content, including videos, memes, and GIFs; often playful, sometimes provocative, and always focused on the goals of increasing awareness and participation, the messages were effective at drawing public attention to the election. The EVS social media success earned positive local and national media coverage as well, and was identified by the Center for Technology & Civic Life as an example of effective use of social media by election officials.

Examples of EVS Twitter posts and comments from the 2017 Municipal Election.

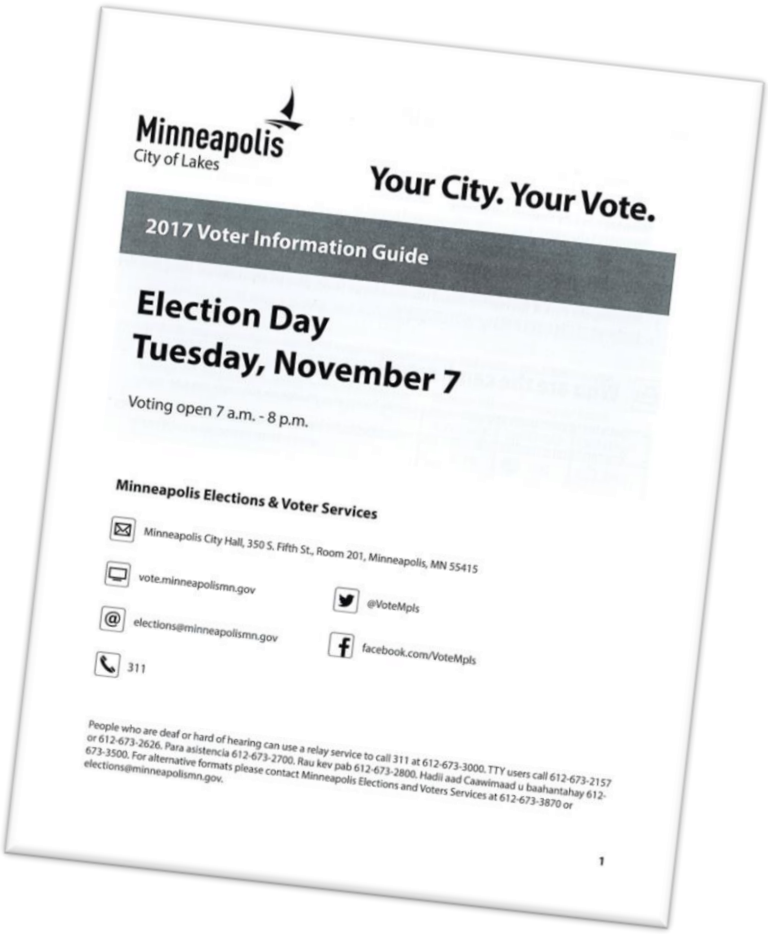
Where appropriate, these social media platforms were used to engage in two-way dialogue with the community. EVS further leveraged the power of social media by coordinating with the City Communications Department to amplify its own messages through cross-promotion on the City's primary social media accounts. This coordinated approach helped inform the electorate in a timely, user-friendly, efficient manner that was also engaging and fun.

Staff also used these social media sites on Election Day and through election night on November 7 as well as the following days during tabulation in order to provide instant updates and access to results data.

B. Voter Information Guide

EVS produced a Voter Information Guide for the 2017 Municipal Election that was sent to every household in Minneapolis. Similar guides were produced for the 2013 Municipal Election and the 2016 Presidential Election. EVS received significant positive feedback on its 2017 guide, which was identified in post-election surveys as the single most effective outreach tool, with 80 percent of all survey participants indicating that the guide was the primary source of how they learned about RCV.

The 2017 guide consisted of two 11 x 17 inch double-sided sheets folded and tabbed to streamline production and delivery by U.S.
Postal Service. Each guide included—



- Details about three methods of voting: (1) Vote-By-Mail; (2) Early In-Person; or (3) at the polls on Election Day.
- Instructions on how to register in advance or at the polls on Election Day, as well as how to access a sample ballot to review in advance.
- Key election dates, including pre-registration periods, dates for absentee (early) balloting, and information about Election Day, including voter resources and assistance, basic voting instructions, and EVS contact information.
- Descriptions of all offices on the ballot.
- Instructions on how RCV works and how to properly mark an RCV ballot.
- The location of all 132 precincts, the site of each precinct's assigned polling place, and operating hours.
- A copy of Minnesota's "Voter's Bill of Rights" as codified in Minn. Stat. § 204C.08, subd. 1d, which provides specific statutory rights and protections guaranteed to all voters.

A total of 200,000 units were produced to distribute to the 197,780 households in Minneapolis, based on amalgamated data sets provided by the City's GIS and Planning divisions. The production was timed to ensure delivery to every household in the final week leading up to Election Day, when voter awareness and interest tend to be highest and—hopefully—maximized impact.

The post-election survey of voters and non-voters showed that 85 percent identified the City's voter guide as "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful," regardless of whether they actually participated in the election. Higher scores were strongest among voters who self-identified as being between 55 and 64 years of age and those with higher educational attainment (at least college graduate). Of voters who were surveyed, 79 percent indicated that the City's guide was their primary source of information for learning about RCV and details about the municipal election. That was an increase of 14 percent from 2013.

C. National Voter Registration Day

The sixth annual National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) was Tuesday, September 26, 2017. EVS promoted NVRD through its website and social media accounts, including details about conducting a voter registration drive for interested groups. EVS partnered with Hennepin County Elections to host a voter registration table on the skyway level of the Government Center as part of NVRD and at various light rail stops.

D. Direct Contact Opportunities

EVS employed a small, part-time outreach team to create direct, face-to-face contact opportunities as a key component of the overall VOE program in 2017. The team tabled at neighborhood and community fairs and festivals; gave presentations and distributed flyers; conducted or helped organize registration drives; and partnered with organizations to promote awareness and participation, particularly among populations that have historically been under-represented and/or under-served. The team trained in July and began events in early August, working between 2 and 10 hours each week.

E. Candidate & Public Information Forum

As in 2013, the Elections & Voter Services Division conducted a public information forum designed to answer frequently-asked questions and common concerns for the community, candidates and campaigns, and the news media. The forum was held November 1 at the Hennepin County Central Library and was live-streamed via EVS social media. The forum included an overview of Ranked-Choice Voting and a demonstration of the RCV tabulation process, presented various voter resources provided by the City, and outlined what could be expected in terms of results reporting on election night and in the following days as tabulations were completed in races where unofficial winners could not be declared on election night.

V. Precincts & Polling Places

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VII. Election Day Activities

There are more than 10,000 election jurisdictions in the United States which vary dramatically in terms of size, population, community demographics, and the functions performed, with the smallest towns having only a few hundred registered voters to Los Angeles County, the nation's largest single jurisdiction serving more than 4.7 million voters.[9] Despite these differences, for every election jurisdiction in the nation Election Day is the "big show." That is when all the plans and preparations, the systems, training, and hard work over the course of many months are put into action, determining whether that election will be deemed a success or failure. Fortunately, the 2017 Municipal Election was a success. In addition to the significant impact of absentee balloting, already described, and the contributions of the Voter Outreach & Education program, Election Day 2017 provided participating voters with a largely seamless experience, as described in the following subsections.

A. Electronic Poll Books

EVS deployed Electronic Poll Books (EPBs) to all its polling places in 2017. This technology—which was purchased and is owned by Hennepin County—was used in all cities, except Minneapolis, in the 2016 Presidential Election. These devices replace the printed roster books used for voter verification and check-in at the polls on Election Day.

In partnership with Hennepin County Elections, Minneapolis EVS deployed Electronic Poll Books (EPBs) for the 2017 Municipal Election. The system was purchased by Hennepin County from KNOWiNK, a leading manufacturer of these systems.

Each EPB unit includes an iPad, stand, battery pack, and mini-printer. The iPads have limited functionality, tied specifically to the single purpose of checking, verifying, and—when necessary—registering voters. By limiting their functionality, the security of the voter data, access, and potential hacking is minimized. Because multiple devices can be interconnected and working at the same time in a single precinct, the EPBs are able to synchronize voter data in real-time throughout the day, helping ensure the integrity of the election by preventing individuals from voting more than once. Minnesota law and the Office of Secretary of State set technical requirements to ensure the safety of electronic voter data. Hennepin County certified that the EPBs it procured satisfy these security standards. In the event of a technical difficulty such as a power outage, backup paper records are available at polling places. The data on EPBs is never connected to the ballot counting machine, and the two systems function independently of one another and do not share or transfer data.

EPBs replace expensive and cumbersome roster books, which required significant effort (labor, time, and money) to produce and compile before Election Day, and an equal investment after each election to update voter history in the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS). The transition to EPB technology expedited voter check-in and verification processes in the polls and facilitated post-election data entry all while strengthening the integrity of the election and reducing overall costs.

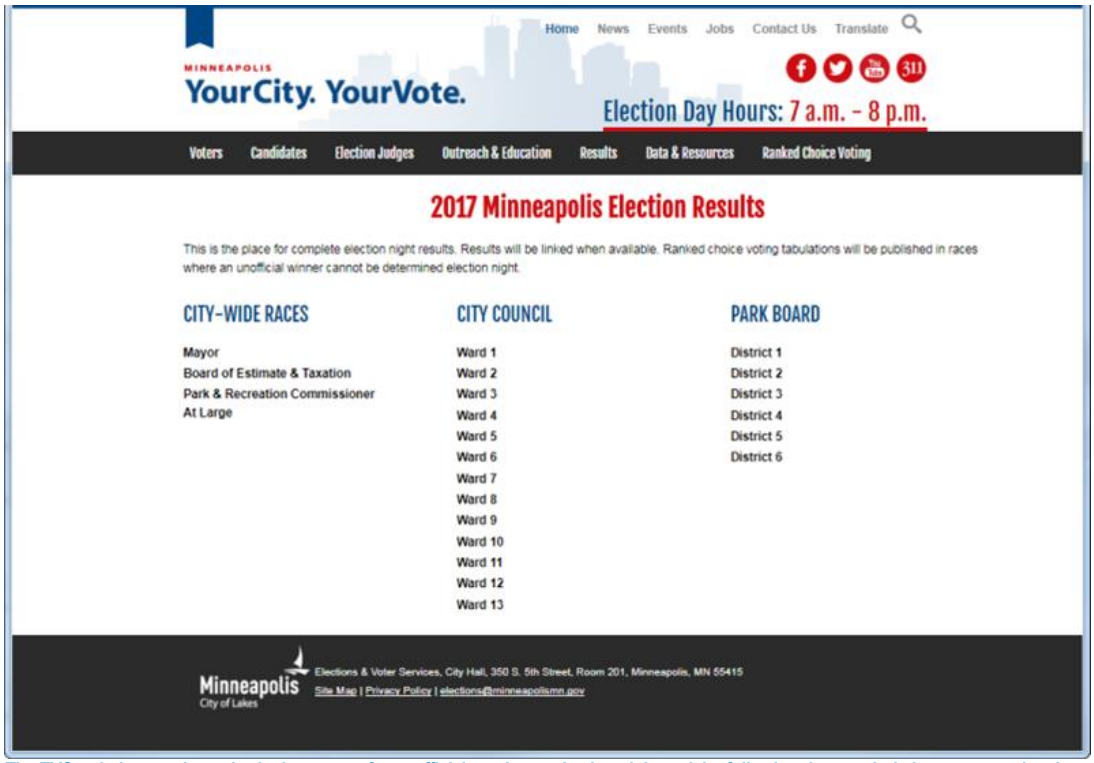
[9] From report by the National Conference of State Legislatures: **Election Administration at State and Local Levels**.

Under the terms of the agreement with Hennepin County, the EPB hardware, software, operating equipment, license, and vendor support are all provided at no cost to the City. The entire EVS team completed training provided by the vendor, KNOWiNK, and provided specialized training for the City's election judges. The EPBs performed well in the 2017 Municipal Election, and EVS is considering additional ways to leverage this new technology to further enhance voter service and poll management.

B. Results Tabulation & Reporting

At 8 p.m. on election night, polls closed and vote data was wirelessly transmitted from each of the City's 132 precincts to Hennepin County where it was merged with the absentee ballot vote data provided by EVS. An initial evaluation was conducted to determine if unofficial winners could be declared in any races based on the maximum possible threshold, as defined in the ordinance. Where possible, these unofficial winners—based only on the results of first-ranked choices in each race—were reported by EVS and also published on-line by the Office of Secretary of State at the following sites—

- **Secretary of State: http://electionresults.sos.state.mn.us**
- **Minneapolis EVS: vote.minneapolismn.gov**



The EVS website was the authoritative source for unofficial results on election night and the following day as tabulation was completed.

However, as in 2013, existing systems could not aggregate and tally results across all three ballot columns to produce results; therefore, after posting unofficial results of first-ranked choices, no further data was posted by the Office of Secretary of State. In 6 of the 22 races on the ballot, the City was able to declare unofficial winners on election night based on first-choice vote totals. In the remaining 16 races a definitive winner could not be identified only using first-ranked choices, thereby necessitating at least one round of tabulation. Tabulation began the following day, Wednesday, November 8, starting with the mayoral race.

After posting initial results from first-ranked choices, Hennepin County created a complete data file using the ElectionWare® Cast Vote Record (CVR) functionality. The CVR generates as a report in Microsoft Excel and ties together the total first, second, and third-ranked choices in each race; the total number of write-in candidates in each race; and the total number of overvotes and undervotes. This report was used for tabulation in races where a winner could not be declared. The complete CVR file, produced by Hennepin County, was received by EVS at 8:24 a.m. the next morning.

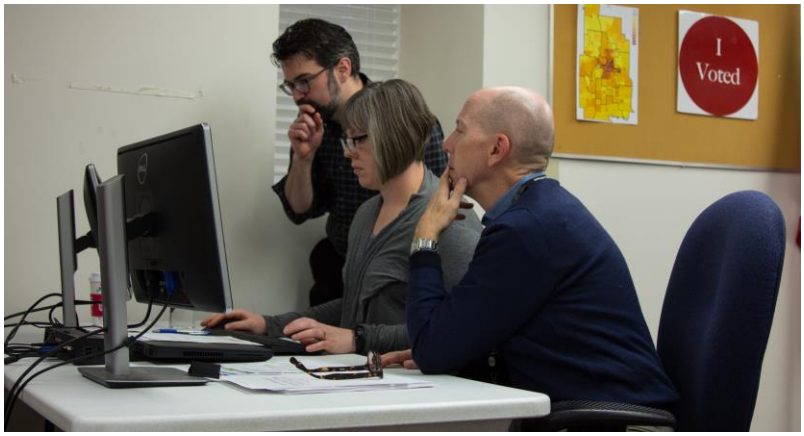
Tabulation

Tabulation for the 2017 Municipal Election began at 8:24 a.m. on Wednesday, November 8, and was conducted at the City's Early Vote Center located at 217 S. Third Street South, approximately one block northwest of City Hall. This location provided a secure, quiet work environment. Using the CVR file provided by Hennepin County, EVS first determined the threshold to declare unofficial winners in each race. Tabulation proceeded for races in the order of the ballot where an unofficial winner had not already been declared; that order was: Mayor; City Council (wards done in randomized order: 3, 9, 5, 11, 4, 1, and 6); Board of Estimate & Taxation; Park & Recreation Board At-Large; and Park & Recreation Board (districts done in randomized order: 6, 3, 5, 2, 1, and 4).

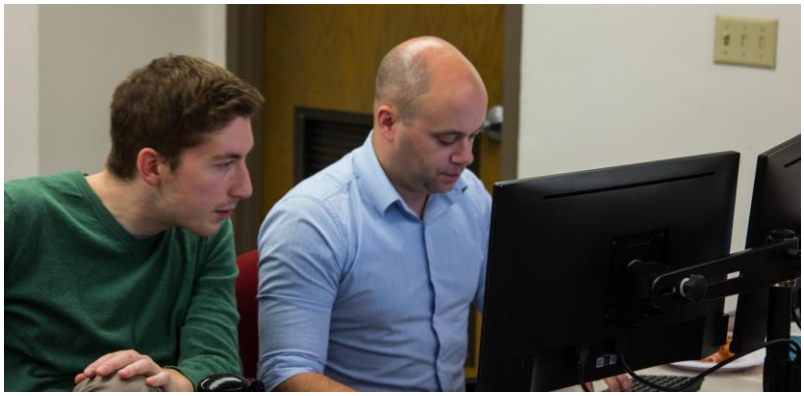
A total of eight tabulators, working in teams of two, completed tabulation, with two tabulation teams working on the same race at the same time. In each team, one tabulator was assigned the task of sorting, copying, and pasting results data in the Microsoft Excel workbook according to the detailed instructions that aligned with the tabulation process dictated by the City's RCV ordinance; the second tabulator monitored the process, verified each step was completed according to instructions, and ensured there were no errors.

All tabulation teams worked under the supervision of a tabulation team leader, who provided overall process guidance, answered questions, and flagged any problems or challenges. Assistant City Clerk Christian Rummelhoff was the tabulation team leader in 2017.

The Microsoft Excel workbook used by tabulators in 2017 was the same as in 2013 and was designed to mimic the physical counting stations which would have been used in a hand-count process of paper ballots, based on the *Minneapolis Method*. For each race, a worksheet was used to sort and transfer vote data, extracted from the CVR file. A separate results page in the workbook added the vote totals for each candidate in each round and a mathematical elimination page was used to determine which candidate(s) were defeated in each round.



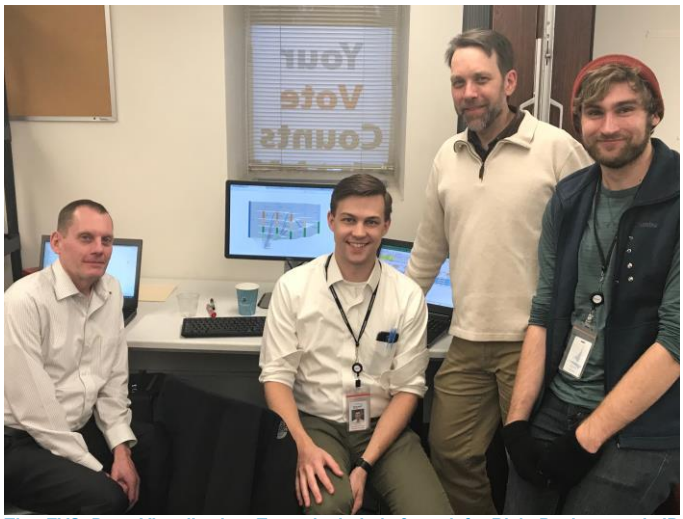
Election officials tabulating results data at the Early Vote Center on November 8, 2018. Pictured, left to right, are: Christian Rummelhoff, tabulation supervisor; tabulator Megan Conley; and monitor Greg Munson.



Election officials tabulating results data at the Early Vote Center on Wednesday, November 8, 2018. Pictured, left to right, are: Aaron Grossman and Josh Schaffer.

Teams begin tabulating the results of the mayoral race at the Early Vote Center on Wednesday, November 8, 2017. Two tabulations teams worked concurrently on each race according to specific instructions dictated by the City's Ranked-Choice Voting Ordinance. Pictured, left to right, are: Mitch Kampf, Greg Munson, Peter Ebnet, Grant Johnson (standing), Lisa Lamor, Megan Conley, and Kristen Olson.

Assistant City Attorney Caroline Bachun, legal counsel for the Office of City Clerk, including its Elections & Voter Services Division, was present throughout the tabulation process to provide legal advice and guidance. In addition, a small communications team was in attendance to visualize and post results data for each race as it was completed using the EVS website and social media accounts. The entire tabulation process, and all the teams and personnel which contributed to it, were under the direction of Assistant City Clerk Grace Wachlarowicz, who is the City's Director of Elections & Voter Services. In addition to overseeing the tabulation process, Ms. Wachlarowicz gave final direction on all questions or concerns raised, documented the proceedings, and identified potential process improvements for future RCV elections.



The EVS Data Visualization Team included, from left: Rick Paulsen and JP Heisel, from the Information Technology Department; Grant Johnson, the Clerk's Office Information Technology Manager; and Mitch Kampf, the Clerk's Office Social Media Coordinator.

Tabulation for the mayoral race began at 9:42 a.m. After 3.5 hours and 6 rounds of tabulation, Jacob Frey was declared the unofficial winner. From here tabulators moved on to City Council races, beginning with Ward 3. The tabulation of the entire election—all 16 races not declared on election night—was completed in less than 24 hours after polls closed on election night.

Minneapolis Ranked-Choice Voting Election Statistics 2013-2017 Comparisons		
22 Municipal Races to elect 25 Seats		
DETAIL	**2013**	**2017**
Precincts	117	132
Total ballots cast	80,099	105,928
Number of unofficial winners declared election night	14	6
Number of hours to complete RCV tabulation	34.5 hrs/3 days	11.5 hrs/1 day
Number of tabulation teams	1	2
MAYORAL RACE DETAILS		
Number of declared candidates	35	16
Number of tabulation rounds to declare unofficial winner	34	6
Hours to complete tabulation	24+	3.5

Canvassing & Certification of Results

The City Council, sitting as the Minneapolis Canvassing Board, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 205.185, subd. 3, met on Tuesday, November 12, at 9 a.m. at City Hall. At that time, the City Clerk reported the final tally of returns in each race on the ballot, and the Canvassing Board certified those vote counts as the final, official results of the 2017 Municipal Election. The official order of the Municipal Canvassing Board was filed of record with the Office of City Clerk, and a certified copy of the official returns was filed with the County Auditor. The certification of the official results opened a seven-day contest period during which time any candidate or voter could contest the certified results, as provided under state election law. That seven-day period ran through November 19.

C. Ward 6 Recount

After unofficial results were announced in all races, a contest was filed in the Ward 6 City Council race. This was the first time a recount in an RCV election was required, and it necessitated EVS to develop and apply policies and procedures within the general parameters of the City's RCV Ordinance and consistent with the general election laws, rules, and regulations of the State of Minnesota.

It was not possible to declare an unofficial winner in the Ward 6 City Council race on election night; thus, rounds of tabulation were required, which was done the next day. When the Ward 6 race was evaluated, consistent with the RCV Ordinance, the threshold was calculated and applied. In the first round of tabulation, voter intent guidelines were applied to normalize those ballots with overvotes and undervotes (or skipped rankings in the first-choice column) and, as a result, EVS declared an unofficial winner. The following table shows the tally by candidate name following the first round of tabulation, as described above.

2017 Municipal Election City Council Race: Ward 6	
Total votes cast for office	7,234
Threshold to declare a winner	3,518
Candidate	Votes Cast
Abdi Warsame	**3,629**
Mohamud Noor	3,390
Fadumo Yusuf	183
Tiffani Forslund	6
Undeclared Write-ins	26
Exhausted	0
Total	7,234

The difference in votes cast for Candidate Warsame and Candidate Noor was 239 or a differential of 3.3%; thus, pursuant to the provisions of Minn. Stat. § 204C.36, subds. 1 and 2, Mr. Noor requested a discretionary recount of the race. Mr. Noor provided a cashier's check in the amount of $7,000, as determined by the City's EVS Division, for payment of recount expenses. Mr. Noor also requested that the recount begin with the ballots cast in precincts 6-2, 6-3, and 6-7.

Recount Procedures

Both state statute and the RCV ordinance are specific that the scope of a recount is limited to the determination of the number of votes validly cast for the office to be recounted. [Minn. Stat. § 204C.36, subd. 6, and Minneapolis Code of Ordinances § 167.90(d).] Since this race did not require tabulation (a candidate defeated requiring ballot reallocation), the recount could mirror the process of a traditional ballot and the *Minneapolis Method* for a RCV hand count. Specifically, only the first choice rankings would be counted, voter intent would be applied where required consistent with the RCV ordinance to normalize any ballot errors affecting first-choice rankings, and a comparison would then be made to the totals of the original tabulation spreadsheet with the results of the recount.

The recount commenced November 28 at 9 a.m. at the Early Vote Center. As requested by Mr. Noor, precincts 2, 3, and 7 were recounted first. The recount results compared to the Cast Vote Record (CVR) results for those three precincts revealed no significant change; specifically: votes counted for Candidate Warsame remained unchanged, with a total of 1,826 votes, whereas votes in the recount for Candidate Noor resulted in a net loss of one vote, for a total of 1,639 votes. It is important to note that slight differences in

vote counts are not unusual when recounts are conducted. Normally any errors by judges or the machines are random errors, and during a recount these errors generally offset one another. Characteristically, a slight change one way in one precinct is balanced by a corresponding change in the other direction in another precinct. Normally, the results of an election are not changed by these adjustments, but it can happen.

The following tables show the final vote totals for precincts 2, 3, and 7 in the Ward 6 City Council race as a result of the recount.

2017 Municipal Election Minneapolis City Council Race: Ward 6 —RECOUNT RESULTS—			
Total votes cast for office		7,234	
Threshold to declare a winner		3,518	
Total Results for Precincts 2, 3, and 7			
CANDIDATE	ORIGINAL	RECOUNT	DIFFERENCE
Abdi Warsame	1826	1826	0
Mohamud Noor	1640	1639	-1
Fadumo Yusuf	52	52	0
Tiffini Forslund	3	3	0
Undervote	62	62	0
Overvote	3	5	2
Undeclared Write-In	9	8	-1
Totals	3595	3595	0

Following the results of the three requested precincts, Mr. Noor waived further recount of the remaining precincts in the race, as allowed under state law. Accordingly, the recount concluded at approximately 11:30 a.m. The recount results were certified by the City Canvassing Board on December 1, 2017. The total cost to administer the recount was $3,229.18, and the City reimbursed Mr. Noor the difference of $3,770.82.

D. Post-Election Review

A post-election review (PER) involves a hand-count of ballots from randomly selected precincts to verify election equipment accurately counted votes on scanned ballots. The drawing of precincts was done November 14, and the PER conducted on November 29. The PER was noticed and open to public observation. The exportable CVR data file in each race was the source information used in the RCV tabulation. Therefore, the PER was designed to verify the CVR matched what was actually marked on ballots in selected precincts. As specified in the ordinance, the City Council race was counted for two randomly selected precincts and the Board of Estimate & Taxation race was counted for two different randomly selected precincts.[10] Election judges worked in party-balanced pairs sorting ballots by all three rankings and recording the number of ballots cast for each possible combination of candidates.[11] This count was compared to the results for each combination in the CVR data file. No discrepancies between the CVR data files and the actual ballots were discovered in any of the four precincts included as part of the PER.

[10] The ordinance specified that a multi-seat race, selected at random, be counted in the PER. Board of Estimate & Taxation was the race selected in 2017.

[11] This process was identical to the Minneapolis Method hand count developed to tabulate results in 2009.

VIII. Voting Patterns

A. Voter Errors

In any election, there exists the possibility that voters will mark ballots in a manner which prevents or does not allow all choices to be automatically tabulated by voting equipment. A common example which occurs in almost every election cycle is when a voter circles a preferred candidate's name rather than filling in the oval next to the candidate's name. Recognizing the potential for human error and desiring to make every effort to count every ballot, the Minnesota Legislature acted to ensure as many ballots as possible are included in each election tally, requiring election officials to make "every effort … to count all votes on a ballot and prevent ballots from being rejected for a technicality when it is possible to determine voter intent."[12]

For traditional, first-past-the-post (plurality) elections, the State has adopted regulations that provide detailed policy guidance on interpreting and determining voter intent for common voter and/or ballot errors. However, there is no such guidance for errors that are unique to Ranked-Choice Voting. These RCV-specific errors include:

1. Overvoting, which is choosing more than one candidate at a single ranking;
2. Repeating a candidate in multiple rankings; and
3. Skipping a ranking, but choosing a candidate at a lower ranking.

As a consequence, the City of Minneapolis was obligated to develop policy guidance to address these RCV-specific ballot errors to satisfy the statutory requirement. As part of its first use of RCV in 2009, the City created a Voter Error Accounting Chart which met this need. The Voter Error Accounting Chart provided consistent treatment of ballots with RCV-specific errors, a process sometimes referred to as "normalizing" a ballot. It is important to emphasize that normalized ballots are not disqualified or excluded from being included in the tabulation of election results. In each and every instance where a ballot error is discovered, that ballot is normalized according to the policy guidelines dictated by the ordinance and then tabulated.

Overvoting

In 2017, overvotes occurred on 0.19% of the races voted.[13] Overvoting was higher in multiple-seat races (0.26%) than in single-seat races (0.15%). These rates were strikingly similar to those of 2013, which saw 0.19% races overvoted, with 0.25% in the multi-seat races and 0.16% in the single-seat races.

The persistent rate of overvoting errors may be explained, at least in part, by the fact that in non-RCV elections involving multi-seat races voters are able to select their preferences within a single column; whereas, due to ballot design issues, voters must use a different process in selecting candidate preferences in multi-seat races during RCV elections. It is possible that improvements in RCV ballot design, coupled with advancements in system technology, could eliminate the need to repeat candidate names in multiple columns. This is an issue worthy of further exploration as vendors continue to consider designs for alternative voting methodologies.

Fortunately, the existing tabulators are capable of recognizing an overvote on an RCV ballot, and voters are alerted to this error. This notification of a potential overvote gives the voter a chance to correct his or her ballot, if they choose to do so. Of course, a voter could still cast a ballot with an overvote error, despite the systematic warning, but it would require the voter to knowingly cast a ballot with this error included. It is a result of this notification feature that the overvote error rate remains low, appearing in fewer than two out of every one thousand races voted.

Skipped Rankings

Skipped rankings occurred on 0.27% of the races voted in 2017, slightly less than the rate of 0.35% in 2013. About half of this total consisted of voters who skipped the first ranking (0.17%), with the remainder evenly

[12] Minnesota Statutes §204C.22

[13] There were five races on each ballot, so each ballot is considered five instances to make an error or vote correctly. However, if a voter decided not to vote in a particular contest, that race was disregarded in this analysis.

divided between voters who skipped the second ranking only and voters who skipped both the first and second rankings (0.09% each).

While the City lacks data that clearly explains the reason for the skip in rankings, it is possible that voters misunderstood how to mark an RCV ballot correctly. Ballot marking instructions are included at the top of each ballot, and instructions are also communicated to voters by election judges when issuing ballots. It is also possible that voters are attempting to vote strategically in favor of a preferred candidate with the false assumption that skipping a ranking may give that preferred candidate an advantage. Of course, that is not true. The ballot normalization rules require that ballots with skipped rankings be adjusted such that any ranking of a lower value be allocated to the next higher value; for example, if a voter skipped the first-ranked choice but did express preferences for a second and/or third-ranked choice, that ballot would be adjusted to show the second-ranked choice as first and the third-ranked choice (if any) as the second, and then the ballot would be tabulated using the regular procedures dictated by the ordinance. Again, in order to meet the statutory requirement of making "every effort to count all votes on a ballot and prevent ballots from being rejected for a technicality when it is possible to determine voter intent." This is an example of how the normalization process enables the City to give voters' ballots the maximum opportunity to continue forward in tabulation.

Repeat Candidates ("Bullet Voting")

Repeat candidate errors were the highest source of challenges in both 2013 and 2017. For the 2017 election, repeat candidate errors occurred on 3.32% of the races voted, nearly identical to the 3.28% rate from 2013. This error occurred on 2.77% of races where there were three or more candidates (2013: 2.26%), and on 5.02% of races in which there were two or fewer candidates in a race (2013: 6.84%). This higher error rate might perhaps indicate that some voters felt the need, and perhaps believed it was a requirement, to complete all three rankings on the ballot despite clear instructions to the contrary—both printed on the ballot and issued orally by election judges in the polling place.

It is also noteworthy that repeat candidate errors were experienced at least 10 times more frequently than either overvoting or skipped rankings. This reflects a common theme identified during EVS's outreach efforts that many voters believed "bullet voting" would bolster the chances for a preferred candidate to advance in the final tabulation of a particular race. "Bullet voting" is another term for the repeat candidate error; however, it generally refers to a ballot error in which a voter selects the same candidate in all rankings in a given race (e.g., first, second, and third choices). In reality, bullet voting weakens a voter's ballot and decreases his or her ability to affect the outcome in a particular race.

The following table summarizes the RCV-specific errors occurring in the 2017 Municipal Election.

SUMMARY OF 2017 RCV BALLOT ERRORS		
Type of Error	**Type of Race**	**Percentage**
Overvote	Single-seat	0.15%
Overvote	Multi-seat	0.26%
Overvote	All races	0.19%
Skipped Ranking	All races	0.27%
Repeat Candidate	1-2 candidates	5.02%
Repeat Candidate	3+ candidates	2.77%
Repeat Candidate	All races	3.32%

B. Choice Drop-off

Another consideration is how many choices to rank a voter has; that is, how many rankings a voter is able to make in each race on the ballot. In all three RCV elections—2009, 2013, and 2017—Minneapolis provided a total of three rankings per race, including the option for a write-in candidate as part of those three rankings, primarily due to restrictions tied to ballot design regulations and the capabilities of existing voting systems.[14] Of the 22 races on the ballot in 2017, 5 had two or fewer declared candidates. In contrast, the mayoral race had a total of 16 declared candidates and the Park Board At-Large race had 9 declared candidates. The other 15 races had either 3 or 4 declared candidates.

Generally, the frequency of voters ranking additional choices in 2017 mirrored results from 2013. The data show the majority of voters chose to use all three rankings in only 6 of the 22 races; that is the same rate as in 2013, but still about one-third less than the total number of races on the ballot. Races in which all three rankings were used by a majority of voters included: Mayor (16 candidates); Council Ward 3 (4 candidates); Council Ward 5 (4 candidates); Council Ward 10 (4 candidates); Council Ward 11 (3 candidates); and Park Board At-Large (9 candidates). In the remaining 16 races, the majority of voters did not use all three rankings.

Based on the low overall error rates combined with post-election polling data, it appears voters understood how to rank preferences and were more likely to do so in races with a larger number of candidates. Ballot position did not appear to negatively impact ranking opportunities. The number of voters choosing to use all three rankings for the park board at-large race—which had a total of 9 declared candidates and was displayed in the fourth position on the ballot—was higher than all of the City Council races, all of which had four or fewer declared candidates and were displayed in second position on the ballot. From this, it would appear that candidate quantity may be a primary motivator for voters to use all available rankings in a race.

The data also suggests that providing three rankings may be sufficient for the majority of voters to express their preferences. In 16 of the 22 races on the 2017 ballot, a majority of voters chose to rank fewer than three candidates; that is, the majority of voters were able to express their preferences within a limitation of three rankings, and often less than three rankings. Even within the six races which showed the highest number of rankings, a substantial number of voters ranked fewer than three candidates. In the mayoral race, for example, 55 percent of exhausted ballots—or 12,532 of the total 22,835 ballots—had fewer than three different candidates ranked. In essence, 9 out of 10 voters in the mayoral race were able to rank their preferences within the limitation of three choices. Having more than three rankings in that race—despite a total of 16 candidates—would not have been needed for the vast majority of voters casting ballots, and ranking choices, in the mayoral race in 2017.

The chart below shows how frequently voters chose to use all three choices, two choices, or only one choice.

Summary of Choice Drop-off

Race	3 Choices	2 Choices	1 Choice
Mayor (16 candidates)	72.5%	14.3%	13.3%
City Council w/ 1 candidate	2.2%	1.6%	96.3%
City Council w/ 2 candidates	3.4%	23.1%	73.5%
City Council w/ 3+ candidates	43.3%	22.0%	34.7%
Board of Estimate (2 candidates)	4.9%	59.0%	36.1%
Park At Large (9 candidates)	63.7%	14.2%	22.2%
Park District w/ 2 candidate	4.3%	44.2%	51.5%
Park District w/ 3+ candidates	35.5%	21.1%	43.4%

[14] *See* **File No. 15-00848** for report with recommendations from the RCV Ballot Design Workgroup presented to the Elections & Rules Committee on July 22, 2015.

Although allowed under the City's ordinance, providing more than three rankings has some drawbacks for both voters and election administrators.

It is highly probable that producing a ballot providing more than three rankings in each race would require additional ballot pages in Minneapolis, given the high number of races that are included. Research has shown that multiple-page ballots tend to reduce voter participation for those races listed on a second (and any succeeding) page and leads to an increase in the number of abandoned ballots. The drop-off rate can increase when multiple ballot pages are used, such that the overall turnout for the election does not translate to the number of voters actually participating in elections further down the ballot. Adding more than three rankings across the ballot could have the unintended consequence of reducing the number of voters participating in races involving the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the Board of Estimate & Taxation.

Saint Paul provides an interesting comparison. The City of Saint Paul conducted its municipal election using Ranked-Choice Voting in 2017, which only featured the mayoral race. The ballot design provided voters the option of ranking up to six candidates. A total of 10 declared candidates were included on the ballot along with the option for a write-in candidate. Despite a good number of declared candidates and the option for an increased number of rankings on the ballot, the results showed that more than half of all first-choice rankings were for one candidate, which obviated the need for tabulation. The following chart reflects the total number of ballots cast in the Saint Paul mayoral race and the percent of first-choice ballots.

Summary Saint Paul 2017 Mayoral Race (10 Candidates)		
Choice Ranking	Ballots Cast	Percent of First-Choice Ballots
First	61,554	100%
Second	46,714	75.9%
Third	34,002	55.2%
Fourth	16,692	27.1%
Fifth	9,699	15.8%
Sixth	6,652	10.8%

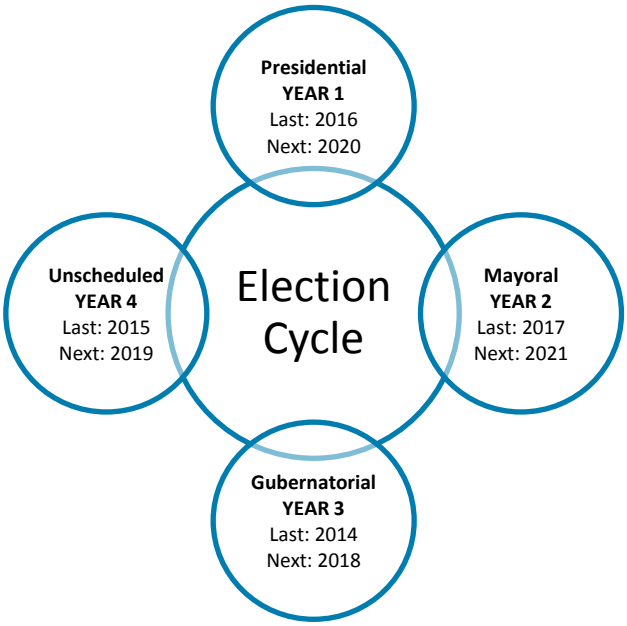
It is important to note, however, that Saint Paul does not use the Cast Vote Record (CVR) that is used in Minneapolis; thus, we are unable to analyze the specific choices from individual ballots in detail. Still, in reviewing the overall total number of votes cast in each of the six ranking columns, there is a clear and significant drop-off occurring after the first three rankings. This does not account for any repeated rankings or other factors, but it does illustrate that while a majority of Saint Paul voters ranked a third choice in the mayoral race (55.2%), only about a quarter of all voters actually ranked a fourth, fifth, and/or sixth choice in the mayoral race.

Unlike Minneapolis, the municipal ballot in Saint Paul is divided: the mayoral race occurs in one election cycle and City Council races appear in the next regular cycle; there are no other races on the municipal ballot. As a result, in Saint Paul, absent a special election, voters are presented with a municipal ballot that features one race every other cycle: either the mayoral race or the City Council races, which are divided by wards. In Minneapolis, by contrast, all voters have five offices on the ballot, which feature a mix of at-large and ward/district-specific races: Mayor, City Council (by ward), Park & Recreation Board At-Large, Park & Recreation Board (by district), and Board of Estimate & Taxation. Thus, the ballot style—and its overall design—are significantly different between the two cities. Still, Minneapolis should continue to research Saint Paul as a test case should the number of rankings be increased if and when new systems and improved technology would allow ballot design and layout to be reconsidered.

IX. Financials

A. Overview of Election Financing

Minneapolis administers elections across a planned, four-year cycle, illustrated below. The first year focuses on the presidential election, which typically sees the highest voter turnout, followed by the mayoral election in the second year, when turnout is usually lowest. There are no regular elections programmed in the fourth year of the cycle, although there is always the possibility of a special election being called.



More so than other municipal functions, the financing of elections varies dramatically year to year, influenced by many factors, which includes but is not limited to:

- The type of election and the number of election events during a given year;[15]
- Ballot content, especially high-profile, competitive races and interesting or controversial ballot questions;[16]
- The level of voter engagement, including organized get-out-the-vote drives and campaign efforts to motivate participation;
- Projected turnout based on an analysis of trends, demographics, and precinct profiles, among others.

As a consequence, most jurisdictions have adjusted their approach to financing elections to budget according to the particular year in the overall election cycle, factoring in some of the anticipated elements listed above which can and do impact the fiscal impact of each election.

In 2013, responding to direction from the City Council's Elections Committee, EVS developed budget recommendations projected against this regular, four-year election cycle. The proposed budget has been used by EVS since that time for internal tracking and reporting purposes; it consists of two key components:

- A **CORE BUDGET** which includes the fixed operating costs required to maintain the EVS Division; and
- An **ELECTIONS EXPENSE** budget which is tailored to the programming needs for a particular year based on the four-year election cycle and a thorough analysis of several factors, some of which are identified above.

[15] Within the regular four-year election cycle, years 1 and 3 each have at least two planned election events: a primary and a general election. With RCV, there is only one election event in year 2, because there is no primary.

[16] Research over multiple years and different election cycles and types of elections have consistently shown that ballot content is the greatest determining factor for voter turnout/participation.

The fluctuating impact of election funding can be illustrated by evaluating actual expenditures over the past five years, which includes the last two municipal elections (2013-2017).

ELECTION EXPENDITURES: 2013 – 2017					
ELECTION YEAR/CYCLE → EXPENSE CATEGORIES ↓	2013 MAYORAL	2014 GUBERNATORIAL	2015 UNSCHEDULED	2016 PRESIDENTIAL	2017 MAYORAL
CORE BUDGET	$481,911	$447,972	$472,026	$936,008	$1,059,793[17]
ELECTION EXPENSE	$1,328,551	$1,659,253	$838,996[18]	$3,338,230	$1,292,587[19]
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	**$1,810,462**	**$2,107,225**	**$1,311,022**	**$4,274,238**	**$2,352,380**

Clearly, elections are expensive. That is because elections are inclusive—and they are guaranteed. Voting rights are bestowed through and protected by federal and state constitutions and laws. Thus, access to the ballot box cannot be conditioned upon a budget. Assuring all qualified voters have free, equitable access to the ballot box is a cornerstone of representative democracy. Indeed, government begins at the ballot box. Much like public safety, health, and infrastructure, elections are a fundamental function of good government.

B. 2017 Municipal Election Budget

Actual expenditures for the 2017 Municipal Election exceeded the approved budget by about 30 percent. Given this significant difference in approved budget versus actual expenditures, it is worth examining some of the major factors which contributed to this overage (*detailed in the following pages*).

2017 MUNICIPAL ELECTION: BUDGETED VS. ACTUAL		
CATEGORIES	APPROVED	ACTUAL
CORE BUDGET	$1,019,793	$1,059,793 [$40,000 for voting booth capital replacement plan added to core budget]
ELECTION EXPENSE	$400,835	$1,117,587
SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS	$215,000 [Rollover of $175,000 for EPB implementation and $40,000 for voting booth replacement]	$175,000 [EPB implementation]
TOTALS	**$1,635,628**	**$2,352,380**

Actual expenditures were $716,752 more than the original approved budget. Costs for Election Day could have been covered by that original budget amount, but it would have been insufficient to cover absentee balloting, voter outreach and education, the deployment of EPBs, or other components of the election, as detailed in this section.

For many years, the City has allocated between $400,000 and $500,000 for election expenses not covered by the EVS core budget. This financing approach has not been sufficient to meet the full impact of an election. For context, in the 2017 Municipal Election, the impact of payroll for 1,562 election judges and the initial ballot order to cover 132 precincts was $366,543. EVS paid a total of $5,350 in rental fees for its polling places in 2017. Deployment and receipt of voting equipment and supplies, also known as drayage, was $27,725, with an additional $8,000 to deploy EPBs. Collectively, these expenses would have been covered within the original budget allocation of $400,835. However, that original budget allocation would have been insufficient to address additional costs for seasonal staffing, which alone was $680,219; nor would it have covered the

[17] Includes $40,000 in rollover funding for replacement of voting booths

[18] Acquisition and implementation of new Elections Management System

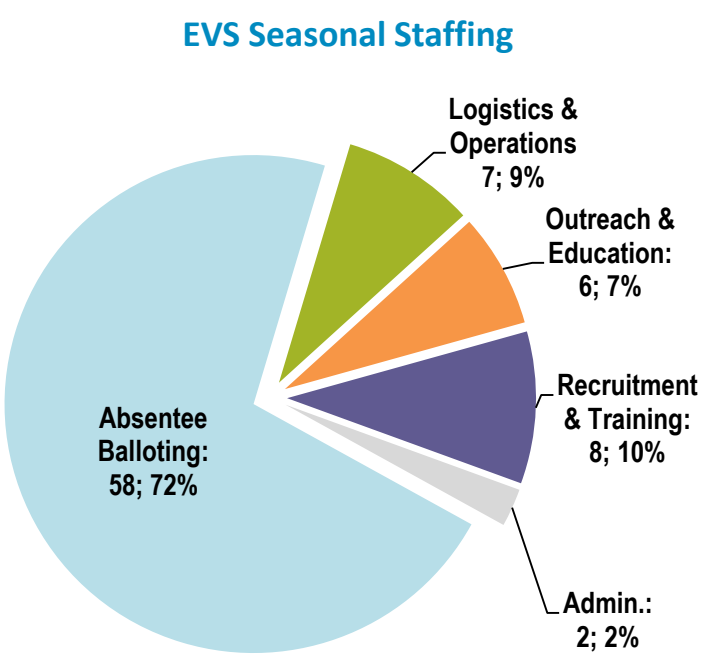
[19] Includes $175,000 in unanticipated costs for implementation and deployment of Electronic Poll Books

costs for the 46-day absentee balloting period, estimated at $306,343; nor the myriad of other expenditures which contributed to the strategic goal of ensuring all voters were "election ready" in 2017, as more fully detailed in the following paragraphs.

Significant 2017 Budgetary Impacts

1) SEASONAL STAFFING = $680,219

Minneapolis is the largest, most-populated city in Minnesota, the state boasting some of the highest turnout in the nation. With 239,750 registered voters in 2017, Minneapolis accounted for 1 of every 13 registered voters in Minnesota. Yet, EVS has only five permanent, full-time positions: the director and four professional election administrators to serve this large (and growing) community. This is significantly less than the average staffing model in benchmark jurisdictions. As a consequence, EVS is reliant on its ability to recruit, train, and utilize seasonal staffers to fulfill several mission-critical tasks, giving preference to those with prior experience and knowledge of elections.



Based on the regular election cycle, the number of seasonal staffers can vary; however, recruitment usually begins in March and ramps up through Election Day, with some seasonal workers remaining to help with post-election functions. The yearly seasonal staffing plan includes supervisory and non-supervisory positions. All seasonal staff must be trained on the full range of statutory duties prescribed for Election Judges, in addition to City and department policies and procedures covering as ethics and performance standards, communication policies, and technical functions like access to the Statewide Voter Registration System.

As shown in this chart, absentee balloting has the most significant impact on all seasonal positions. Those seasonal workers assigned to the absentee balloting program assist voters choosing to cast a ballot before Election Day, whether via In-Person at the Early Vote Center or Vote-By-Mail. The typical seasonal staffing plan for absentee balloting includes: a supervisor and team of seasonal workers to administer the Vote-By-Mail processes; a supervisor and team of seasonal workers to administer IPV balloting at the Early Vote Center(s); a supervisor and team of seasonal workers to conduct absentee balloting at designated health care facilities; and a supervisor and team of seasonal workers to serve as the City's Absentee Ballot Board, which is responsible under state law with accepting, rejecting, and tallying all absentee ballots.

In addition to the large contingent of seasonal staffers assigned to absentee balloting, supervisory and non-supervisory seasonal workers are needed to assist with recruiting, training, and scheduling election judges; evaluating and securing polling places; ordering and organizing supplies and equipment; coordinating logistics; and performing a variety of administrative tasks and offering general assistance in EVS headquarters at City Hall. Due to the limited number of permanent positions in EVS, one of the greatest ongoing risks to the City is the potential inability to recruit, train, and deploy adequate seasonal staffing to cover the multiple functions that contribute to the success of each election. Without effective, trained seasonal workers, EVS simply could not conduct an election.

2) ELECTRONIC POLL BOOKS = $106,296

The introduction of EPBs in 2017 forced EVS to incur unanticipated costs associated with the new technology. Although Hennepin County paid for the actual systems (hardware and software), Minneapolis was required to handle ancillary costs to store and maintain the EPBs, handle the logistics of delivering and retrieving the systems for Election Day, and costs associated with training. Most significantly, the training room at the EVS Warehouse had to be converted to storage space meeting strict specifications required for the technology. In the larger scheme of budgeting for elections, this demonstrates the impact other jurisdictions can have on the City; in this instance, the unanticipated costs were driven by decisions made by Hennepin County, not the City of Minneapolis. And, as a new component of all future elections, a portion of these costs will need to be added to future election financing plans, similar to funding for ballot tabulators and AutoMARK machines.

ELECTRONIC POLL BOOKS: 2017	
DESCRIPTION	**ACTUAL COST**
Warehouse Remodel	$17,286
iPad totes	$17,150
Gaffers tape	$3,800
Drayage	$8,000
EPB Staff	$60,060
TOTALS	**$106,296**

3) CONNIE SCHMIDT, CONSULTANT = $51,786

Schmidt was retained as a consultant to provide expert input for planning and an objective analysis of the entire election, essentially repeating her work from 2013. Her expertise and feedback over many years have been invaluable in refining and improving the general operation of the EVS team. Schmidt collaborated with the EVS team throughout the year in the lead-up to Election Day and in post-election tabulation and audit processes. For a summary of Schmidt's observations and recommendations, see Section X, below.

4) THE MORRIS LEATHERMAN COMPANY, RCV SURVEY = $48,000

EVS contracted with Morris Leatherman Company to conduct a statistically-valid survey of voters, non-voters, candidates, and election judges about their experiences with the 2017 Municipal Election and Ranked-Choice Voting. This repeats similar post-election surveys done after the municipal elections in 2009 and 2013, adding to the insights the City has gained from its electorate during the nine-year period in which Ranked-Choice Voting has been used for municipal elections. These insights have helped to inform process improvements, especially in terms of targeted outreach and education campaigns. A summary of survey results in provided in Section X, below.

5) VOTER GUIDE MAILED TO EVERY MINNEAPOLIS HOUSEHOLD = $87,859

The guide was the centerpiece of the 2017 Voter Outreach & Education program, based on positive, post-election feedback in 2013 and 2016. The success of the City's multi-pronged plan can be measured by the high percentage of voters (81%) who reported they understood RCV "perfectly well" or "fairly well" before reaching the polling place. More importantly, nearly 80 percent of voters indicated they learned about RCV through just one component of the voter outreach campaign—the guide mailed to every household. The cost breakdown for all three years is shown in the table below:

2013 Voter Guide	2016 Voter Guide	2017 Voter Guide
Election Type: Municipal	Election Type: Presidential	Election Type: Municipal
Expected Turnout: Low	Expected Turnout: High	Expected Turnout: Low
Three 11x17 pages, double-sided and folded	Four 11x17 pages, double-sided and folded (33% increase in content)	Two 11x17 pages, double-sided and folded
Separate envelope, adding cost	Tabbed and direct-mailed, cutting costs	Tabbed and direct-mailed, cutting costs
Per household = 200,000 units	Per household = 200,000 units	Per household = 200,000 units
Personalized sample ballot included	Personalized sample ballot included	No sample ballot included
100% production outsourced	58% production outsourced	65% production outsourced
Cost/Unit = 49 cents	Cost/Unit = 49 cents	Cost/Unit = 44 cents
Total Cost = $97,536	**Total Cost = $97,486**	**Total Cost = $87,859**

Production costs for the voter guide have been steadily refined as EVS has had more experience in generating the guide and in improving delivery in collaboration with partners, including the U.S. Postal Service. The actual fiscal impact to produce the 2017 guide was $46,573, which was roughly 44 cents per unit; the additional costs were for the postage to cover the per-household distribution (197,870 households).

6) TRAINING FACILITY = $8,600

Because the existing training room at the EVS Warehouse had to be converted for EPB storage, EVS was required to locate another site for training purposes. Working with the Property Services Division, a rental agreement with Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral located at 519 Oak Grove Street was approved. The total impact of these unanticipated costs was $8,600, with details below.

TRAINING FACILITY: 2017	
DESCRIPTION	**ACTUAL COST**
Rental space (Saint Mark's)	$5,100
Equipment	$2,300
Staffing (set-up/tear-down)	$1,200
TOTALS	**$8,600**

Because the training room at the EVS Warehouse has been converted for technology storage needs for new equipment (EPBs), the costs of training space—whether through permanent City-owned facilities or rented space—will need to be factored into the base expenditure budget for future elections.

7) LUKE BELANT, CONSULTANT = $6,000

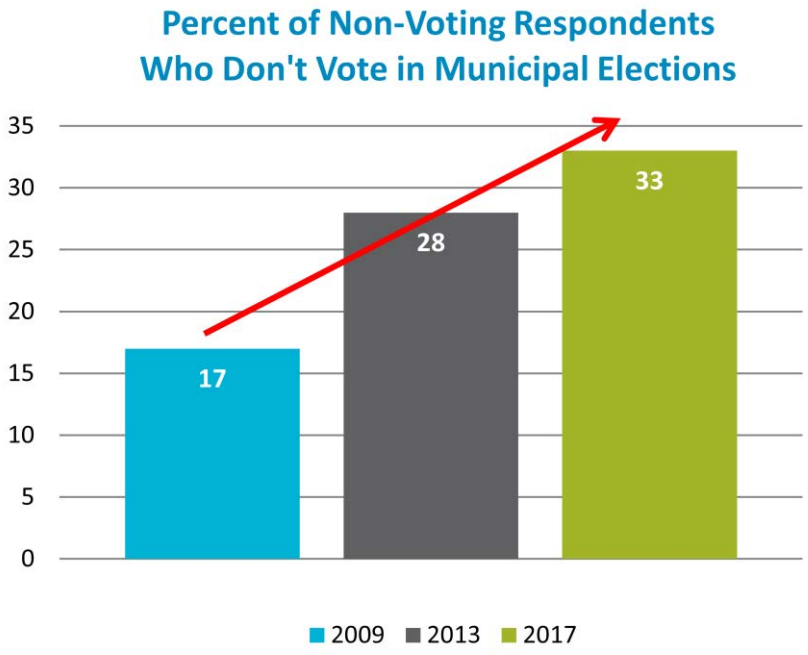
Elections & Voter Services experienced staff turnover in the past four years resulting in a need to obtain additional expertise on the tabulation process of ranked choice voting. Mr. Belant was part of the RCV tabulation team in 2013 and the post-election analysis resulting in the recommendations to enhance the tabulation process. Those recommendations were subsequently adopted as ordinance amendments in 2015. Belant was tasked with revising, testing, documenting, and instructing tabulation teams on the improved procedures for tabulating results, including batch elimination that was first used in 2017. Mr. Belant also assisted with tabulation processes at the Early Vote Center on November 8.

X. 2017 Municipal Election Analysis

A. Ranked-Choice Voting Survey

EVS contracted with The Morris Leatherman Company, a Minneapolis-based, full-service market research firm to survey a sample population of voters, non-voters, candidates, and election judges about experiences and perceptions of the 2017 Municipal Election. The objective was to provide a statistically-valid comparison of stakeholder experiences between the three municipal elections using Ranked-Choice Voting: 2009, 2013, and 2017.

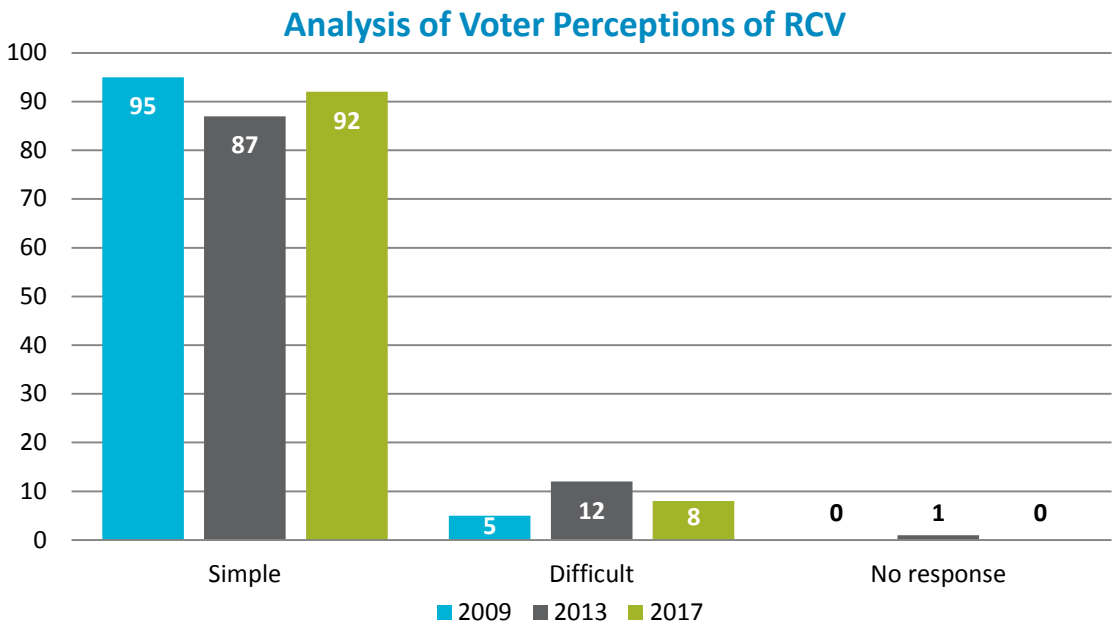
According to survey results, of those self-reporting that they actually cast ballots in 2017, only 67% identify as "regular voters" in prior municipal elections. This represented a hefty reduction of about 28% compared to the survey results from 2013. In terms of determining the voting base, then, it would appear that those who participated in the 2017 Municipal Election were less-frequent and more sporadic voters. This is troubling in that municipal elections are regularly conducted in the odd-year following a regular presidential election. Because Minneapolis has a proud tradition of being among the highest turnout municipalities, it is frustrating to see such significant drop-off in terms of voter engagement and participation in regular municipal elections in the immediate aftermath of a presidential election. This concern is bolstered by the fact that 33% of non-voting survey participants indicated they "don't care much about voting in municipal elections." In other words, there lack of participation is not a result of Ranked-Choice Voting or the timing of the election itself; rather, they choose not to engage in local elections. The percentage of respondents who identified with this statement—a preference not to engage in local elections—actually increased by 5 percentage points in comparison to 2013. The table below reflects the percentage of non-voting survey respondents in each of the three years (2009, 2013, and 2017) who self-identified that they "don't care much about voting in municipal elections."



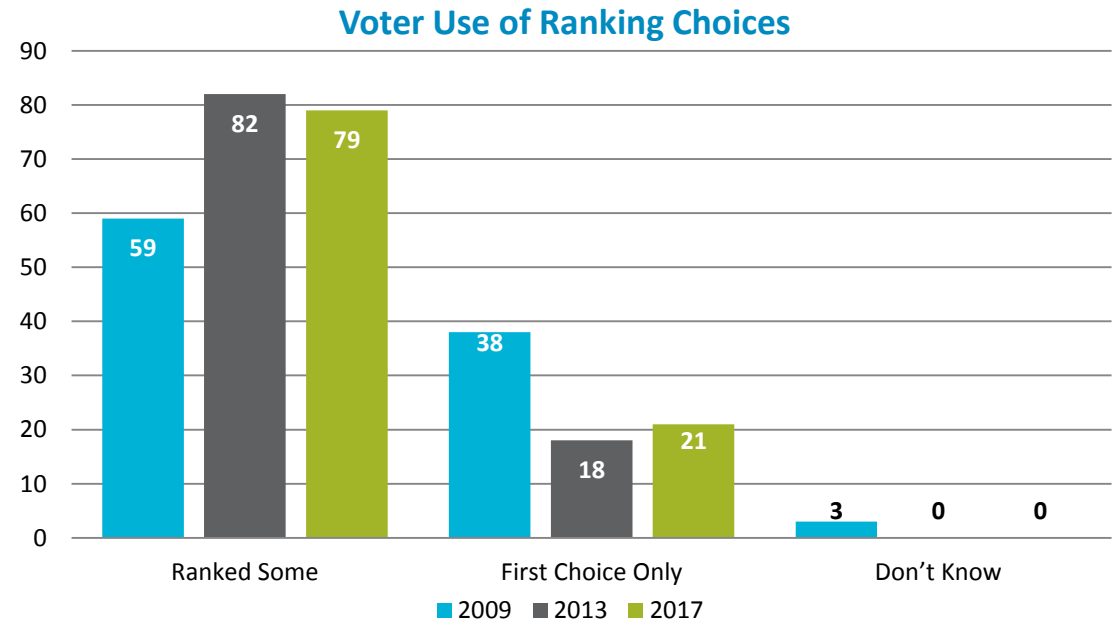
The percentage of non-voters who indicate they do not care to vote in municipal elections has grown over the last three cycles, showing an increase of 16 points from 2009 to 2017. Post-election survey results showed that this was more likely true of residents who self-identified as being between 18-34 years of age with a high school (or less) education. It was also more likely true of men than women.

Despite this unsettling feedback, of non-voting survey respondents 14% indicated that they were "very likely" to participate in future municipal elections, and an additional 28% indicated that they were "likely" to do so. Given that the legitimacy of government action can be measured, at least in part, by active participation in elections, this is encouraging feedback for the future. The City should pursue efforts that would make such participation not only easy by continuing to remove barriers, but also by offering further evidence of the benefits of participation, for individuals as well as the community.

Overall, of those respondents who did participate in the 2017 election, a significant majority (92%) indicated that ranking their preferences using the RCV ballot was simple to do. This was an increase from the 2013 election, but slightly less than what was initially reported in 2009 when RCV was first implemented.

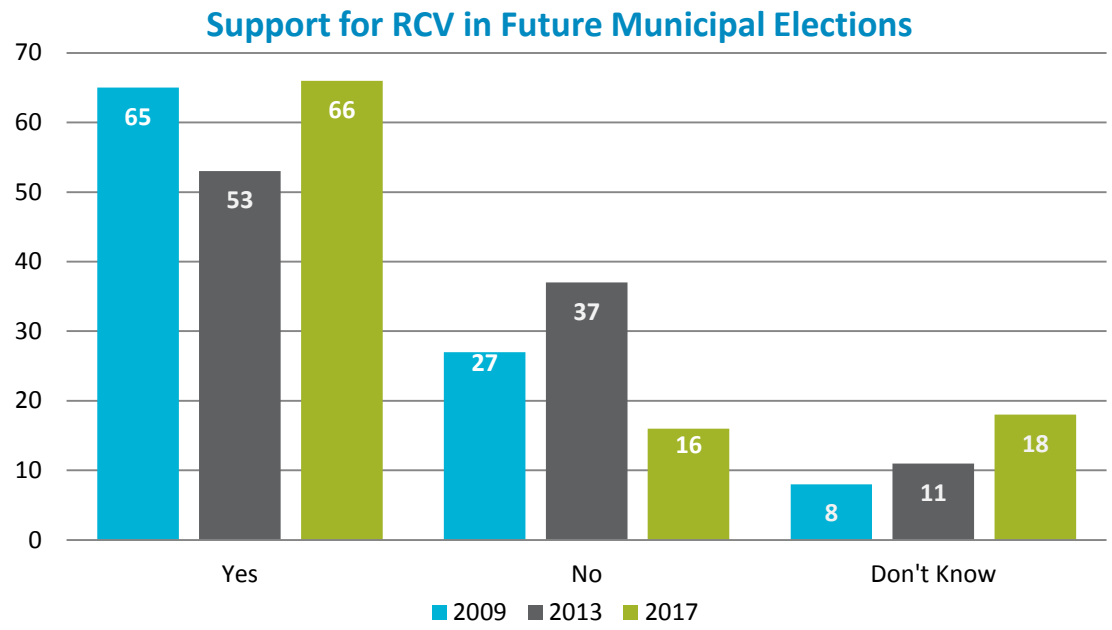


In 2017, most voters used the opportunity to express preferences across all three rankings in only 6 of the 22 races on the ballot. This represents less than one-third of all races on the ballot; thus, it appears that most voters chose not to take advantage of this opportunity. This is reflected in the following chart, showing similar themes across all municipal election years, 2009, 2013, and 2017. For more detail, see the section on Choice Drop-Off on page 29.



What the data implies is that most voters continue to vote for a single candidate in the majority of races on the ballot, notwithstanding the ability to rank additional preferences. More specifically, additional choices typically are a factor in the at-large, multi-seat races and are less a factor in the ward and district races. Nevertheless, a majority of survey participants in 2017—whether they self-identified as voters or non-

voters—expressed a willingness to continue using RCV in future municipal elections. In fact, the number of survey respondents indicating that they support or are otherwise neutral as to whether RCV is used in future municipal elections has increased from 2013, as shown on the chart below.



B. EVS Performance Analysis

Connie Schmidt is an associate and adjunct faculty member with the National Association of Election Officials (also known as the Election Center), an independent contractor for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and a former election administrator who was the recipient of the National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award for Outstanding Service to American Democracy and was inducted into the Election Center's Hall of Fame for election administrators. She has been retained as a consultant for the Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services Division in 2011, 2013, and again in 2017.

Throughout 2017, Schmidt collaborated with the EVS team, providing input on several process improvements which included a review and refinement of ordinances amendments approved by City Council as well as an overhaul of the City's election judge recruitment and training programs and on-site training and assistance with the testing and deployment of EPBs. She also was heavily involved in the workflow design (and redesign) and documentation of plans related to polling place management, absentee balloting processes, and the post-election audit. Some of the specific areas included in the scope of her analysis were the recruitment, selection, training, and orientation of seasonal staff and election judges; absentee balloting operations, both for Vote-By-Mail and In-Person functions; the use of technology, including the deployment of new EPBs; and Election Day operations, both in the field and at headquarters, as well as results reporting and post-audit.

Among other recommendations, Schmidt identified the following needs to be examined and prioritized by EVS in partnership with City policymakers.

First, the need to balance permanent staffing resources to meet existing and projected future demands, which would include a minimum increase of two full-time positions as well as the comprehensive review of the existing staffing plan and allocation of programs in the Division. As noted elsewhere in this report, EVS has much fewer resources than comparable jurisdictions given the size and complexity of the population served, especially considering the proud tradition of strong voter engagement and participation in Minneapolis (and Minnesota). The fact that EVS is heavily dependent on seasonal staff to perform mission-critical work is a significant risk to the effective planning and conduct of an election, and potentially exposes the City to challenges that could impact the integrity of the election.

Another key challenge is the lack of a central operation. Consolidating all EVS operations into a single facility is ideal, and something that EVS has advocated for many years. Not only is the existing permanent team very small, but it is also geographically dispersed to multiple locations across the city, making cross-training, back-up coverage, and collaboration nearly impossible.

Schmidt's report mentions the EVS Division's stated goal of being the "gold standard" for election administration, particularly for the administration of RCV elections, a goal she says has been achieved. This high standard of performance, and the service extended to the City's voters, can be maintained in all elections by seizing opportunities for further investment in the work of EVS. As noted in the bipartisan report published by the Presidential Election Commission: "[t]he electorate seeks above all modern, efficient, and responsive administrative performance in the conduct of elections." These investments in professional personal with the requisite training and expertise, facilities, equipment and technology are critical to enable the City of Minneapolis to continue providing the best service to its voters.

XI. Recommendations for the Future

RCV Recommendations for 2021

A. Automated RCV-Compatible System

In its plans for the next regular municipal election, scheduled for 2021, EVS has one overarching goal: acquire and deploy a fully-automated solution that tabulates RCV ballots. This would eliminate the need for exportable data files, manual processing of results data to produce unofficial winners, and delays in the public release or announcement of unofficial results. Vendors are working to develop these systems and it is possible that new systems could be certified and on the market before the next regularly-scheduled municipal election.

In 2017, Dominion, a provider of election systems and solutions, certified its Democracy Suite 5.0 which includes a module that automates RCV elections. The system is compatible with grid-style ballots allowing up to ten rankings and does not require additional third-party software or other workarounds. It is capable of reading and tabulating RCV ballots and producing results for both single-seat and multi-seat races. This is incredible news for the City of Minneapolis, as competition will continue to push other vendors in the industry to develop fully-automated systems. The Dominion system was used in the first RCV election conducted by the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico, in March 2018.

As already noted in this report, any voting system used in the State of Minnesota must meet federal and state certification standard; federal standards are promulgated by the U.S. EAC. The EAC last adopted system certification standards in 2005, the year before RCV was adopted in Minneapolis, and those standards do not contain any set of criteria for RCV or other non-traditional voting methodologies. Since 2005, election officials and vendors have been waiting for a fully-functioning EAC in order to have those certification standards updated. In the absence of a fully-functioning EAC since 2005, all vendors have been forced to design to technology standards set in 2005, more than a decade old. The EAC had been on a path to considering a new, updated set of system certification standards in August 2018; however, with the term expiration for Commissioner Masterson, creating a vacancy on the commission, the timing of such work is now in question. Nevertheless, the EAC staff who are responsible for standard testing are continuing efforts to develop test assertions and requirements to prepare for upgraded certification standards, assuming a new appointment to fill the vacant commissioner seat might be made yet this year.

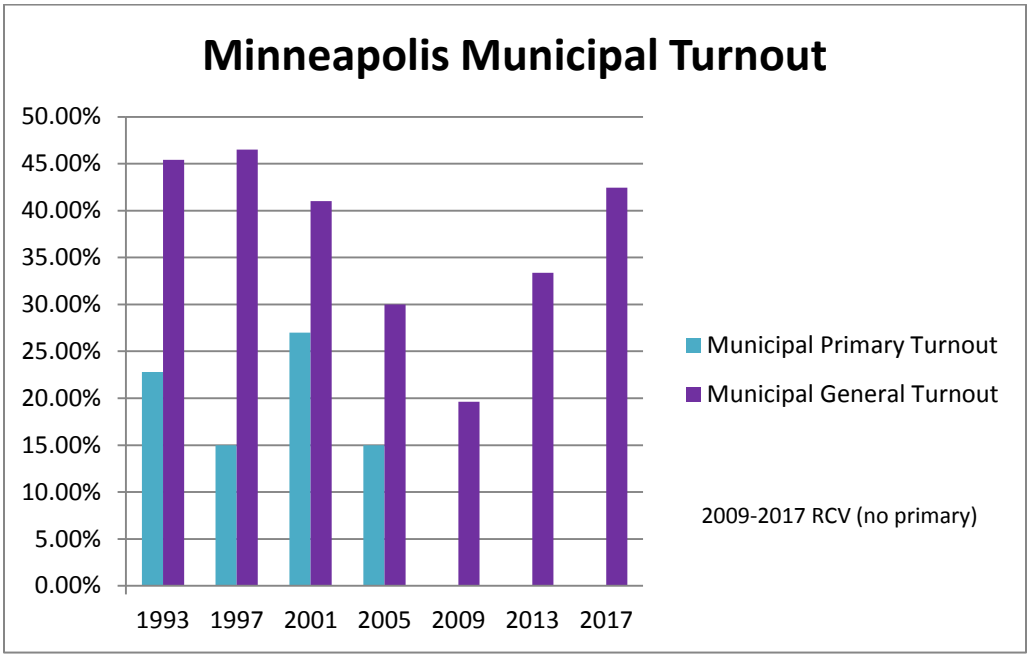
In Minnesota, however, the key question is whether Minneapolis will retain its ability to continue using RCV for its municipal elections.

In 2018, Senate File 3325, introduced by Senator Mark W. Koran (R), District 32, was passed by the Senate's State Government Finance, Policy & Elections Committee and referred to the full Senate for consideration as part of a planned omnibus elections bill. That provision, if enacted, would prohibit the use of RCV in Minnesota and would even nullify the use of RCV in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where the methodology was

adopted by public vote. Council Member Andrew Johnson, in his capacity as chair of the Council's standing Intergovernmental Relations Committee, testified in opposition to the bill before the Senate committee, as did Council Member Phillipe Cunningham. The key question will be whether this local pre-emption bill will be included in the final omnibus elections bill ultimately passed by the State Legislature and, if so, whether Governor Dayton would sign the bill notwithstanding his stated opposition to this measure.

B. Timing of Municipal Elections

The 2017 Municipal Election saw an increase in voter participation. While not reaching record numbers, that turnout was the highest since 1997 at 42.45%, with 105,928 votes cast.[20] While many factors can and do influence turnout from one election to the next, competitive races up and down the ballot likely played a significant role in bringing more voters to the polls. Additionally, following the 2016 Presidential Election, a renewed sense of engagement and push to the ballot box was seen in jurisdictions across the United States, which was reflected in the City of Minneapolis. The following chart shows turnout for municipal elections across a 24-year period, 1993 to 2017.



While certainly lower than turnout in presidential or gubernatorial elections, the City's level of participation in the 2017 Municipal Election was significantly higher than most jurisdictions in recent years, which typically have hovered between 27 to 34 percent.[21]

However, the overall increased participation in 2017 did not significantly alter trends of who votes in Minneapolis. The highest engagement continues to be in precincts found in Wards 12 and 13, with the lowest levels of engagement from those precincts in Wards 4 and 5. A growing trend in absentee balloting has been particularly evident in Ward 6, with a record level of over 4,000 voters—the equivalent of 55 percent of all Ward 6 voters—choosing to vote early, and primarily favoring In-Person voting at the Early Vote Center rather than Vote-By-Mail. The precinct with the highest total number of ballots was Ward 6 – Precinct 3 with 1,841 votes cast, equal to about 60 percent of the total number of registered voters. For Election Day turnout, Ward 8-Precinct 7 located at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park served the highest number of voters at 1,522, or equal to 55 percent of registered voters. And, as always, those precincts located near the University of Minnesota topped the list for the number of Election Day registrations.

[20] Minneapolis calculates turnout based on percentage of registered voters participating, not on percentage of estimated voting age population.

[21] Political Research Quarterly (© 2013 University of Utah), *Campaigns, Mobilization and Turnout in Mayoral Elections*, Holbrook and Weinschenk, published July 15, 2013

Voting is often used as a key indicator of political engagement and, thus, as a sort of litmus test for public support of government policies and expressed priorities. Higher voter turnout is usually considered to be desirable. Higher turnout and participation often are taken as evidence of the legitimacy of the current political system and public support for government policies and expressed priorities. By contrast, lower turnout is considered to be undesirable. Low turnout is frequently attributed to disillusionment, indifference, and/or a sense of futility on the part of the electorate; it can reflect active disinterest, apathy, or the perception that participation in elections will not make a difference.

Numerous studies have attempted to identify causes for low turnout. Most political scientists agree that it is a complex mixture of economic, demographic, cultural, and institutional factors that can result in lower engagement. All studies have concluded that there is no single cause; accordingly, there is no "magic bullet" to solving the challenge of voter disengagement.

Over the past several decades, participation in the United States has peaked during presidential elections, when between 55 and 60 percent of the eligible electorate typically votes. Studies conducted by the Pew Research Center show approximately 53 percent of eligible voters cast ballots in the 2012 Presidential Election, but turnout dropped to just 36 percent for the 2014 midterm election cycle, the lowest turnout in a general election since 1942 when many of the nation's young people were fighting in World War II. In the 2016 primaries, only 3 out of 10 qualified voters chose to participate in shaping the presidential general election ballot. And, in the end, only about 56 percent of the voting-age population cast ballots in the 2016 Presidential Election. The Pew Research Center's report ranked the United States 31st out of 35 countries for voter turnout based on voting age populace among the mostly democratic nations included in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Turnout drops to its lowest in elections conducted in the off-year cycle; that is, in elections conducted in odd-numbered years not correlated to regular presidential or midterm elections. This has particular concern for Minneapolis, since municipal elections are conducted in the off-year between regular presidential and gubernatorial elections. This is alarming because the smaller the voter pool becomes, the more weight a single vote carries and the easier it can become for an active, partisan minority to determine the outcome of an election. This can lead to unequal representation among the various constituencies of the community, with a smaller and smaller slice of the electorate making important decisions that affect the whole. Studies show that this is especially impactful in particular demographic and socioeconomic groups, especially the young, poor, and marginalized. The plain fact is that the majority of voters tend to be white, older (45-75), wealthier, married, more educated, and own property in comparison to non-voters. This group tends to make the decisions for the rest of the community. And these implications are compounded exponentially by the timing of municipal elections in Minneapolis.

As a consequence, the Minneapolis Charter Commission has introduced a proposal to study the implications of changing the timing of municipal elections to align with the regular presidential or gubernatorial elections conducted in even-numbered years. The theory is that a larger percentage of the community could be engaged, thereby increasing not only the overall turnout but specifically turnout among the city's harder-to-reach and historically-underrepresented populations. A growing body of research suggests that transitioning municipal elections in this manner can have positive implications for voter turnout. The Charter Commission is collaborating with the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs to research turnout levels of comparable jurisdictions where municipal elections are conducted in even-numbered years. There are, of course, some legal and technological challenges to this proposal; however, those should not dissuade the consideration of a proposal that has the potential of expanding the pool of eligible voters that might engage in municipal elections. The timing of any such proposal, however, is likely to be delayed until 2020 at the earliest.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

The Elections & Voter Services Division dedicates this report to the legacy of Mary Davis, who served as the coordinator of the City's nationally-recognized Student Election Judge program. Here she is photographed with Mayor Jacob Frey and EVS Director Grace Wachlarowicz. Mayor Frey proclaimed January 25, 2018, as "MARY DAVIS DAY" in the City of Minneapolis to honor her leadership and the service given in nurturing the Student Election Judge program, educating the next generation about the importance of voting and active civic engagement, and providing work experience and skills development.

Pictured, left to right: EVS Director Grace Wachlarowicz, Student Election Judge Coordinator Mary Davis, and Mayor Jacob Frey.

Report presented to:
Minneapolis City Council
Standing Committee on Elections
The Hon. Jeremiah Ellison, Chair
May 9, 2018

Report prepared by:
Office of City Clerk – Casey Joe Carl, City Clerk

Elections & Voter Services Division—
Grace L. Wachlarowicz – Assistant City Clerk and Director of Elections & Voter Services

Tim Schwarz – Election Administrator
Jeff Narabrook – Election Administrator
Grant E. Johnson – Technology Manager
Char Peterson – Operations Technician
Mitchell Kampf – Communications Coordinator
Barb Suciu – Election Administrator
Eric Jeffreys-Berns – Election Administrator
Aaron Grossman – Project Coordinator
Kate Redden – EVS Program Assistant

Recognitions:
The Elections & Voter Services Unit gratefully acknowledges the participation and contribution of several partners who were engaged in preparations for a successful 2017 Municipal Election:
Minneapolis Election Judges & Seasonal Staff
The Hon. Steve Simon, Secretary of State
Secretary of State's Elections Division – Gary Poser, Director
Hennepin County Elections Team – Ginny Gelms, Director
Connie J. Schmidt, consultant
Luke Belant, consultant
Election Systems & Software
FairVote Minnesota – Jeanne Massey, Executive Director
All Minneapolis City Departments — especially: City Attorney's Office; City Communications; Community Planning & Economic Development; Finance & Property Services; Human Resources; Information Technology; Minneapolis 311; Neighborhood & Community Relations; and Regulatory Services

City of Minneapolis
General Election November 7, 2017
SUMMARY

	Registered Voters at 7am	Voters Registering at Polls	Voters Registering by Absentee	Total Registrations	Voters at Polls	Absentee Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Total Turnout	Percentage Absentee	Spoiled Ballots
WARD 1	19,015	680	27	707	8,277	587	8,864	44.94%	6.62%	265
WARD 2	16,466	1,204	32	1,236	6,515	519	7,034	39.74%	7.38%	344
WARD 3	23,009	1,404	109	1,513	8,599	1,278	9,877	40.28%	12.94%	343
WARD 4	16,833	308	15	323	5,087	262	5,349	31.18%	4.90%	252
WARD 5	14936	334	32	366	3964	314	4,278	27.96%	7.34%	274
WARD 6	14,354	489	882	1,371	3,333	4,064	7,397	47.04%	54.94%	314
WARD 7	20,106	625	58	683	8,089	1,166	9,255	44.52%	12.60%	387
WARD 8	17,507	548	35	583	7,783	492	8,275	45.74%	5.95%	323
WARD 9	12,481	473	157	630	4,854	796	5,650	43.09%	14.09%	278
WARD 10	19,881	1,002	59	1,061	7,335	576	7,911	37.78%	7.28%	261
WARD 11	19,905	332	27	359	9,024	568	9,592	47.34%	5.92%	351
WARD 12	22,214	483	38	521	10,065	639	10,704	47.08%	5.97%	419
WARD 13	23,043	394	15	409	11,028	714	11,742	50.07%	6.08%	484
CITY TOTAL	**239,750**	**8,276**	**1,486**	**9,762**	**93,953**	**11,975**	**105,928**	**42.45%**	**11.30%**	**4,295**

ABSENTEE STATISTICS: TOTAL ABSENTEE VOTERS SERVED

			PERCENT TO TOTAL
	IN PERSON	9,056	**75.62%**
	MAIL	2,303	**19.23%**
(a)	**HCF**	384	**3.21%**
(b)	**UOCAVA**	27	**0.23%**
(c)	**AGENT DEL**	205	**1.71%**
	TOTAL	**11,975**	

(a) HCF: Health Care Facility

(b) UOCAVA: Overseas and military absentee ballots

(c) Agent Delivery: Delivery by designated agent for absentee voters

City of Minneapolis Statistics

General Elections November 7, 2017

Ward	Precinct	Registered Voters at 7am	Voters Registering at Polls	Voters Registering by Absentee	Total Registrations	Ballots Cast at Polling Place	Absentee Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Total Turnout	Percentage Absentee	% Registered to Total (Election Day)	Spoiled Ballots
City Summary		**239,750**	**8,276**	**1,486**	**9,762**	**93,953**	**11,975**	**105,928**	**42.45%**	**11.30%**	**8.81%**	**4,295**
1	1	912	20	2	22	381	30	411	44.00%	7.30%	5.25%	16
1	2	2,751	62	3	65	1,195	109	1,304	46.31%	8.36%	5.19%	32
1	3	2,369	60	1	61	1,205	79	1,284	52.84%	6.15%	4.98%	37
1	4	2,195	66	2	68	1,067	84	1,151	50.86%	7.30%	6.19%	27
1	5	1,873	65	5	70	890	65	955	49.15%	6.81%	7.30%	18
1	6	2,281	87	-	87	1,016	44	1,060	44.76%	4.15%	8.56%	46
1	7	1,760	150	2	152	567	34	601	31.43%	5.66%	26.46%	15
1	8	1,377	56	3	59	581	33	614	42.76%	5.37%	9.64%	22
1	9	2,527	99	8	107	984	83	1,067	40.51%	7.78%	10.06%	42
1	10	970	15	1	16	391	26	417	42.29%	6.24%	3.84%	10
Ward 1 Subtotal		**19,015**	**680**	**27**	**707**	**8,277**	**587**	**8,864**	44.94%	**6.62%**	**8.22%**	**265**
2	1	1,440	37	4	41	614	55	669	45.17%	8.22%	6.03%	39
2	2	1,370	35	3	38	716	87	803	57.03%	10.83%	4.89%	44
2	3	1,757	168	5	173	547	35	582	30.16%	6.01%	30.71%	20
2	4	1,274	187	3	190	294	5	299	20.42%	1.67%	63.61%	7
2	5	2,092	125	-	125	710	45	755	34.06%	5.96%	17.61%	47
2	6	1,125	51	2	53	516	50	566	48.05%	8.83%	9.88%	24
2	7	637	128	3	131	239	39	278	36.20%	14.03%	53.56%	7
2	8	2,588	58	3	61	1,346	102	1,448	54.66%	7.04%	4.31%	85
2	9	1,076	109	6	115	462	54	516	43.32%	10.47%	23.59%	23
2	10	1,735	262	-	262	383	6	389	19.48%	1.54%	68.41%	12
2	11	1,372	44	3	47	688	41	729	51.37%	5.62%	6.40%	36
Ward 2 Subtotal		**16,466**	**1,204**	**32**	**1,236**	**6,515**	**519**	**7,034**	**39.74%**	**7.38%**	**18.48%**	**344**
3	1	2,916	353	17	370	585	36	621	18.90%	5.80%	60.34%	17
3	2	2,544	262	11	273	939	69	1,008	35.78%	6.85%	27.90%	27
3	3	2,809	156	14	170	1,244	272	1,516	50.89%	17.94%	12.54%	53
3	4	1,082	55	1	56	509	48	557	48.95%	8.62%	10.81%	30
3	5	1,616	63	11	74	731	91	822	48.64%	11.07%	8.62%	26
3	6	2,842	168	10	178	1,294	87	1,381	45.73%	6.30%	12.98%	64
3	7	2,186	80	14	94	829	112	941	41.27%	11.90%	9.65%	30
3	8	1,531	47	3	50	583	121	704	44.53%	17.19%	8.06%	27
3	9	2,291	66	14	80	727	259	986	41.59%	26.27%	9.08%	32
3	10	989	52	5	57	402	23	425	40.63%	5.41%	12.94%	15
3	11	1,370	72	4	76	524	70	594	41.08%	11.78%	13.74%	5
3	12	833	30	5	35	232	90	322	37.10%	27.95%	12.93%	17
Ward 3 Subtotal		**23,009**	**1,404**	**109**	**1,513**	**8,599**	**1,278**	**9,877**	40.28%	**12.94%**	**16.33%**	**343**

City of Minneapolis Statistics

General Elections November 7, 2017

Ward	Precinct	Registered Voters at 7am	Voters Registering at Polls	Voters Registering by Absentee	Total Registrations	Ballots Cast at Polling Place	Absentee Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Total Turnout	Percentage Absentee	% Registered to Total (Election Day)	Spoiled Ballots
4	1	1,730	23	1	24	502	30	532	30.33%	5.64%	4.58%	27
4	2	2,564	33	8	41	660	44	704	27.02%	6.25%	5.00%	31
4	3	1,525	22	1	23	335	26	361	23.32%	7.20%	6.57%	23
4	4	2,447	47	1	48	941	51	992	39.76%	5.14%	4.99%	39
4	5	2,731	56	2	58	716	29	745	26.71%	3.89%	7.82%	31
4	6	1,930	37	1	38	511	25	536	27.24%	4.66%	7.24%	28
4	7	1,723	55	-	55	734	26	760	42.74%	3.42%	7.49%	38
4	8	2,183	35	1	36	688	31	719	32.40%	4.31%	5.09%	35
Ward 4 Subtotal		**16,833**	**308**	**15**	**323**	**5,087**	**262**	**5,349**	31.18%	**4.90%**	**6.05%**	**252**
5	1	2,170	53	-	53	641	27	668	30.05%	4.04%	8.27%	44
5	2	2,173	39	1	40	504	18	522	23.59%	3.45%	7.74%	28
5	3	1,552	51	5	56	399	43	442	27.49%	9.73%	12.78%	26
5	4	1,371	32	4	36	479	32	511	36.32%	6.26%	6.68%	32
5	5	1,436	33	1	34	494	34	528	35.92%	6.44%	6.68%	39
5	6C	689	14	2	16	188	21	209	29.65%	10.05%	7.45%	13
5	7	2,015	37	2	39	355	34	389	18.94%	8.74%	10.42%	38
5	8	2,098	41	3	44	456	34	490	22.88%	6.94%	8.99%	26
5	9	1,432	34	14	48	448	71	519	35.07%	13.68%	7.59%	28
Ward 5 Subtotal		**14,936**	**334**	**32**	**366**	**3,964**	**314**	**4,278**	**27.96%**	**7.34%**	**8.43%**	**274**
6	1	826	39	15	54	401	110	511	58.07%	21.53%	9.73%	20
6	2	2,259	87	111	198	615	710	1,325	53.93%	53.58%	14.15%	45
6	3	2,674	82	318	400	395	1,446	1,841	59.89%	78.54%	20.76%	68
6	4	2,199	50	98	148	348	399	747	31.83%	53.41%	14.37%	31
6	5	1,175	39	94	133	218	444	662	50.61%	67.07%	17.89%	50
6	6	1,336	38	96	134	259	336	595	40.48%	56.47%	14.67%	27
6	7	815	21	50	71	195	234	429	48.42%	54.55%	10.77%	18
6	8	1,193	32	59	91	342	182	524	40.81%	34.73%	9.36%	33
6	9	1,877	101	41	142	560	203	763	37.79%	26.61%	18.04%	22
Ward 6 Subtotal		**14,354**	**489**	**882**	**1,371**	**3,333**	**4,064**	**7,397**	**47.04%**	**54.94%**	**14.67%**	**314**
7	1C	1,014	14	-	14	613	41	613	59.63%	6.69%	2.28%	23
7	2D	1,524	25	-	25	819	81	900	58.10%	9.00%	3.05%	37
7	3	2,435	91	9	100	1,147	138	1,285	50.69%	10.74%	7.93%	63
7	4D	2,333	53	8	61	918	128	1,046	43.69%	12.24%	5.77%	50
7	5	2,153	106	7	113	830	112	942	41.57%	11.89%	12.77%	38
7	6	2,954	81	16	97	605	178	783	25.66%	22.73%	13.39%	28
7	7	1,075	13	2	15	595	59	595	54.59%	9.92%	2.18%	34
7	8	3,612	109	7	116	1,242	297	1,539	41.28%	19.30%	8.78%	49
7	9	2,265	88	7	95	1,043	107	1,150	48.73%	9.30%	8.44%	54
7	10	741	45	2	47	277	25	302	38.32%	8.28%	16.25%	11
Ward 7 Subtotal		**20,106**	**625**	**58**	**683**	**8,089**	**1,166**	**9,255**	**44.52%**	**12.60%**	**7.73%**	**387**

City of Minneapolis Statistics

General Elections November 7, 2017

Ward	Precinct	Registered Voters at 7am	Voters Registering at Polls	Voters Registering by Absentee	Total Registrations	Ballots Cast at Polling Place	Absentee Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Total Turnout	Percentage Absentee	% Registered to Total (Election Day)	Spoiled Ballots
8	1	1,326	53	13	66	395	54	449	32.26%	12.03%	13.42%	34
8	2	2,666	124	3	127	1,098	64	1,162	41.60%	5.51%	11.29%	42
8	3	1,507	55	5	60	504	35	539	34.40%	6.49%	10.91%	28
8	4	1,554	44	4	48	680	35	715	44.63%	4.90%	6.47%	34
8	5	2,427	38	1	39	1,082	55	1,137	46.11%	4.84%	3.51%	41
8	6	2,382	80	4	84	1,215	62	1,277	51.78%	4.86%	6.58%	41
8	7	2,889	69	3	72	1,522	119	1,641	55.42%	7.25%	4.53%	50
8	8	2,756	85	2	87	1,287	68	1,355	47.66%	5.02%	6.60%	53
Ward 8 Subtotal		**17,507**	**548**	**35**	**583**	**7,783**	**492**	**8,275**	**45.74%**	**5.95%**	**7.04%**	**323**
9	1	1,275	41	6	47	444	63	507	38.35%	12.43%	9.23%	21
9	2	2,488	114	15	129	1,225	135	1,360	51.97%	9.93%	9.31%	62
9	3	1,852	55	43	98	497	173	670	34.36%	25.82%	11.07%	49
9	4	1,413	61	34	95	363	141	504	33.42%	27.98%	16.80%	42
9	5	597	30	7	37	230	37	267	42.11%	13.86%	13.04%	3
9	6	2,242	83	37	120	1,024	122	1,146	48.52%	10.65%	8.11%	59
9	7	1,244	39	3	42	614	44	658	51.17%	6.69%	6.35%	21
9	8	227	7	-	7	61	18	79	33.76%	22.78%	11.48%	4
9	9	1,143	43	12	55	396	63	459	38.31%	13.73%	10.86%	17
Ward 9 Subtotal		**12,481**	**473**	**157**	**630**	**4,854**	**796**	**5,650**	**43.09%**	**14.09%**	**9.74%**	**278**
10	1	2,057	135	3	138	861	57	918	41.82%	6.21%	15.68%	39
10	2	3,247	154	12	166	915	82	997	29.21%	8.22%	16.83%	21
10	3A	1,726	57	4	61	767	59	826	46.22%	7.14%	7.43%	24
10	4	1,790	88	6	94	712	50	762	40.45%	6.56%	12.36%	18
10	5A	1,473	45	6	51	702	68	770	50.52%	8.83%	6.41%	30
10	6	2,249	93	5	98	942	47	989	42.14%	4.75%	9.87%	34
10	7	1,699	125	5	130	600	60	660	36.09%	9.09%	20.83%	21
10	8	1,376	77	4	81	523	40	563	38.64%	7.10%	14.72%	9
10	9	2,387	138	9	147	726	73	799	31.53%	9.14%	19.01%	39
10	10	1,877	90	5	95	587	40	627	31.80%	6.38%	15.33%	26
Ward 10 Subtotal		**19,881**	**1,002**	**59**	**1,061**	**7,335**	**576**	**7,911**	**37.78%**	**7.28%**	**13.66%**	**261**
11	1	1,655	33	-	33	903	48	951	56.34%	5.05%	3.65%	27
11	2	2,293	41	18	59	1,011	136	1,147	48.77%	11.86%	4.06%	52
11	3	2,165	36	2	38	670	38	708	32.14%	5.37%	5.37%	41
11	4	2,655	59	5	64	1,429	87	1,516	55.76%	5.74%	4.13%	61
11	5	1,457	9	-	9	736	40	776	52.93%	5.15%	1.22%	22
11	6	2,388	43	1	44	1,234	58	1,292	53.13%	4.49%	3.48%	40
11	7	2,263	28	1	29	1,068	48	1,116	48.69%	4.30%	2.62%	30
11	8	2,120	48	-	48	874	44	918	42.34%	4.79%	5.49%	26
11	9	1,296	7	-	7	372	20	392	30.08%	5.10%	1.88%	21
11	10	1,613	28	-	28	727	49	776	47.29%	6.31%	3.85%	31
Ward 11 Subtotal		**19,905**	**332**	**27**	**359**	**9,024**	**568**	**9,592**	**47.34%**	**5.92%**	**3.68%**	**351**

City of Minneapolis Statistics

General Elections November 7, 2017

Ward	Precinct	Registered Voters at 7am	Voters Registering at Polls	Voters Registering by Absentee	Total Registrations	Ballots Cast at Polling Place	Absentee Voters	Total Ballots Cast	Total Turnout	Percentage Absentee	% Registered to Total (Election Day)	Spoiled Ballots
12	1	2,485	72	6	78	1,218	61	1,279	49.90%	4.77%	5.91%	48
12	2	2,305	42	-	42	1,101	52	1,153	49.13%	4.51%	3.81%	37
12	3	2,760	52	3	55	1,270	56	1,326	47.10%	4.22%	4.09%	69
12	4	1,264	25	-	25	626	30	656	50.89%	4.57%	3.99%	19
12	5	1,675	37	2	39	872	68	940	54.84%	7.23%	4.24%	28
12	6	1,502	28	-	28	674	43	717	46.86%	6.00%	4.15%	26
12	7	159	2	6	8	16	25	41	24.55%	60.98%	12.50%	2
12	8	1,126	36	2	38	554	27	581	49.91%	4.65%	6.50%	25
12	9	1,712	33	-	33	759	46	805	46.13%	5.71%	4.35%	29
12	10	1,964	44	-	44	702	29	731	36.40%	3.97%	6.27%	32
12	11	1,561	27	2	29	604	39	643	40.44%	6.07%	4.47%	28
12	12	2,563	62	17	79	1,123	142	1,265	47.88%	11.23%	5.52%	55
12	13	1,138	23	-	23	546	21	567	48.84%	3.70%	4.21%	21
Ward 12 Subtotal		**22,214**	**483**	**38**	**521**	**10,065**	**639**	**10,704**	**47.08%**	**5.97%**	**4.80%**	**419**
13	1	2,122	56	1	57	639	53	692	31.76%	7.66%	8.76%	31
13	2	1,212	32	-	32	606	32	638	51.29%	5.02%	5.28%	25
13	3	1,606	21	3	24	804	59	863	52.94%	6.84%	2.61%	35
13	4	1,691	38	1	39	779	29	808	46.71%	3.59%	4.88%	32
13	5	1,548	9	1	10	800	50	850	54.56%	5.88%	1.13%	38
13	6	1,977	34	1	35	1,068	104	1,172	58.25%	8.87%	3.18%	51
13	7	2,727	35	-	35	1,393	76	1,469	53.19%	5.17%	2.51%	41
13	8	2,024	20	-	20	968	52	1,020	49.90%	5.10%	2.07%	51
13	9	2,673	45	-	45	1,124	74	1,198	44.08%	6.18%	4.00%	55
13	10	1,064	26	2	28	550	44	594	54.40%	7.41%	4.73%	23
13	11	1,714	35	2	37	846	47	893	51.00%	5.26%	4.14%	37
13	12	1,045	18	1	19	562	29	591	55.55%	4.91%	3.20%	30
13	13	1,640	25	3	28	889	65	954	57.19%	6.81%	2.81%	35
Ward 13 Subtotal		**23,043**	**394**	**15**	**409**	**11,028**	**714**	**11,742**	**50.07%**	**6.08%**	**3.57%**	**484**

2017 General Election

Total Voter Turnout

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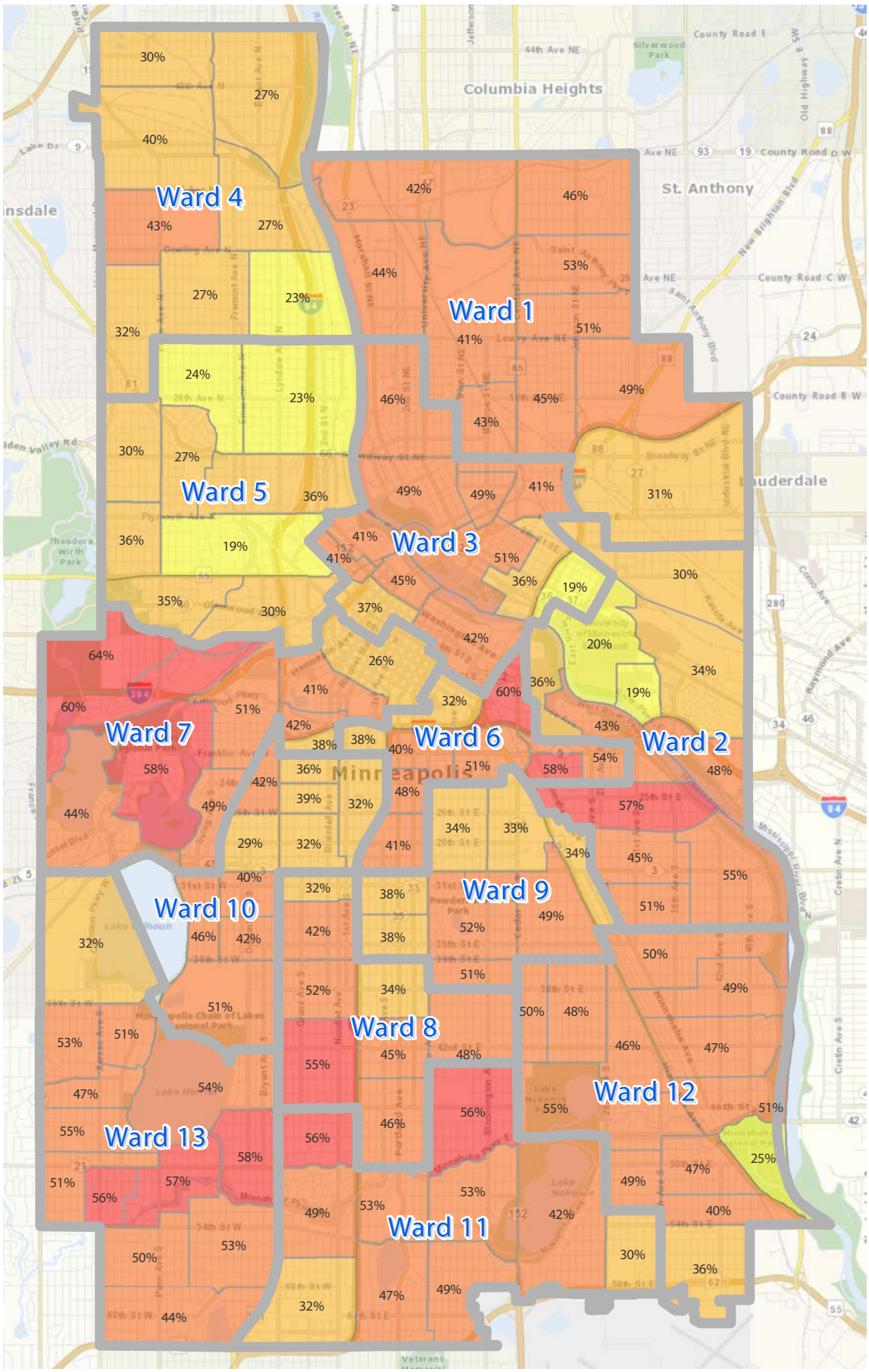

% by Precinct

- 18-25%
- 25-40%
- 40-55%
- 55-65%

2017 General Election

Percent Voting on Election Day

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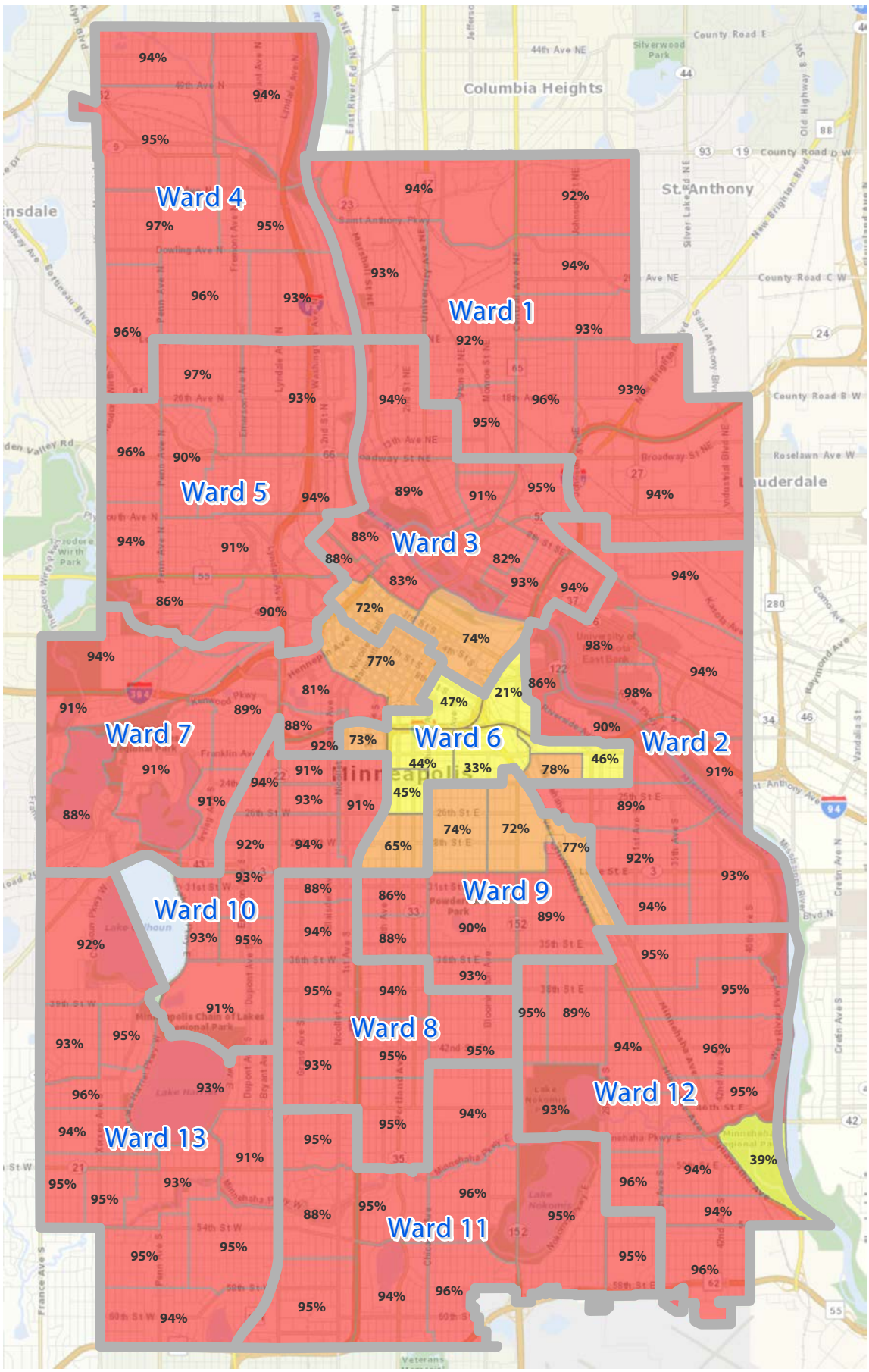

% by Precinct

- 20% - 50%
- 51% - 80 %
- 81% - 99%

2017 General Election

Percent Voting by Absentee Ballot

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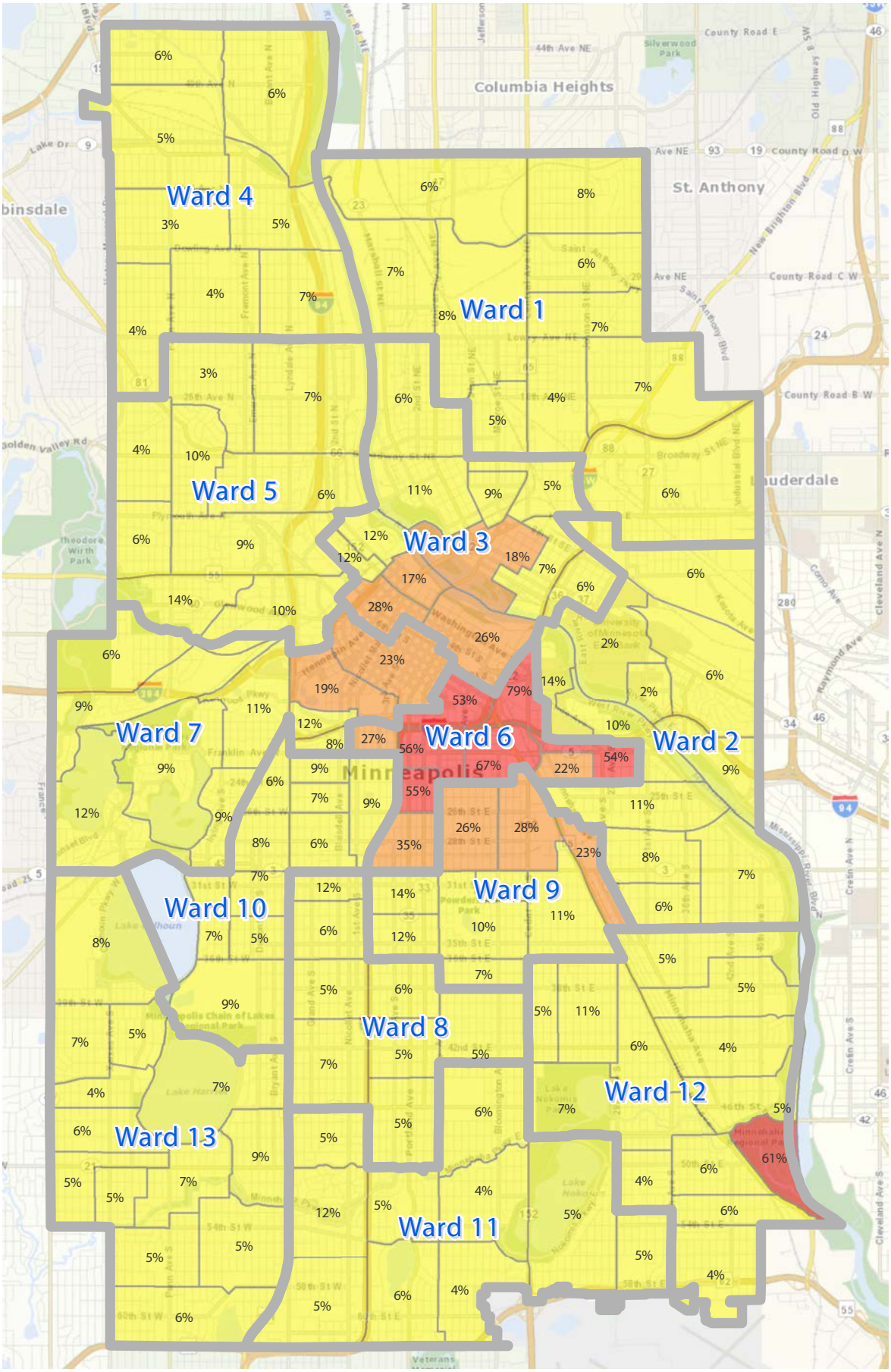

% by Precinct

- 0% - 15%
- 16% - 35%
- 36% - 80%

Survey Overview

The Morris Leatherman Company, is pleased to present the results of this study to the City of Minneapolis. This section provides a brief introduction to the specifications of the survey and a guide to the organization of the written analysis.

While the most statistically sound procedures have been used to collect and analyze the information presented herein, it must always be kept in mind that surveys are not predictions. They are designed to measure public opinion within identifiable limits of accuracy at *specific points in time*. This survey is in no way a prediction of opinions, perceptions, or actions at any future point in time. After all, in public policy analysis, the major task is to impact these revealed opinions in a constructive fashion.

The Principal Investigator for this study was Dr. William D. Morris; the Project Director overseeing all phases of the research and analysis was Mr. Peter Leatherman.

Research Design

This study contains the results of a telephone survey of 800 randomly selected voters in the 2017 Municipal election in the City of Minneapolis and a 500 randomly selected non-voters in the 2017 Municipal election in the City of Minneapolis. Survey responses were gathered by professional interviewers across the community between November 28th and December 15th, 2017.

The average interview took fifteen minutes.

All respondents interviewed in this study were part of a randomly generated sample of the City of Minneapolis. The random sample of 800 voters yields results projectable to the respective universe within ± 3.5 percent in 95 out of 100 cases, while the random sample of 500 non-voters yields results projectable to the respective universe within +/-4.5 in 95 out of 100 cases.

Interviews were conducted by **Morris Leatherman Company** trained personnel from telephone banks in St. Paul, Minnesota. Approximately twenty percent of all interviews were independently validated for procedure and content by a Morris Leatherman Company supervisor. Completed interviews were edited and coded at the company's headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Statistical analysis and cross-tabulations were produced by the company's CfMC Mentor Analysis System and SPSS 24.0 FOR WINDOWS.

Organization of the Study

The results of this study are presented in the following order:

The ***Analysis*** consists of a written report of the major findings. The results contained herein were also presented verbally to the client.

The ***Questionnaire*** reproduces the survey instrument as it was used in the interviewing process. This section also includes a response frequency distribution for each question.

Any further questions the reader may have about this study which are not answered in this report should be directed to either Dr. Morris or Mr. Leatherman.

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Analysis

Chapter One: Residential Demographics

Residential Demographics

Respondents in the City of Minneapolis were asked a series of questions about their demographic backgrounds. These questions were asked to track any differences between subgroups and the rest of the population. Throughout the course of this study, subgroup differences will be discussed.

Age of Respondent

Respondents were asked:

What age group are you a member of?

The median age of a 2017 voter is 46.2 years old; the median age of a 2017 non-voter is 41.3 years old:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
18-24	5%	11%
25-34	13%	20%
35-44	26%	26%
45-54	27%	19%
55-64	16%	13%
65 AND OVER	13%	12%

It is noteworthy only 18% of the voters report ages of 34 years old and younger, while 31% of the non-voters report ages in that same range.

Educational Level

Respondents were next queried:

What is the last grade of formal education you completed?

They typical 2017 voter is a college-graduate; the typical non-voter has some college experience, albeit short of graduation:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS	1%	4%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	17%	29%

VO-TECH/TECH COLLEGE	15%	14%
SOME COLLEGE	19%	19%
COLLEGE GRADUATE	38%	25%
POST GRADUATE	10%	5%
REFUSED	1%	2%

While 18% of the 2017 voters possess a high school education or less, 33% of the non-voters report the same education level. Similarly, 48% of the 2017 voters have college educations, while 30% of the non-voters report the same educational experience.

Ethnicity

Minneapolis residents were queried:

> ***Which of the following categories represents your ethnicity – Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic-Latino, Asian-Pacific Islander, American Indian, or something else? What would that be?***

Fifty-seven percent of the 2017 voters self-report as "Caucasian," while 43% of the 2013 non-voters identify the same way:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
AFRICAN	1%	2%
AFRICAN-AMERICAN	21%	25%
AMERICAN-INDIAN	3%	6%
ASIAN	2%	3%
ASIAN-AMERICAN	2%	4%
HISPANIC-LATINO	5%	7%
PACIFIC-ISLANDER	2%	1%
CAUCASIAN	57%	43%
MIXED/BI-RACIAL	7%	9%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	1%	0%

African or African-Americans are 22% of the 2017 electorate; they compose 27% of the non-voters. Hispanic-Latino and Asian-Pacific Islander ethnic groups show roughly the same proportion.

Telephone Service

Respondents were asked:

Is your household telephone service by land line only, cell phone only, or both land line or cell phone?

A majority of 2017 voters use both types of telephone service; while a plurality of non-voters indicate being a cell phone only household.

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
LAND LINE ONLY	15%	16%
CELL PHONE ONLY	32%	44%
BOTH LAND/CELL	52%	40%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

Zip Code

Interviewees were next asked:

What is your zipcode?

Both 2017 voters and non-voters reflect the pattern of turnout across the community:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
55401	2%	2%
55402	1%	1%
55403	3%	3%
55404	4%	4%
55405	3%	3%
55406	12%	10%
55407	11%	9%
55408	3%	6%
55409	3%	3%
55410	5%	7%
55411	4%	3%
55412	7%	4%
55413	3%	3%
55414	4%	3%
55415	1%	3%
55416	3%	4%
55417	11%	12%
55418	7%	7%
55419	8%	9%
55430	3%	1%
55454	3%	1%
55455	2%	1%

Income

Respondents were asked:

> ***Would you please tell me the range which best represents the total yearly income, before taxes, of all immediate family living in your household?***

The median pre-tax yearly household income for 2017 voters is $41,000.00; the median for 2017 non-voters is $30,900.00:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
UNDER $15,000.	3%	7%
$15,000 TO $25,000.	12%	25%
$25,001 TO $35,000.	21%	27%
$35,001 TO $50,000.	30%	21%
$50,001 TO $75,000.	22%	13%
$75,001 TO $100,000.	4%	2%
OVER $100,000..	3%	1%
DON'T KNOW.	2%	2%
REFUSED.	4%	3%

Households reporting yearly incomes under $35,000.00 are 36% of the 2017 voters group and 59% of the non-voters group. Similarly, households posting incomes over $50,000.00 are 29% of the 2017 voters group and 16% of the non-voters group.

Gender

The gender of each respondent was noted:

	VOTER	NON-VOTER
MALE.	47%	52%
FEMALE.	53%	48%

There was no significant gender difference between the two groups.

Summary and Conclusions

2017 Minneapolis municipal election voters were more often than non-voters older, have more formal education, more often Caucasian, and members of higher income households.

Chapter Two: Voters

Voters

Identified 2017 Minneapolis voters were asked a series of questions about the ranked choice voter system. In general, knowledge about the system, confidence in the system and eases of voting were highly rated.

In Person or Absentee

Respondents were asked:

Did you vote in person or absentee?

Eighty-nine percent report voting in person:

	2013	2017
IN-PERSON	92%	89%
ABSENTEE	8%	11%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Eleven percent report submitting absentee ballots.

"In-person" was indicated more often by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

"Absentee" is cited more often by:

- Hispanic-Latinos
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Know Before about RCV

2017 Minneapolis voters were queried:

Before you voted, did you know you would be asked to rank your vote choices?

Seventy-nine percent knew before they voted they would be asked to rank choices, down a statistically significant 13% from 2013:

	2013	2017
YES	92%	79%
NO	8%	21%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Twenty-one percent report they were unaware, almost tripe the 2013 level.

Knowledge was higher among:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates

It was lower among:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- Residents with some college experience
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

Information Sources about RCV

Respondent were asked a general question:

How did you learn about ranked choice voting?

A list of eight potential sources was then read:

Newspapers?

Fifty-three percent learned about RCV through the newspapers:

	2013	2017
YES	74%	53%
NO	26%	47%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

Newspapers as a source of information dropped 21% between the two studies.

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Caucasians
- College graduates
- Residents in the Southeast area of the city

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- Hispanic-Latinos
- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the Northeast and West Central areas of the city

Minneapolis website?

Forty-five percent learned from the City of Minneapolis website:

	2013	2017
YES	24%	45%
NO	76%	55%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

The impact of the city's website increased by 21%, nearly double, in four years.

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- Hispanic-Latinos
- College graduates
- $50,000 to $75,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Over fifty-four year olds
- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- Residents with some college experience
- Under $25,000 annual income households

Mailed brochure?

Seventy-nine percent learned about ranked choice voting from a mailed brochure, an increase of 14% over the 2013 level:

	2013	2017
YES	65%	79%
NO	35%	20%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- College graduates

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- High school graduates or less
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Neighbor, friend or relative?

Sixty-five percent, a 22% increase since the last municipal election, obtained information from a neighbor, friend or relative:

	2013	2017
YES	43%	65%
NO	57%	35%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Hispanic-Latinos
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- Under $25,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Asian-Pacific Islanders
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Television news?

Fifty-six percent, a drop of 13% compared to the 2013 election, learned about ranked choice voting from television news:

	2013	2017
YES	69%	56%
NO	31%	44%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Fifty-five to sixty-four year olds

Radio news?

Twenty-five percent learned about it from radio news:

	2013	2017
YES	28%	25%
NO	72%	75%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Caucasians
- College graduates
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- African-Americans
- High school graduates or less

Door to door?

Twenty-one percent, almost double the 2013 level, learned about ranked choice voting from door-to-door interpersonal efforts:

	2013	2017
YES	12%	21%
NO	88%	79%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Over sixty-four year olds

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Residents with some college experience
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Something else?

Only one percent reported learning about it from another source:

	2013	2017
YES	8%	1%
NO	92%	99%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

There are no statistically significant sub-group differences.

Level of Understanding

Respondents were asked:

Prior to voting, would you say your level of understanding of how ranked choice voting functions was perfectly well, fairly well, not entirely understood or not at all understood?

Eighty-one percent again, either knew how ranked choice voting functioned "perfectly well" or "fairly well:"

	2013	2017
PERFECTLY WELL	44%	35%
FAIRLY WELL	37%	46%
NOT ENTIRELY	13%	12%
NOT AT ALL	6%	6%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Eighteen percent rated their knowledge lower.

"Perfectly well" is stated more often by:

- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents

"Fairly well" is cited more frequently by:

- African-Americans
- Residents in the Southeast area of the city

"Not entirely" is posted most often by:

- Caucasians

- Residents with some college experience
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Helpfulness of Election Judges

Respondents were asked:

> ***In your personal opinion, did you find the election judges explanation of ranked choice voting very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful or not at all helpful when you cast your ballot?***

Eighty-six percent, a six percent increase over the 2013 election, found the explanation of ranked choice voting by election judges either "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful:"

	2013	2017
VERY HELPFUL.	42%	44%
SOMEWHAT HELPFUL.	38%	42%
NOT VERY HELPFUL.	8%	8%
NOT AT ALL HELPFUL.	3%	4%
DON'T KNOW.	8%	3%
REFUSED.	0%	0%

Only 12% were more critical in their evaluations.

"Very helpful" is cited at a higher rate by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- College graduates

"Somewhat helpful" is mentioned more often by:

- Eighteen to forty-four year olds
- Residents with some college experience

Actually Rank Candidates

2017 Minneapolis election voters were asked:

> ***Did you actually rank any candidates after your first choice or did you only vote for your first choice?***

Seventy-nine percent report they “ranked some candidates after their first choice:”

	2013	2017
RANKED SOME	82%	79%
FIRST CHOICE ONLY	18%	21%
DON’T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Twenty-one percent ranked “only a first choice.”

“Ranked some” is stated most often by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- College graduates
- Residents in the Southwest area of the city

“First choice only” is indicated more frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the West Central area of the city

The sub-sample who reported “ranking some choices” were asked a follow-up question:

In your opinion, was it simple or difficult to rank your choices on the ballot?

Ninety-two percent report it was “simple” to rank their choices on the ballot:

	2013	2017
SIMPLE	87%	92%
DIFFICULT	12%	8%
DON’T KNOW	0%	0%
REFUSED	1%	0%

Only 8% report “difficulty.”

“Simple” is stated more often by:

- Women
- $35,000 to $50,000 annual income households

"Difficult" is mentioned more frequently by:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Men

The sub-sample who ranked "first choice only" were asked a short series of follow-up questions:

Why did you not rank your vote choice?

A list of seven possible factors was then read:

I didn't know enough about the other candidates?

Sixty-seven percent, up six percent, report their lack of knowledge about other candidates is a factor:

	2013	2017
YES	61%	67%
NO	39%	33%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Over $75,000 annual income households

None of the other candidates were acceptable?

Forty-four percent, an eight percent increase over the 2013 election, found none of the other candidates acceptable:

	2013	2017
YES	36%	44%
NO	63%	56%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Caucasians
- Residents in the Southeast area of the city
- $35,000 to $50,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Asian-Pacific Islanders

I will always pick one candidate?

Fifty-six percent, up nine percent compared to the 2013 election, indicate they will always pick just one candidate, regardless of the ability to rank choices:

	2013	2017
YES	47%	56%
NO	53%	43%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Caucasians
- College graduates
- Under $25,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Asian-Pacific Islanders
- Residents in the southeast area of the city

I didn't know I could rank candidates?

Fourteen percent, almost identical to the 2013 level, report they did not know they could rank candidates:

	2013	2017
YES	12%	14%
NO	88%	86%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

There are no statistically significant sub-group differences.

I didn't understand that part of the ballot?

Thirty-six percent, consistent with the 2013 findings, report difficulty in understanding the ranked choice section of the election ballot:

	2013	2017
YES	35%	36%
NO	65%	64%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the Southwest area of the city
- Under $35,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Residents in the Southeast area of the city

I wanted to give an advantage to my favorite candidate?

Fifty-eight percent, a 20% increase compared to the 2013 election, "bullet balloted" to advantage their favorite candidate:

	2013	2017
YES	38%	58%
NO	58%	43%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	4%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds

"No" is cited more often by:

- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the Southwest area of the city

Some other reason?

Only one percent report another reason for choosing only one candidate:

	2013	2017
YES	9%	1%
NO	92%	99%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

There are no statistically significant sub-group differences.

Opinion of RCV

2017 Minneapolis election voters were asked:

> ***What is your opinion of the ranked choice voting system?***
> ***A) I prefer ranked choice voting to traditional voting in a primary or general election;***
> ***B) I prefer the traditional voting system; OR***
> ***C) It doesn't matter to me which system is used?***

Thirty-nine percent, identical to the 2013 level, prefer ranked choice voting; twenty-two percent prefer traditional voting, a drop of 19% over four years; and, 37%, twenty percent higher than the 2013 level, report it makes no difference to them:

	2013	2017
STATEMENT A.	39%	39%
STATEMENT B.	41%	22%
STATEMENT C.	17%	37%
DON'T KNOW.	3%	1%
REFUSED.	0%	0%

"Statement A" is mentioned most frequently by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- Fifty-five to sixty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- College graduates
- Over $75,000 annual income households

"Statement B" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- Men

"Statement C" is indicated more often by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- Hispanic-Latinos
- Residents with some college experience
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

Delay in Announcing Winners

Minneapolis election voters preferring the traditional primary-general election voting system were reminded:

> ***Automated tabulating equipment is not certified to be used in Minnesota. This meant final results in all races were not known until the day following the election.***

They were then asked:

> ***If there were no such delay in announcing the winners of a ranked choice voting election, would you then change your opinion about ranked choice voting?***

Twenty percent, an increase of 12% over the 2013 level, report a lack of delay would change their opinion about ranked choice voting:

	2013	2017
YES	8%	20%
NO	86%	61%
DON'T KNOW	6%	19%
REFUSED	0%	0%

But, a majority of 61% would be unmoved by the decreased waiting time for results.

Agreement is higher among:

- Hispanic-Latinos
- College graduates

It is lower among:

- Asian-Pacific Islanders

Confidence in Counting of Votes

Minneapolis voters were asked:

> ***Are you very confident, confident, not entirely confident, or not confident at all that votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting?***

Seventy-six percent, consistent with the 2013 level, are either "very confident" or "confident" all voters were counted accurately using ranked choice voting:

	2013	2017
VERY CONFIDENT	30%	32%
CONFIDENT	47%	44%
NOT ENTIRELY CONFIDENT	15%	18%
NOT CONFIDENT AT ALL	4%	4%
DON'T KNOW	3%	1%
REFUSED	0%	0%

"Very confident" is selected more often by:

- Thirty-five to fifty-four year olds
- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- College graduates
- Residents in the Southwest area of the city
- Over $75,000 annual income households

"Confident" is indicated more frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- Caucasians

"Not entirely confident" is posted more frequently by:

- Residents with some college experience
- Under $25,000 annual income households

RCV Used in Future

Next, 2017 Minneapolis election voters were queried:

> ***Do you think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections?***

Sixty-six percent, up 13% in four years, think RCV should be used in future municipal elections:

	2013	2017
YES	53%	66%
NO	37%	16%
DON'T KNOW	11%	18%
REFUSED	0%	1%

Sixteen percent think RCV should not be used in future municipal elections, a decrease of 21% during the same time frame, while 18% were uncertain.

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- College graduates

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Asian-Pacific Islanders
- Men

Different Winner

2017 election voters were instructed:

> ***Suppose the outcome of this election had resulted in a different winner than there would have been in a traditional primary and general election.***

They were then asked:

> ***Which of the following best describes your opinion if this happened?***
> ***A) I would prefer the ranked choice voting result because it is more accurate;***
> ***B) I would prefer the traditional primary and general election result, because it is tried and true; OR***
> ***C) I wouldn't care which system were used?***

While 38% would prefer "the ranked choice vote result" in this situation, while 23% opted for "the traditional primary and general election result:"

	2013	2017
STATEMENT A.	37%	38%
STATEMENT B.	41%	23%
STATEMENT C.	19%	38%
DON'T KNOW.	3%	1%
REFUSED.	0%	1%

The greatest changes are the decreased preference for "the traditional primary and general election result," and the doubling of "wouldn't care which system were used."

"Statement A" is cited at a higher rate by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- College graduates
- Over $75,000 annual income households

"Statement B" is posted more often by:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Asian-Pacific Islanders
- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the East Central area of the city

"Statement C" is mentioned at a higher rate by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- Hispanic-Latinos
- Residents with some college experience
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

Voting Behavior

Last years's municipal election were asked to classify themselves:

Would you say you were a regular voter, occasional voter, or you've never voted in past municipal elections?

Sixty-seven percent report they are "regular voters;" but 30%, six times higher than the 2013 level, are "occasional voters."

	2013	2017
REGULAR VOTER.	95%	67%
OCCASIONAL VOTER.	5%	30%
NEVER VOTED.	0%	1%
FIRST TIME COULD VOTE.	0%	2%
DON'T KNOW.	0%	0%
REFUSED.	0%	0%

"Regular voters" tend to be:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Over sixty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates
- $50,000 to $75,000 annual income households

"Occasional voters" are typically:

- Eighteen to forty-four year olds
- Residents with some college experience
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- Men
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

Summary and Conclusions

Eleven percent of the 2017 Minneapolis municipal voters did so by absentee ballot; the remainder, did so in person. Only sixty-seven percent classify themselves as "regular voters" in past municipal elections, a drop of 28%. In terms of past voting behavior, this electorate was composed of less frequent voter and sporadic odd-year participants.

Seventy-nine percent reported they knew they would be asked to rank their vote choices. The most effective sources of information about ranked choice voters in 2017 were: mailed brochures, at 79% reach; neighbors, friends and relatives at 65% reach; television news at 56% reach; and, newspapers, at 53% reach.

Eighty-one percent of 2017 municipal voters reported they at least "fairly well" understood how ranked choice voting functions. Eighty-six percent also thought the election judges explanation of ranked choice voting was "helpful."

Seventy-nine percent of municipal voters ranked candidates after their first choice; ninety-two percent of this group found it simple to do so. The principal reasons for ranking only a first choice were: "I didn't know enough about the other candidates," at 67%; "I wanted to give an advantage to my favorite candidate," at 58%; and, "I will always pick one candidate," at 56%. "Strategic voting," choosing only one candidate to provide an advantage, increased by 20% since

the 2013 election. Seventy-six percent of 2017 voters are "confident" about the accuracy of the vote count using ranked choice voting.

Voters again split on their preferred voting system – 39% prefer the ranked choice voting system, while 22% prefer the traditional voting system, a drop of 19% in four years. But, thirty-seven percent are indifferent between the two voting systems reflecting an increase of 20%. The absence of a delay in announcing election results has a minor impact on voters preferring the traditional voting system: twenty percent would change their opinion. Voters also split in their reaction to an outcome in which the RCV election results in a different winner than there would have been in a traditional primary and general election – 38% prefer the ranked choice voting result because it is more accurate, and 23% prefer the traditional primary and general election simply because it is tried and true, and 38% remain indifferent.

In weighing the costs and benefits, a 66% majority, up 13% in four years, thinks ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections, while only 16% disagree, and 18% are unsure.

Chapter Three: Non-Voters

Non-Voters

Non-voters in the 2017 Minneapolis municipal elections were asked a series of questions. First, their reason for not voting was ascertained, followed by a an examination of their knowledge of the ranked choice voting system. In the four years since the last study, non-voters' antipathy toward the new election system has significantly abated. Instead, these non-voters are most indifferent to the election system used, but much more unlikely to vote in municipal election regardless.

Reason for Not Voting

Non-voters were initially asked:

> ***Why did you not vote in this year's municipal election, was it because you:***
> ***A) just didn't have time;***
> ***B) forgot about the election;***
> ***C) don't care for the ranked choice method of voting;***
> ***OR***
> ***D) don't care much about voting in municipal elections?***

Thirty-three percent "don't care much about voting in municipal elections;" while 29% "didn't have time:"

	2013	2017
STATEMENT A.	33%	29%
STATEMENT B.	11%	21%
STATEMENT C.	12%	13%
STATEMENT D.	28%	33%
ELSE	16%	3%
DON'T KNOW.	0%	0%
REFUSED.	0%	0%

But, 21%, almost double the 2013 level, report they "forgot about the election."

Only 13%, consistent with the 2013 finding, specified they "didn't care much for the ranked choice method of voting."

"Statement C" is stated more often by:

- Over fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians

"Statement D" is selected most often by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- High school graduates or less
- Men

Know about Use of RCV

Non-voters were next asked:

Did you know this election would use the ranked choice method of voting?

Forty-four percent, down 19% compared to the 2013 study, report awareness:

	2013	2017
YES	63%	44%
NO	37%	55%
DON'T KNOW	0%	1%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Fifty-five percent, an increase of 18%, were unaware.

Knowledge increases among:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates
- Over $50,000 annual income households

It decreases among:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- High school graduates or less
- Under $25,000 annual income households

Information Sources about RCV

2017 non-voters were asked:

How did you learn about ranked choice voting?

A list of eight potential sources were then read:

Newspapers?

Fifty-three percent, down 19% from the result four years ago, report learning about ranked choice voting:

	2013	2017
YES	72%	53%
NO	28%	46%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Fifty-five to sixty-four year olds

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds

Minneapolis website?

Thirty percent, nearly triple the 2013 level, learned about RCV from the Minneapolis website:

	2013	2017
YES	11%	30%
NO	89%	70%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- College graduates

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- High school graduates or less
- Residents with some college experience
- Under $25,000 annual income households

Mailed brochure?

Eighty-one percent, up 17% from the 2013 result, read about ranked choice voting in mailed brochures:

	2013	2017
YES	64%	81%
NO	36%	18%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

"No" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Over $75,000 annual income households

Neighbor, friend or relative?

Sixty-five percent, showing an increase of 20%, learned about rank choice voting in discussions with neighbors, friends or relatives:

	2013	2017
YES	45%	65%
NO	55%	35%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"No" is reported more frequently by:

- High school graduates or less

Television news?

Fifty-nine percent, down six percent since the 2013 survey, report learning about ranked choice voting on television news:

	2013	2017
YES	65%	59%
NO	36%	40%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

"No" is cited more often by:

- Residents in the West Central area of the city

Radio news?

Twenty-six percent learned about the new voting system from radio news:

	2013	2017
YES	26%	26%
NO	74%	73%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%

"Yes" is mentioned most frequently by:

- Residents in the East central area of the city

"No" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- Residents in the Northeast area of the city

Door-to-door?

Thirteen percent were informed about ranked choice voting in door-to-door contacts:

	2013	2017
YES	11%	13%
NO	90%	88%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

"Yes" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Over sixty-four year olds
- Hispanic-Latinos
- $35,000 to $50,000 annual income households

"No" is stated most frequently by:

- Under $25,000 annual income households

Something else?

Only five percent learned about RCV from another source:

	2013	2017
YES	5%	5%
NO	95%	95%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%

There are no statistically significant sub-group differences.

RCV Simple or Difficult

2017 municipal non-voters were asked:

> ***Based on what you know, would you say it would be simple or difficult to rank your choices on the ballot?***

Non-voters divide on the simplicity of the ranked choice voting system: forty-four percent think it is "simple," 28% think it is "difficult," and 27% are unsure:

	2013	2017
SIMPLE	33%	44%
DIFFICULT	37%	28%
DON'T KNOW	29%	27%
REFUSED	1%	0%

Non-voters seeing it as "difficult" dropped nine percent from the 2013 study.

"Simple" is cited most often by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates
- $50,000 to $75,000 annual income households

Opinion of RCV

Non-voters were queried:

> ***What is your opinion of the ranked choice voting system?***
> ***A) I prefer ranked choice voting to traditional voting in a primary or general election;***
> ***B) I prefer the traditional voting system; OR***
> ***C) It doesn't matter to me which system is used?***

By an almost 4-to-1 margin, non-voters prefer the traditional voting system over ranked choice voting:

	2013	2017
STATEMENT A.	9%	10%
STATEMENT B.	57%	37%
STATEMENT C.	20%	41%
DON'T KNOW.	14%	11%
REFUSED.	1%	0%

A large 41% are indifferent between the two voting systems.

"Statement A" is selected at a higher rate by:

- College graduates

"Statement B" is mentioned most frequently by:

- Over fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians

"Statement C" is cited more frequently by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- Residents in the West Central area of the city

Fairness of RCV

Next, 2017 non-voters were queried:

Personally, would you say ranked choice voting is very fair, fair, probably not fair or not at all fair?

Forty-two percent view RCV as "very fair" or "fair," while 30% think it is "probably not fair" or "not at all fair:"

	2013	2017
VERY FAIR.	7%	8%
FAIR	36%	34%
PROBABLY NOT FAIR.	21%	22%
NOT AT ALL FAIR.	7%	8%
DON'T KNOW.	28%	27%
REFUSED.	1%	0%

Twenty-seven percent are unsure.

"Very fair" is indicated most often by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds

"Fair" is posted at a higher rate by:

- Thirty-five to forty-four year olds
- $25,000 to $35,000 annual income households

Confidence in Counting of Votes

2017 Minneapolis election non-voters were asked:

> ***Are you very confident, confident, not entirely confident, or not confident at all that votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting?***

Thirty-five percent, down seven percent from the 2013 level, are "very confident" or "confident" votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting; but, 42%, up nine percent, are "not entirely confident" or "not confident at all:"

	2013	2017
VERY CONFIDENT	8%	8%
CONFIDENT	34%	27%
NOT ENTIRELY CONFIDENT	26%	30%
NOT CONFIDENT AT ALL	7%	12%
DON'T KNOW	23%	23%
REFUSED	1%	0%

Twenty-three percent are unsure about the accuracy of the vote count.

"Very confident" is selected most frequently by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- College graduates

"Confident" is posted more often by:

- Over $75,000 annual income households

"Not entirely confident" is cited more often by:

- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- Residents in the West Central area of the city

RCV Used in Future

Non-voters were queried:

> ***Do you think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections?***

Thirty percent, an increase of 11% from the 2013 result, endorse its future use; while twenty-seven percent, a large decrease of 22%, do not think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections:

	2013	2017
YES	19%	30%
NO	49%	27%
DON'T KNOW	31%	43%
REFUSED	1%	0%

Forty-three percent are uncertain.

"Yes" is stated more often by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- College graduates
- Over $75,000 annual income households

"No" is indicated more frequently by:

- Fifty-five to sixty-four year olds
- Caucasians

Next, residents opposed to the future use of ranked choice voting were told:

> ***Automated tabulating equipment is not certified to be used in Minnesota. This meant final results in all races were not known until the Friday following the election.***

They were then asked:

> ***If there were no such delay in announcing the winners of a ranked choice voting election, would you then change your opinion about ranked choice voting?***

Seventy-six percent report delay or not, they would not change their opinion of ranked choice voting:

	2013	2017
YES	9%	6%
NO	85%	76%
DON'T KNOW	7%	18%
REFUSED	0%	0%

Six percent would change their opinion of RCV if there were no delay in announcing the winners. Uncertainty increased by 11% since the 2013 study.

"Yes" is posted more often by:

- African-Americans

"No" is cited most frequently by:

- Caucasians

Future Voting Behavior

Non-voters were queried:

> ***Would you say you are very likely, likely, probably not likely or not at all likely to vote in future Minneapolis municipal election?***

Fourteen percent, down nine percent from the 2013 level, report they are "very likely" to vote in future Minneapolis municipal elections:

	2013	2017
VERY LIKELY	23%	14%
LIKELY	35%	28%
PROBABLY NOT LIKELY	20%	27%
NOT AT ALL LIKELY	13%	25%
DON'T KNOW	8%	7%
REFUSED	1%	0%

Another 28%, down seven percent, are "likely" to do so. The combined "probably not likely" and "not at all likely" response is 52%, reflecting a 19% increase since the 2013 study.

"Very likely" is posted more often by:

- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates
- Over $50,000 annual income households

"Not at all likely" is mentioned more often by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- American Indians or Multi-Racial residents
- Residents in the Northwest area of the city
- Under $35,000 annual income households

Summary and Conclusions

Thirty-three percent of 2017 non-voters report they "don't care much about voting in municipal elections" to vote, while 29% just " just didn't have time." Twenty-one percent, nearly double the 2013 level, "forgot about the election," and 13% "don't care for the ranked choice method of voting." Forty-four percent also report they knew this election would use the ranked choice method of voting, a 19% decline from 2013. Four sources of information are most enlightening for non-voters: "mailed brochures," at 81% reach; "neighbors, friends or relatives," at 65% reach; "television news," at 59% reach; and, "newspapers," at 53% reach.

Non-voters are more apt to see rank choice voting as "simple" rather than "difficult." By a 37%-10% margin, non-voters prefer the traditional voting system over ranked choice voting. However, 41% indicated "it doesn't matter to me which system is used," an increase of 21% since 2013. Even so, by a 42%-30% margin, non-voters thought RCV is "fair." However, by a 42%-35% margin, non-voters are "not confident" votes are counted accurately using ranked choice voting.

Non-voters are split about the use of ranked choice voting in future municipal elections by a 30%-27% margin. A large 43% are simply unsure. Few opponents of rank choice voting would change their view even if delays in announcing the winner could be avoided.

Fourteen percent of 2017 non-voters are "very likely" to vote in future Minneapolis municipal election, and 28% are "likely" to do so.

These results translate into two conclusions about 2017 non-voters: first, in comparison to 2013, they are much lower probability municipal election voters in general; and second, resistance to rank choice voting has substantially decreased.

Chapter Four: Voter Guide

Voter Guide

This year, respondents were asked specifically about the voter guide mailed to every household in the City of Minneapolis. While about one third of the sample do no recall receiving the mailing, 80% of residents receiving the publication viewed it as "helpful."

Receipt and Readership

Respondents were told:

> ***The City of Minneapolis mailed a voter guide to every household in the city.***

They were then asked:

> ***Do you recall receiving the voter guide? Did you read it?***

NO	31%
YES/YES	55%
YES/NO	14%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%

Thirty-one percent "do not recall receiving the voter guide," and fourteen percent "received the voter guide, but did not read it." However, a 55% majority both "received and read the voter guide."

"No" is reported most frequently by:

- 2017 non-voters
- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds
- African-Americans
- High school graduates or less
- Residents in the Southeast area of the city
- Under $25,000 annual income households

"Yes/yes" is cited more often by:

- 2017 voters
- Forty-five to fifty-four year olds
- Caucasians
- College graduates
- $50,000 to $75,000 annual income households

"Yes/no" mentioned more often by:

- 2017 non-voters
- Residents in the Southwest area of the city
- Over $75,000 annual income households

Helpfulness of Voter Guide

Respondents receiving and reading the voter guide were asked a follow-up query:

Did you find the voter guide to be very helpful, somewhat helpful, not too helpful, or not at all helpful?

Eighty-five percent found it "helpful:"

VERY HELPFUL.	39%
SOMEWHAT HELPFUL.	46%
NOT TOO HELPFUL.	12%
NOT AT ALL HELPFUL.	3%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.	1%

Only 15% deemed the voter guide as "unhelpful."

"Very helpful" is reported most frequently by:

- 2017 voters
- Fifty-five to sixty-four year olds
- College graduates

"Somewhat helpful" is indicated more often by:

- Eighteen to thirty-four year olds

"Not too helpful" is posted more often by:

- 2017 non-voters
- Over sixty-four year olds
- Residents with post-secondary experience

Summary and Conclusions

Voters in the 2017 municipal election were much more apt to read the publication and rate it as "helpful" than non-voters.

Seventy percent of voters both received and read the voter guide; only nine percent received it and did not read it. Twenty-one percent of these voters could not recall actually receiving the voter guide. A very solid 90% of voter guide readers label it as "helpful."

Only 30% of 2017 non-voters received and read this city mailing, while 21% received it but did not read the guide. In fact, 48% could not recall receiving the brochure. Even so, 63% of the readers found it "helpful," while 36% disagreed.

The key difference between the two groups, then, lies in the readership rates. Majorities of reader, regardless of voting or not in 2017, found the information helpful.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Conclusions

- Eleven percent of the 2017 Minneapolis municipal voters did so by absentee ballot; the remainder, did so in person. Only sixty-seven percent classify themselves as "regular voters" in past municipal elections, a drop of 28%. In terms of past voting behavior, this electorate was composed of less frequent voter and sporadic odd-year participants. Seventy-nine percent reported they knew they would be asked to rank their vote choices. The most effective sources of information about ranked choice voters in 2017 were: mailed brochures, at 79% reach; neighbors, friends and relatives at 65% reach; television news at 56% reach; and, newspapers, at 53% reach. Eighty-one percent of 2017 municipal voters reported they at least "fairly well" understood how ranked choice voting functions. Eighty-six percent also thought the election judges explanation of ranked choice voting was "helpful." Seventy-nine percent of municipal voters ranked candidates after their first choice; ninety-two percent of this group found it simple to do so. The principal reasons for ranking only a first choice were: "I didn't know enough about the other candidates," at 67%; "I wanted to give an advantage to my favorite candidate," at 58%; and, "I will always pick one candidate," at 56%. "Strategic voting," choosing only one candidate to provide an advantage, increased by 20% since the 2013 election. Seventy-six percent of 2017 voters are "confident" about the accuracy of the vote count using ranked choice voting. Voters again split on their preferred voting system – 39% prefer the ranked choice voting system, while 22% prefer the traditional voting system, a drop of 19% in four years. But, thirty-seven percent are indifferent between the two voting systems reflecting an increase of 20%. The absence of a delay in announcing election results has a minor impact on voters preferring the traditional voting system: twenty percent would change their opinion. Voters also split in their reaction to an outcome in which the RCV election results in a different winner than there would have been in a traditional primary and general election – 38% prefer the ranked choice voting result because it is more accurate, and 23% prefer the traditional primary and general election simply because it is tried and true, and 38% remain indifferent. In weighing the costs and benefits, a 66% majority, up 13% in four years, thinks ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections, while only 16% disagree, and 18% are unsure.

- Thirty-three percent of 2017 non-voters report they "don't care much about voting in municipal elections" to vote, while 29% just " just didn't have time." Twenty-one percent, nearly double the 2013 level, "forgot about the election," and 13% "don't care for the ranked choice method of voting." Forty-four percent also report they knew this election would use the ranked choice method of voting, a 19% decline from 2013. Four sources of information are most enlightening for non-voters: "mailed brochures," at 81% reach; "neighbors, friends or relatives," at 65% reach; "television news," at 59% reach; and, "newspapers," at 53% reach. Non-voters are more apt to see rank choice voting as "simple" rather than "difficult." By a 37%-10% margin, non-voters prefer the traditional voting system over ranked choice voting. However, 41% indicated "it doesn't matter to me which system is used," an increase of 21% since 2013. Even so, by a 42%-30% margin, non-voters thought RCV is "fair." However, by a 42%-35% margin, non-voters are "not confident" votes are counted accurately using ranked choice voting. Non-voters are split about the use of ranked choice voting in future municipal elections by a 30%-

27% margin. A large 43% are simply unsure. Few opponents of rank choice voting would change their view even if delays in announcing the winner could be avoided. Fourteen percent of 2017 non-voters are "very likely" to vote in future Minneapolis municipal election, and 28% are "likely" to do so. These results translate into two conclusions about 2017 non-voters: first, in comparison to 2013, they are much lower probability municipal election voters in general; and second, resistance to rank choice voting has substantially decreased.

- Clearly, perceptions of ranked choice voting remained positive or improved since the 2013 election, and support for a return to the former primary and general election voting system has declined. But a large number of both voters and non-voters remain unsure about which of the two systems is best. As a result, there is still work for proponents of RCV to do: specifically, better explaining the process and merits of the ranked choice voting system to the 30% "transitional residents" – residents who were formerly wedded to the old primary and general election system and now are unsure or have no preference about either approach.

Chapter Six: Election Judges

Election Judges

Minneapolis Election Judges were asked to complete a pen-and-paper survey at their polling places. 1035 election judges completed the survey out of a universe of 1,508 judges, resulting in a response rate of 68.6%.

1. Eighty-six percent rate their training for the ranked choice voting election as either "excellent" or "pretty good;" in fact, 39% called it "excellent." Only eleven percent were more critical in their evaluations.

2. Sixty-nine percent rate voters as either "very knowledgeable" or "knowledgeable" about ranked choice voting before they entered the polling place; twenty-three percent rated voters as "not knowledgeable." Interestingly, thirty-two percent reported voters wanted to engage them in a discussion about the pros and cons of ranked choice voting at the polling place.

3. While 40% think voters needed more time to complete ranked choice voting ballots than traditional ballots, 31% did not think so. The remaining 28% were uncertain. Among judges feeling ranked choice voting required more time, 55% believe it was a result of "first time learning a new way to vote," 65% see it as a consequence of "RCV just seems to take more time," and, 44% see it as a direct result of "the number of candidates on the ballot this year."

4. Eighty-seven percent of the judges report they were "able to do their normal duties as a judge such as registering new voters and checking names to see if the voter is registered, plus answering questions about ranked choice voting." In discussing the type of questions they answered, 39% report they answered more questions "about how to fill out ballots," while 11% answered more "about how votes will be counted," and 25% thought they answered "equal numbers of questions about filling out ballot and how votes counted."

Chapter Seven: Election Candidates

Election Candidates

Minneapolis election candidates were asked to complete a mail-out survey and return it in a self-addressed and stamped envelope. 23 election candidates completed the survey out of a universe of 87 candidates, resulting in a response rate of 26.4%

1. Candidates split on the impact of ranked choice voting on their campaign: 44% saw it as "negatively impacting," 26% say it had a "positively impact," and 26% deem the system as having "little or no impact." Fifty-two percent of candidates feel RCV was a disadvantage to their campaigns; only twenty-six percent see it as an "advantage to my campaign." But, 48% see RCV as an "advantage to my political party," and 39% feel it was a "disadvantage to my political party." Nine percent, though, indicate they were "not affiliated with a political party." Seventy-four percent of the candidates report their campaign strategy changed because of ranked choice voting.

2. Ninety-two percent report confidence that all votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting. Candidates split 48%-44% in their preference for the traditional voting system to the ranked choice voting system. Similarly, if the ranked choice voting system resulted in a different winner than the traditional primary and general election system, 48% preferred the traditional system outcome, while 44% preferred the ranked choice voting outcome. But, even so, 56% regard RCV as a "fair" method of counting ballots for an election, while 39% disagree.

3. Candidates oppose the use of ranked choice voting in future municipal elections by a 48%-44% margin. Municipal candidates, then, are split on the merits of the current ranked choice voting system.

City of Minneapolis Random Choice Voting

2017 Residential Survey

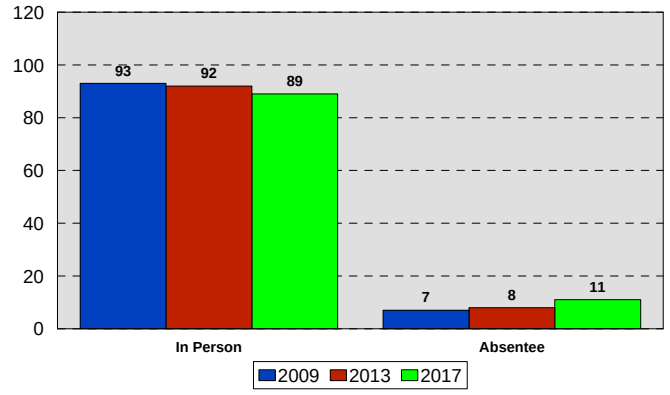
The Morris Leatherman Company

Voters in City of Minneapolis Municipal Elections

The Morris Leatherman Company

Did you vote in person or absentee?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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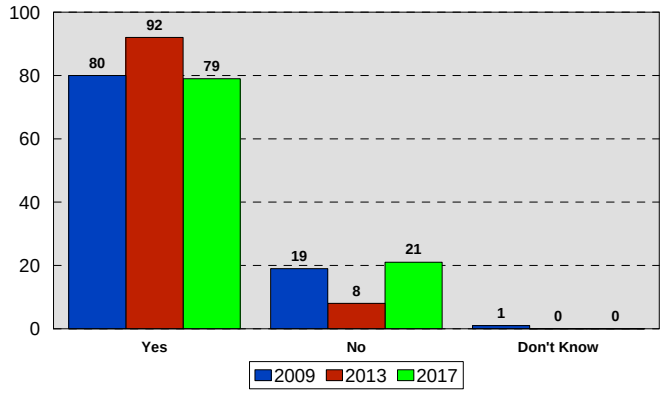
Before you voted, did you know you would be asked to rank your vote choices?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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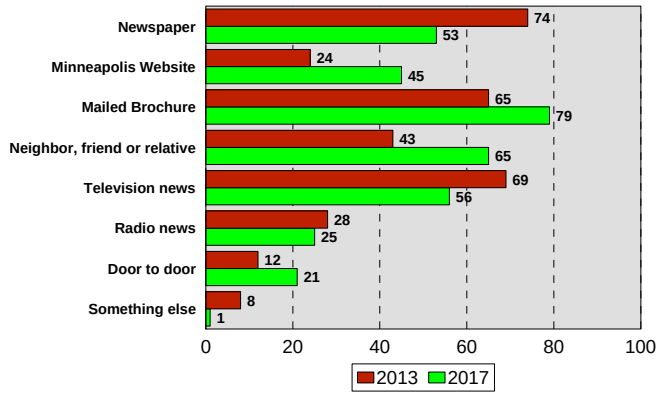
How did you learn about ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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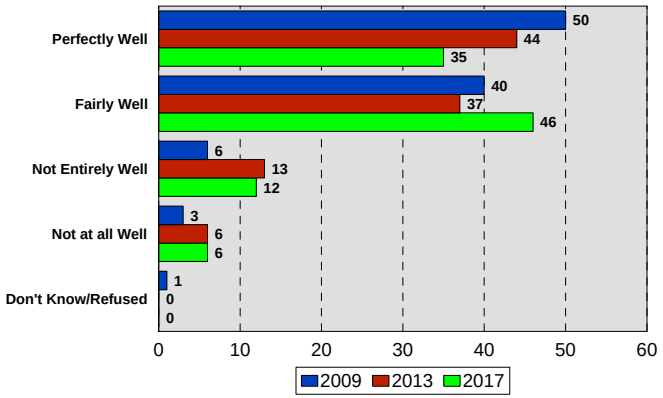
Prior to voting, would you say your level of understanding of how ranked choice voting functions was....?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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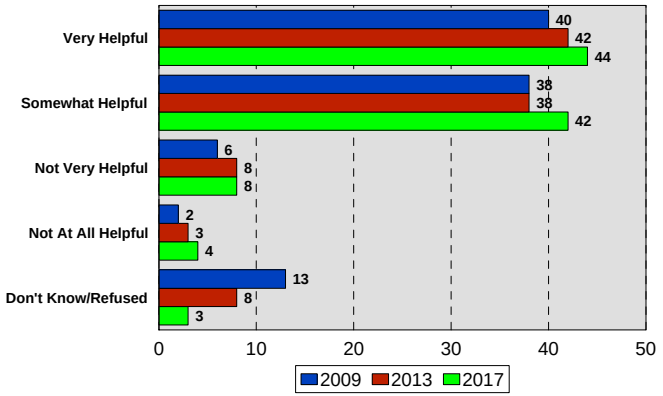
In your personal opinion, did you find the election judges explanation of ranked choice voting....?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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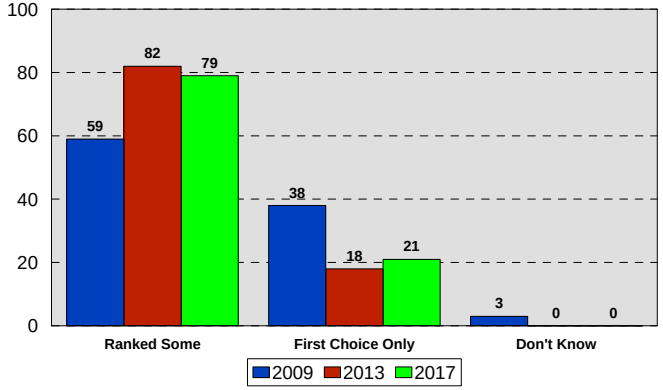
Did you actually rank any candidates after your first choice or did you only vote for your first choice?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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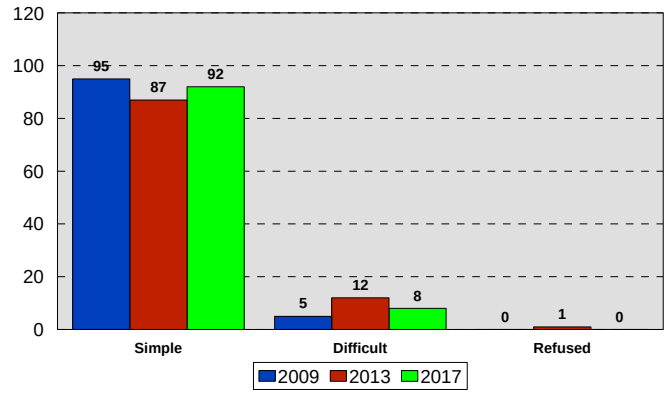
In your opinion, was it simple or difficult to rank your choices on the ballot?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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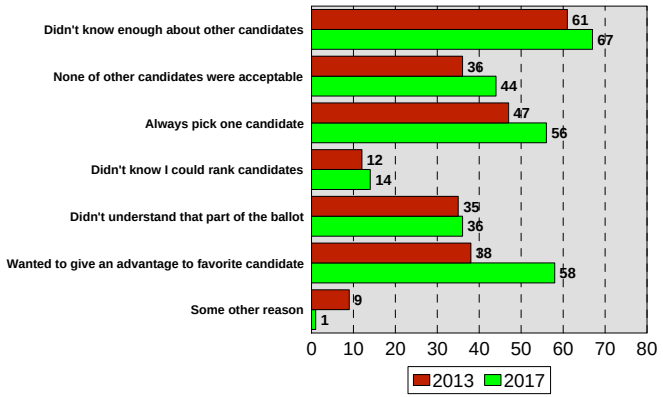
Why did you not rank your vote choice?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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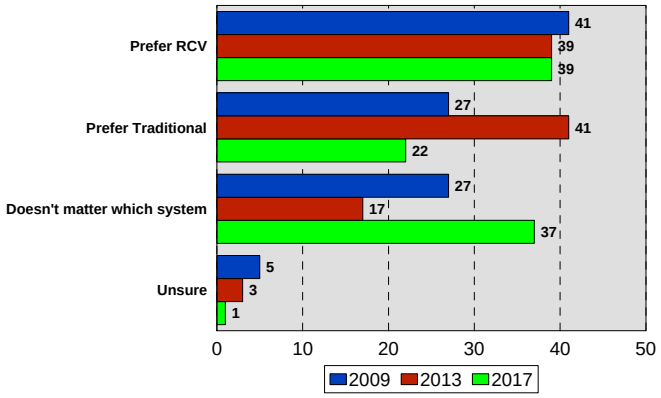
What is your opinion of the ranked choice voting system?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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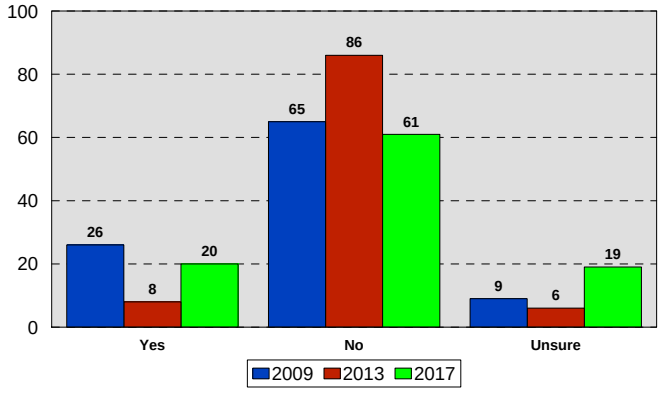
If there were no such delay in announcing the winners of a ranked choice voting election, would you then change your opinion about ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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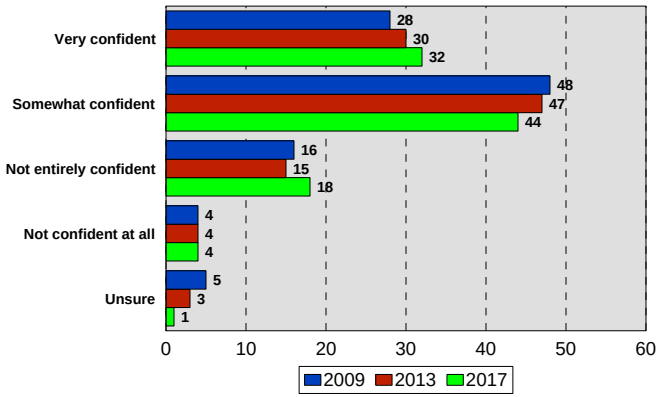
Are you....That votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting?

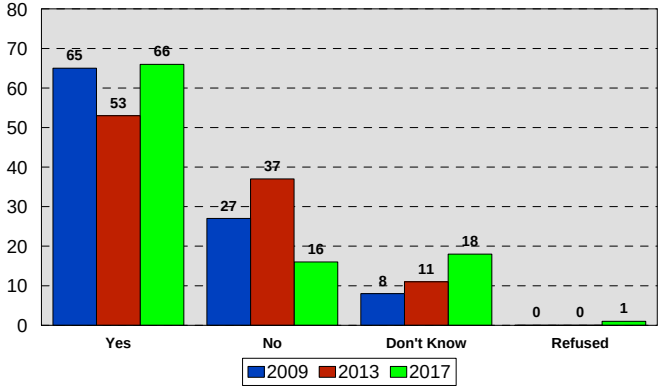
2017 City of Minneapolis



The Morris Leatherman Company

Do you think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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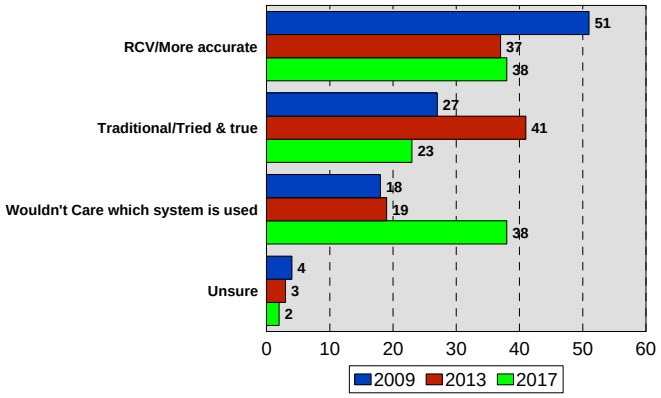
Which of the following best describes your opinion if this happened?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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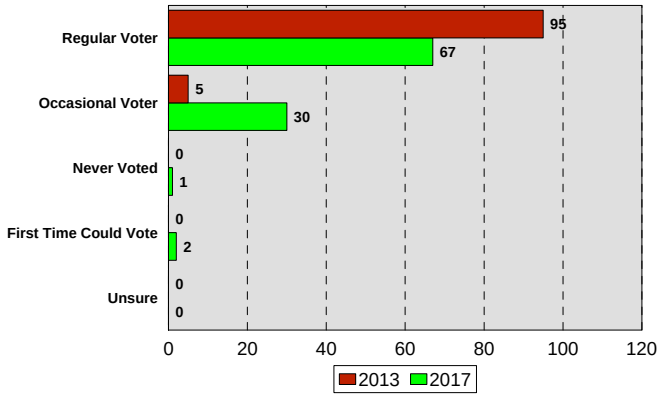
Would you say you were a....?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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Non-Voters in City of Minneapolis Municipal Elections

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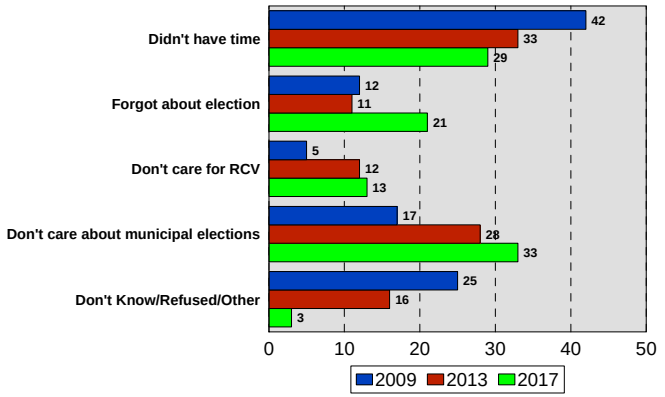
Why did you not vote in this year's municipal election, was it because you?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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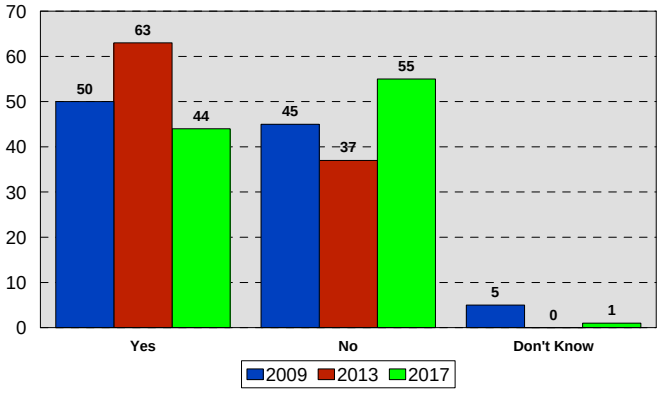
Did you know this election would use ranked choice method of voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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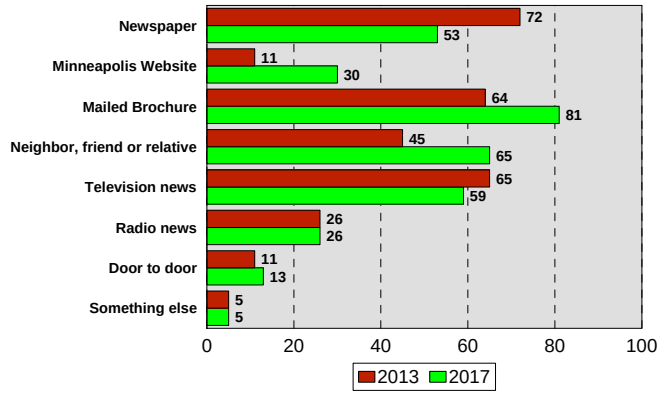
How did you learn about ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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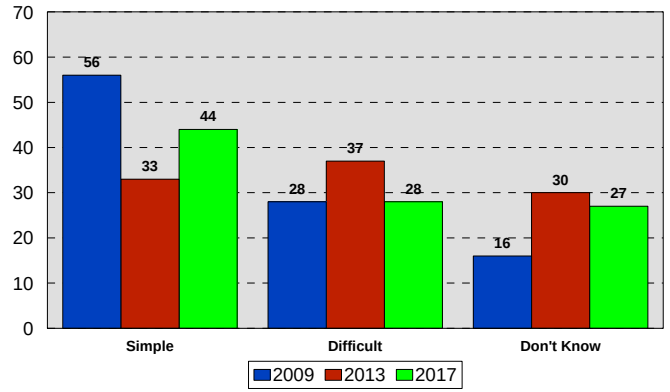
Based on what you know, would you it would be simple or difficult to rank your choices on the ballot?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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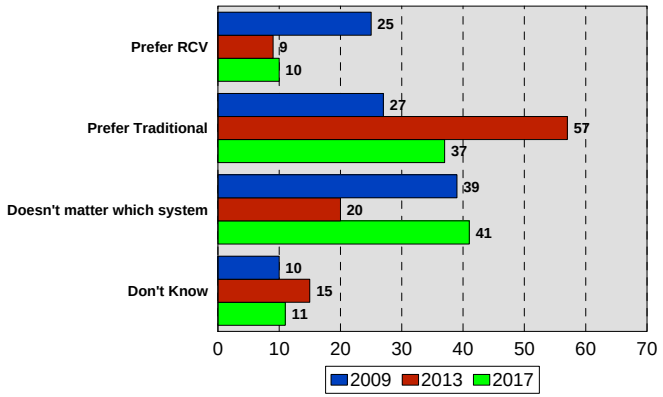
What is your opinion of the ranked choice voting system?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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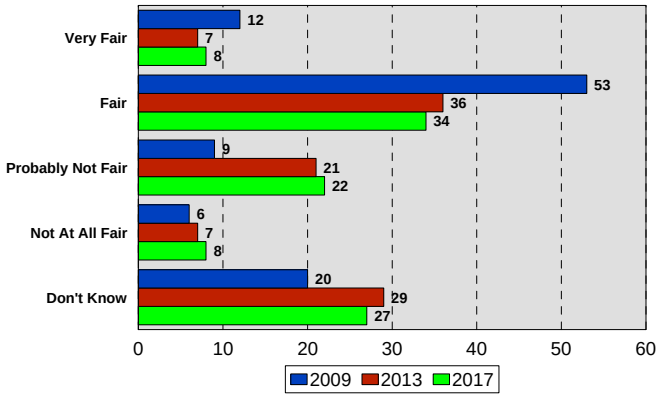
Personally, would you say ranked choice voting is....?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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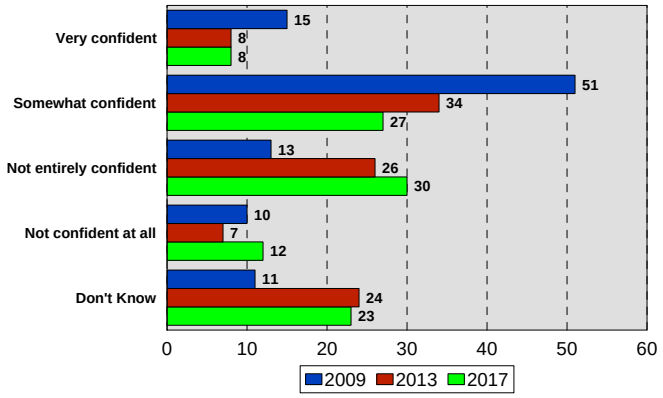
Are you....That votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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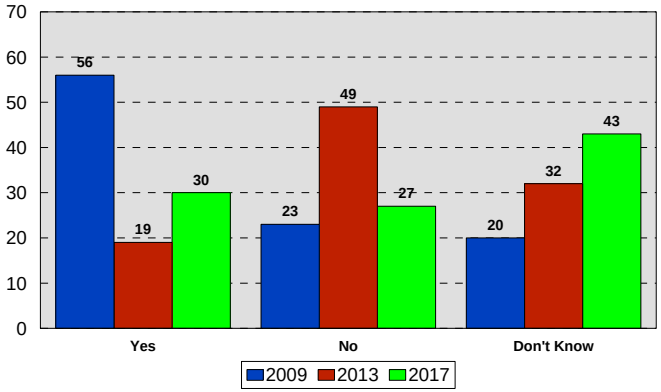
Do you think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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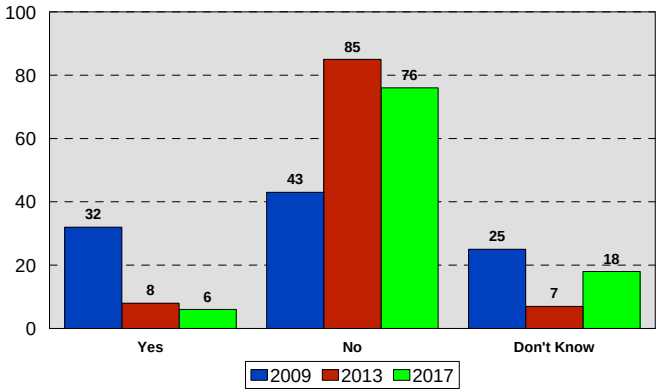
If there were no such delay in announcing the winners of a ranked choice voting election, would you then change your opinion about ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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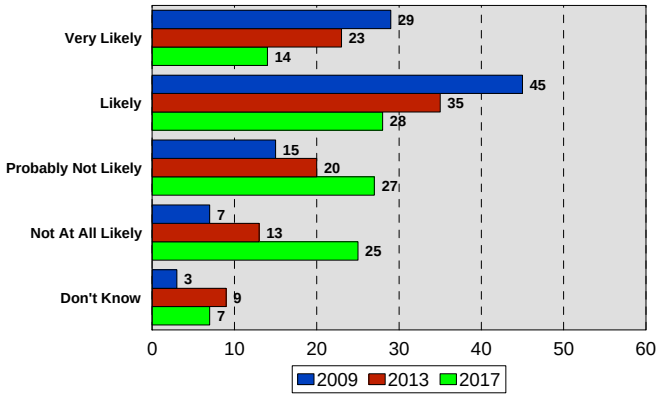
Would you say you are....To vote in future Minneapolis municipal election?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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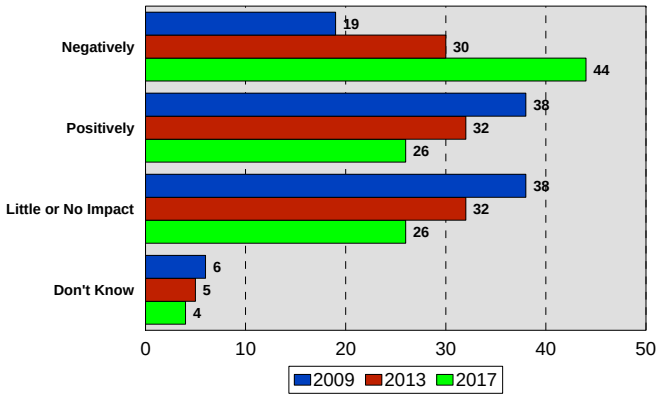
Candidates in City of Minneapolis Municipal Elections

The Morris Leatherman Company

Generally, do you think ranked choice voting negatively or positively impacted your campaign or had little or no impact on your campaign?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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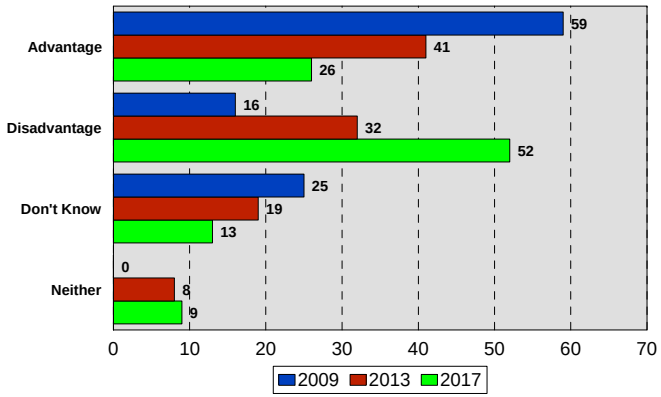
Do you think ranked choice voting was an advantage or disadvantage to your candidacy?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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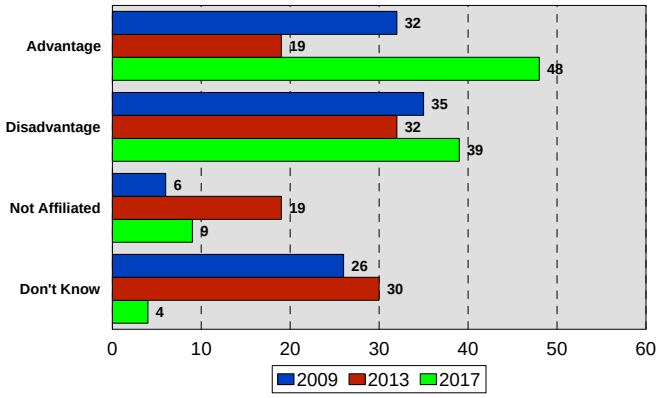
Do you think ranked choice voting was an advantage or disadvantage to your political party?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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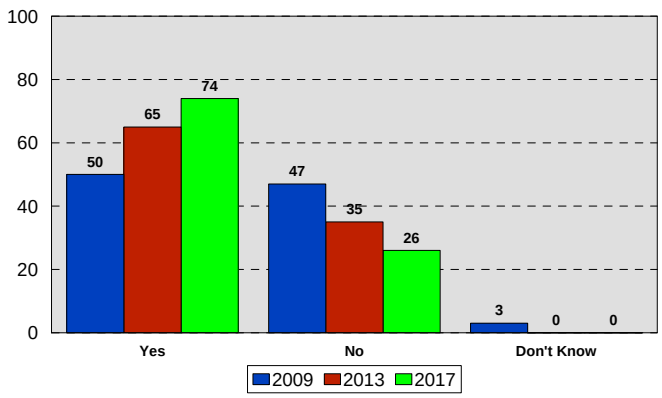
Did your campaign strategy change because of ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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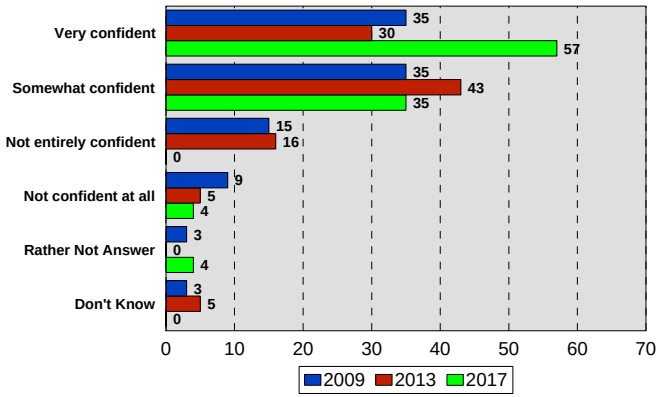
Are you....That votes were counted accurately using ranked choice voting?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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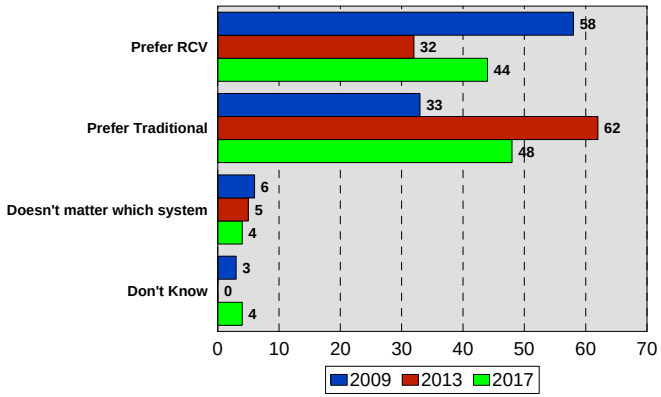
What is your opinion of the ranked choice voting system?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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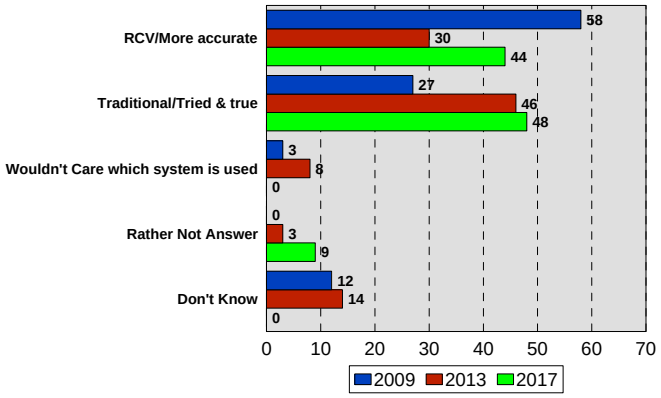
Which of the following best describes your opinion if this happened?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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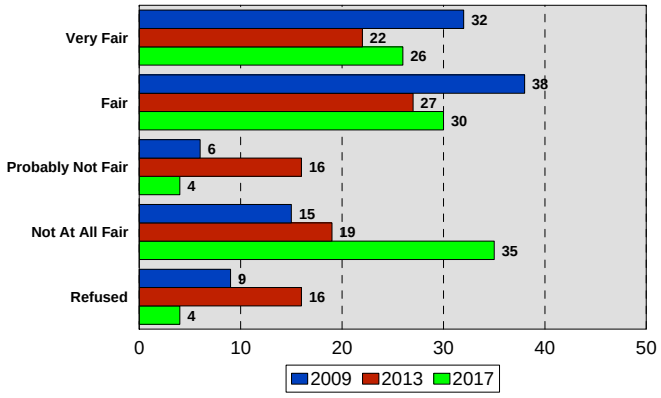
Do you think ranked choice voting is....?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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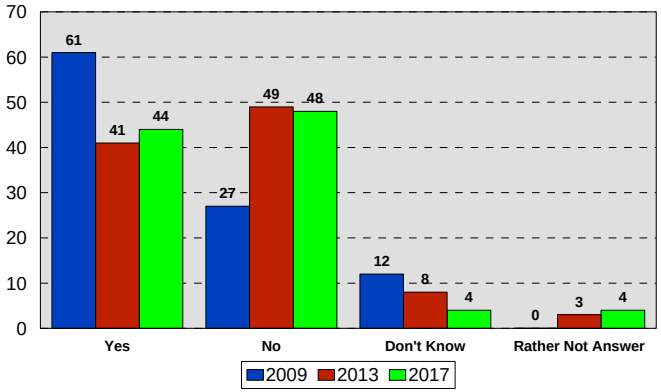
Do you think ranked choice voting should be used in future municipal elections?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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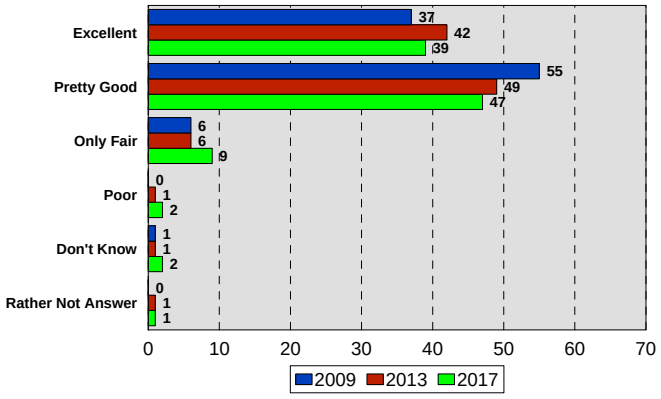
Election Judges in City of Minneapolis Municipal Elections

The Morris Leatherman Company

After your experience today, how would you rate your training for the ranked choice voting election?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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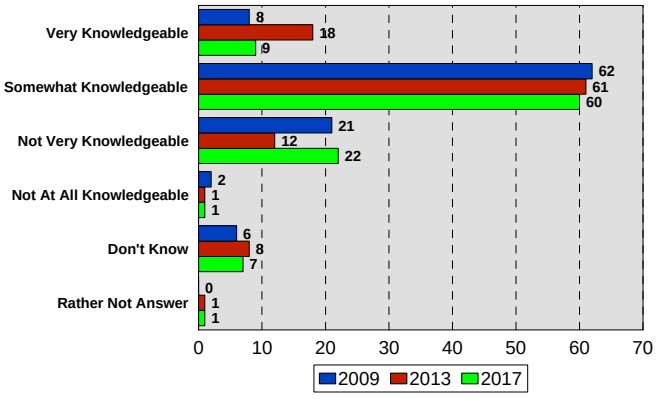
In your opinion, how would you rate how knowledgeable voters were ranked choice voting before they entered the polling place?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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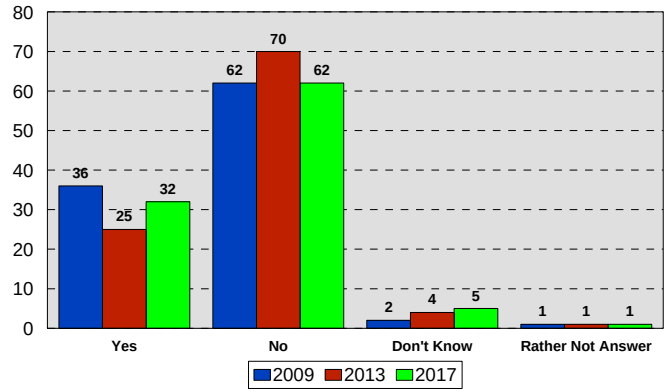
Did voters want to engage you in a discussion about the pros and cons of ranked choice voting at the polling place?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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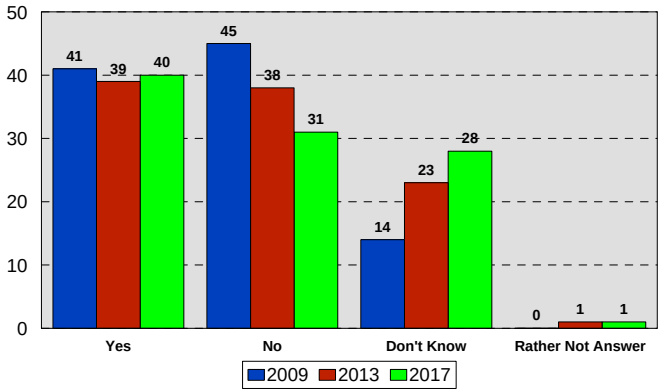
In your personal estimation, did voters need more time to complete ranked choice voting ballots than tradition ballots?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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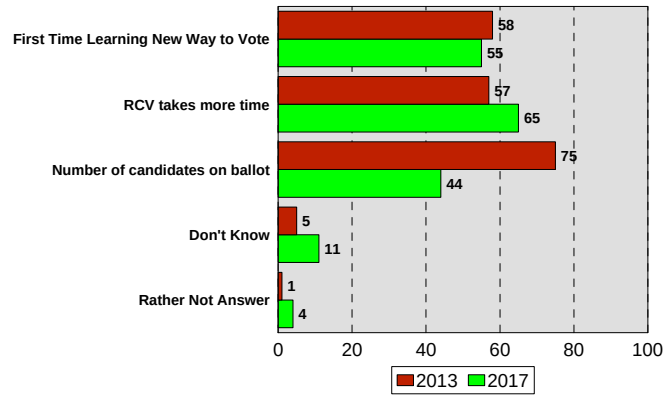
Why do you think voters needed more time?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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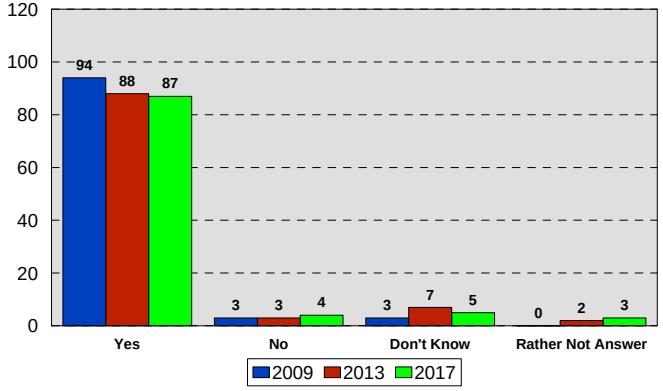
All things considered, were you able to do your normal duties as a judge?

2017 City of Minneapolis



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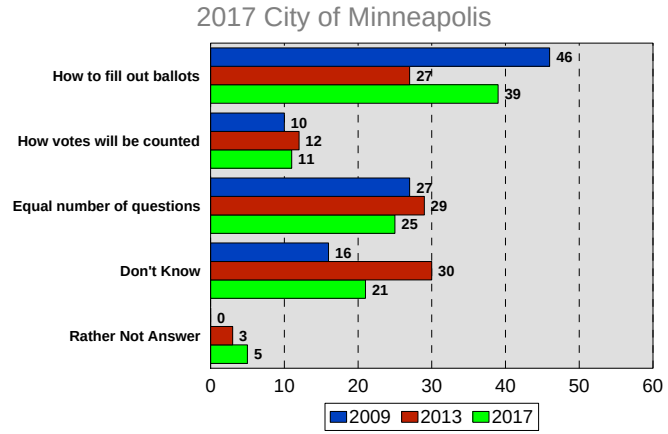
Would you say you were asked more questions from voters about how to fill out the ballot or how votes will be counted?



The Morris Leatherman Company

CITY OF MINNETONKA
14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

TO: Minnetonka Charter Commission

FROM: Moranda Dammann, Administrative Services Manager

DATE: March 5, 2020

SUBJECT: Election administration and ranked choice voting

This memo addresses topics related to the charter commission's consideration of ranked choice voting. The commission has expressed interest in each of the topics addressed below.

History of elections in Minnetonka

How many municipal primary elections has the city of Minnetonka had in the past 20 years?

In the past 20 years, the City of Minnetonka has had four primaries.

- 2003 – Primary for Council Member Wards 1 & 4 (three candidates each) Voter turnout 4.4%
- 2005 – Primary for Council Member At Large Seat A (five candidates) and Council Member At Large Seat B (three candidates) Voter turnout 4.58%
- 2007 – Primary for Council Member Ward 4 (four candidates) Voter turnout 8%
- 2013 – Primary for Council Member Seat B (four candidates) Voter turnout 2.7%

As a point of comparison, the average voter turnout for general elections in Minnetonka from 2011 - 2017 was 14.5%.

In the past 20 years, how many times has Minnetonka filled vacancies in the city council by special election versus appointment?

- 2002- Council appointment for Ward 3 vacancy because Ward 3 Council Member Koblick was elected to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.
- 2008 – Council appointment for mayoral vacancy because Mayor Callison was elected to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

- 2009- Council appointment for At Large Seat B because Council Member Schneider was appointed as mayor.

- 2012- Special election for At Large Seat B because Council Member Greves resigned. No primary, but eight candidates were on the ballot. Voter turnout was 8%.

- 2018- Special election for Ward 3 because Council Member Wiersum was elected as mayor. No primary, but there were five candidates on the ballot. Voter turnout was 13%.

- 2018 – Council appointment for Ward 2 vacancy because Council Member Wagner resigned.

- 2019 – Council interim appointment for At Large Seat B until November special election, because Council Member Acomb was elected to the Minnesota Legislature.

- 2019 – Special election for At Large Seat B, to fill vacancy created by Council Member Acomb's resignation, after end of interim appointment. Voter turnout was 12%.

The ballot conformity issue

Under Minnesota state law, all ballots for optical scan voting systems must conform to certain requirements, so that there is consistency in the form of ballots used in the state. Minnesota Statutes, section 206.90, subdivision 6 provides:

> In precincts using optical scan voting systems, *a single ballot* card on which all ballot information is included must be printed in black ink on white colored material except that marks not to be read by the automatic tabulating equipment may be printed in another color ink. …
>
> When optical scan ballots are used, the offices to be elected must appear in the following order: federal offices; state legislative offices; constitutional offices; proposed constitutional amendments; county offices and questions; municipal offices and questions; school district offices and questions; special district offices and questions; and judicial offices.

In addition, Minnesota Rules establish specific rules for the wording that must appear on ballots.

Hennepin County has indicated that, due to the ballot conformity laws and rules, it is unlikely that a municipal ranked-choice-vote election could be held in August or November of even-numbered years. Because of different formatting, a ranked choice vote office cannot appear on the same side of a ballot as an office that uses traditional voting. From a practical standpoint, it is unlikely that there would be enough space to allow ranked choice votes to be placed on the ballot when there are also federal, state, county, school district, special district and judicial candidates and issues on the same ballot.

At the Jan. 28 charter commission meeting, Jeanne Massey of FairVote indicated that there were three potential solutions to the ballot conformity issue: (1) state law allows use of a second ballot; (2) the ranked choice election can be printed on the back of a ballot; and (3) there is legislation pending that would address the issue, and she was optimistic it would be passed within a year or two.

City elections staff asked Hennepin County the following questions and received the responses indicated:

- What would be the estimated cost of a second ballot, if a special election occurred in August or November of an even-numbered year?
    - Response: the city would be responsible for the cost of the second ballot, which is $0.195 per ballot. In addition, it is not clear that it would be legal to put the city offices on a separate ballot, because the statute and rules specify the order on which offices must appear on the ballot. Finally, the second page of a ballot does not advance the ballot counter's public count, which could cause some problems in reconciling ballots in the polling place.

- Is it possible to have the ranked choice vote offices on the back of a ballot, for a special election that occurs in August or November of an even-numbered year?
    - Response: Definitely not in November, as there would not be enough space. It is unlikely in August, because it is a rare case when there are no other nonpartisan offices that would appear on the back of the ballot.

At this time, Rep. Steve Elkins has introduced legislation, H.F. 3365, to allow all cities, counties, townships and school districts to use ranked choice voting. The bill has been referred to the Government Operations Committee in the Minnesota House. The companion bill is S.F. 3380, authored by Senators Jensen, Eken, Hayden, Franzen and Cwodzinski, and it has been referred to the State Government Finance and Policy and Elections Committee.

The county's response indicates that a second ballot may not be an available option for special elections in August and November of even-numbered years. For information, the staff has estimated the cost of a second ballot, assuming those issues could be resolved. For the 2016 primary, election staff ordered 16,950 ballots, and 41,350 ballots for the general election. In 2018, staff ordered nearly 17,500 ballots for the primary and 46,850 ballots for the general election. Based on a per-ballot cost of $0.195 and the number of ballots ordered in 2018, a second ballot in even-numbered years would result in an estimated additional cost of $3,412.50 for a municipal special election held in August and a cost of $9,135.75 for a municipal special election held in November.

Tabulation of votes

<u>What is the process for reporting results on Election Day?</u>

The process for precinct election judges would not change: they would electronically report initial results to Hennepin County after the close of polling and return the memory sticks from the voting machines (USB thumb drives) to city hall. After that point, however, RCV would require additional city staff time for vote tabulation. City staff would deliver the USB memory sticks to the county, the county would load the data into its system and provide the city with a cast vote record spreadsheet.

<u>What are the mechanics of tabulating the results to determine the winner?</u>

City staff would use the spreadsheet generated by the county to manually tabulate the ranked choice voting results. Current communities using ranked choice voting depend on manual or

spreadsheet manipulation, such as creating and inserting formulas to consider second, third, and additional ranked votes. There is not a 'one size fits all' spreadsheet for all RCV cities; this is generally created and crafted towards each individual city and process.

The anticipated turnaround time to manually tabulate results could take days. There are some RCV tabulating programs being developed by vendors, but nothing at this point is certified in Minnesota, nor is there an anticipated timeline on if or when this may be available.

What is the turn-around time for cities to receive the spreadsheet, and how is the spreadsheet received?

Turn-around time for the spreadsheet to be delivered to the cities depends on the individual city's time to return the USB memory stick from the vote tabulators to the county after the polls close. This timeline can vary depending on whether the precincts are balanced, or whether additional troubleshooting must take place after the polls close.

Turn-around time will also depend on whether it is an even or odd year election. Hennepin County stated that during odd year elections they have been able to provide the spreadsheets by noon the following day, however it could be significantly slower in even-numbered years. The city would receive the spreadsheet on a compact disk or USB thumb drive from Hennepin County.

Are the voting machines limited in the number of rankings they can capture?

The voting machines read each ranking as different offices, so there is no limit to the number of rankings. However, as the number of allowed rankings increases, it can impair the ability to provide user-friendly ballot space and an easy-to-read ballot layout. Also, as the number of allowed rankings is increased, the tabulation spreadsheet becomes wider and disorderly. If ranked choice voting were adopted in Minnetonka, it would be up to the city council to establish the number of rankings in the ordinance that implements ranked choice voting.

When would hand counting ballots take place?

There would not be a need to hand count ballots, other than to do post-election audit to verify vote totals.

What is a best practice to verifying results?

Although Minnetonka would have to find a process that works specifically for our organization and staff, Minneapolis uses two teams doing the same process to verify their totals. Other cities within Minnesota using RCV do a post-election audit where they hand count a select few precincts and confirm totals match.

Election administration anticipated changes and costs

What election administration processes would change?

The process for election administration would not significantly change with ranked choice voting except for a few key areas.

Judges are currently only trained in even years, however an additional hour training would be necessary in the odd year if ranked choice voting were to be implemented. Judges currently receive a flat rate of $30 per training. In 2019, the city of Minnetonka employed 232 election judges. Adding this additional training in the odd year would have an estimated cost of $7,000 in trainings.

A great effort would need to be focused on outreach and education during the transition to RCV, and continuing education on this process would be necessary for future elections.

As mentioned earlier in the report, the tabulation of determining the winner would be a significant change from the current election administration.

What would staffing impacts be, if any?

Staff anticipates that additional staffing would be needed on an ongoing basis if RCV is adopted.

Because RCV would be used only for municipal elections in odd-numbered years, voters would use different voting systems from year to year. Staff anticipates utilizing the additional election staff to provide education and outreach on RCV in odd-numbered years and using the same staff to provide education on primaries and general elections in even-numbered years.

Until RCV direction is given, and a plan is developed, staff is unable to determine the type of additional staffing needs. Staffing may take the preferred form of a full time individual, however a part time staff person or an intern may be sufficient as a work-plan is established.

What may the outreach and education for Minnetonka look like?

For RCV to be successful, extensive voter outreach and education is necessary. Election judges would need additional training and instructions on how to work with voters at the polling locations, to answer questions and educate those unfamiliar with the RCV process. As part of voter education, and in collaboration with Hennepin County, staff would hold mock elections throughout the transition period to provide voters the opportunity to practice the process. Judges would be hired to execute and manage the planning and education process.

To remain consistent with the city of Minnetonka's brand, city staff recommends all communication and educational outreach be kept internal and vetted through the city's Communications division. Managing these messages will be a critical component to the success of RCV in Minnetonka.

Mailings, publications, social media pushes and website articles, as well as community events and information session would also be amongst the list of reviewed options for educational outreach. Resources would need to be available for this implementation.

What are the costs of primaries vs. RCV?

The cost of odd year elections can vary depending on whether it is a single ward or citywide election. Primaries can range in cost from $10,600 (single ward) to $45,000 (citywide), excluding election administration staffing costs. Election costs have increased over the past few years with new equipment, increase in the number of absentee voters, and supplies.

Due to the fact that there has not been a primary in six years, the most relevant data is the April 10, 2018 Ward 3 special election, which costs would be in line with a primary election in a single ward. These costs included:

Election judge costs	$7,121.59
Polling place room rental	$160
Ballots	$1,655
Supplies	$1,557.93
Delivery truck rentals	$102.80
Total:	**$10,597.32**

The use of ranked choice voting eliminates the need for municipal primaries. However, there are costs surrounding a change in voting methods. These costs are in the creation of materials including sample ballots, flyers, Election Day posters and judge materials; postage for mailings; additional staffing costs; staff time to host/attend education and outreach events, including graphic designer costs to create materials; additional training and judges on Election Day to help answer questions. These costs, excluding additional staff, may reach as high as $25,000 for the first year. Staff would ask for a reduced amount in following years to allow for adjustments and new outreach efforts.

Although there are other cities who use ranked choice voting and have created relevant materials, RCV processes are specific to each community. In order to remain consistent with Minnetonka's brand, city staff will create materials geared toward Minnetonka residents.

What would the cost be of placing a ballot question on a general election ballot?

If the commission ultimately decides to recommend the use of ranked choice voting, one option for amending the charter is to place the issue on the ballot for voters to decide. The cost of placing a question on a general election ballot would be $0.0325 per ballot. Looking back to the last presidential election year, 41,350 ballots were ordered in 2016. If a similar number assuming that ballot orders for the 2020 general election are similar, the estimated cost of placing a ballot question on the ballot for November 2020 is $1,343.86.

This Document can be made available
in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 3365

02/17/2020 Authored by Elkins, Dehn, Morrison, Bahner, Christensen and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations

A bill for an act

relating to elections; authorizing jurisdictions to adopt ranked-choice voting; establishing procedures for adoption, implementation, and use of ranked-choice voting; allowing municipalities to use electronic voting systems with a reallocation feature; authorizing rulemaking; amending Minnesota Statutes 2018, sections 205.13, subdivision 2; 206.58, subdivision 1; 206.83; 206.89, subdivisions 2, 3; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 206; proposing coding for new law as Minnesota Statutes, chapter 204E.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[204E.01] APPLICABILITY.**

This chapter applies to all elections expressly authorized by law to use ranked-choice voting. All other provisions of the Minnesota Election Law also apply, to the extent they are not inconsistent with this chapter.

Sec. 2. **[204E.02] DEFINITIONS.**

Subdivision 1. **Scope.** The definitions in this section apply to this chapter.

Subd. 2. **Batch elimination.** "Batch elimination" means a simultaneous defeat of multiple continuing candidates that have no mathematical chance of being elected.

Subd. 3. **Cast vote record.** "Cast vote record" means the tabulatable record of all votes produced by a single voter in one voting session.

Subd. 4. **Duplicate ranking.** "Duplicate ranking" means a voter has ranked the same candidate at multiple rankings for the office being counted.

Subd. 5. **Exhausted ballot.** "Exhausted ballot" means a ballot that can no longer be advanced under the procedures in section 204E.06.

Subd. 6. **Highest continuing ranking.** "Highest continuing ranking" means the ranking on a voter's ballot with the lowest numerical value for a continuing candidate.

Subd. 7. **Local election official.** "Local election official" means the principal officer in the jurisdiction charged with duties relating to elections.

Subd. 8. **Mathematically impossible to be elected.** "Mathematically impossible to be elected" means either:

(1) the candidate cannot be elected because the candidate's current vote total plus all votes that could possibly be transferred to the candidate in future rounds from candidates with fewer votes or an equal number of votes and surplus votes would not be enough to surpass the candidate with the next higher current vote total; or

(2) the candidate has a lower current vote total than a candidate who is described by clause (1).

Subd. 9. **Overvote.** "Overvote" means a voter has ranked more than one candidate at the same ranking.

Subd. 10. **Partially defective ballot.** "Partially defective ballot" means a ballot that is defective to the extent that the election judges are unable to determine the voter's intent with respect to the office being counted.

Subd. 11. **Ranked-choice voting.** "Ranked-choice voting" means an election method in which voters rank candidates for an office in order of their preference, with each vote counting for the highest-ranked continuing candidate on each ballot until that candidate has been elected or defeated by the method established in this chapter.

Subd. 12. **Ranked-choice voting tabulation center.** "Ranked-choice voting tabulation center" means the place selected for the automatic or manual processing and tabulation of ballots.

Subd. 13. **Ranking.** "Ranking" means the number assigned by a voter to a candidate to express the voter's preference for that candidate. Ranking number one is the highest ranking. A ranking of lower numerical value indicates a greater preference for a candidate than a ranking of higher numerical value.

Subd. 14. **Round.** "Round" means an instance of the sequence of voting tabulation steps established in section 204E.06.

Subd. 15. **Skipped ranking.** "Skipped ranking" means a voter has left a ranking blank and ranks a candidate at a subsequent ranking.

Subd. 16. **Surplus.** "Surplus" means the total number of votes cast for an elected candidate in excess of the threshold.

Subd. 17. **Surplus fraction of a vote.** "Surplus fraction of a vote" means the proportion of each vote to be transferred when a surplus is transferred. The surplus fraction is calculated by dividing the surplus by the total votes cast for the elected candidate, calculated to four decimal places, ignoring any remainder.

Subd. 18. **Threshold.** "Threshold" means the number of votes sufficient for a candidate to be elected. In any given election, the threshold equals the total votes counted in the first round after removing defective ballots, divided by the sum of one plus the number of offices to be filled and adding one to the quotient, disregarding any fractions.

Subd. 19. **Transfer value.** "Transfer value" means the fraction of a vote that a transferred ballot will contribute to the next ranked continuing candidate on that ballot. The transfer value of a vote cast for an elected candidate is calculated by multiplying the surplus fraction of each vote by its current value, calculated to four decimal places, ignoring any remainder. The transfer value of a vote cast for a defeated candidate is the same as its current value.

Subd. 20. **Transferable vote.** "Transferable vote" means a vote or a fraction of a vote for a candidate who has been either elected or defeated.

Subd. 21. **Totally defective ballot.** "Totally defective ballot" means a ballot that is defective to the extent that election judges are unable to determine the voter's intent for any office on the ballot.

Subd. 22. **Undervote.** "Undervote" means a voter did not rank any candidates for an office.

Sec. 3. **[204E.03] AUTHORIZATION TO ADOPT RANKED-CHOICE VOTING; IMPLEMENTATION.**

(a) The following political subdivisions may adopt, in the manner provided in this section, ranked-choice voting as a method of voting for local offices within the political subdivision:

(1) home rule charter or statutory cities;

(2) counties;

(3) townships; and

(4) school districts.

(b) A jurisdiction that adopts ranked-choice voting may do so by adopting an ordinance or resolution or by a ballot question presented to the voters. The ranked-choice voting method may be repealed by one of the same methods provided for adoption.

(c) A home rule charter jurisdiction that adopts a ranked-choice voting system in its charter may adopt this chapter by reference in an ordinance, but is not required to do so. Nothing in this chapter prevents a home rule charter jurisdiction from adopting another voting method in its charter.

(d) Ranked-choice voting must only be used to elect local offices at a general or special election, or at a primary election which serves as a party-nominating election for a partisan office. A primary election must not be held for any nonpartisan offices that are elected using ranked-choice voting.

(e) A jurisdiction that adopts the use of ranked-choice voting in local elections must do so no later than 30 days before the first day for filing affidavits of candidacy for the office for which ranked-choice voting is to be used as the method of election.

(f) Repeal of ranked-choice voting must be no later than 30 days before the first day for filing affidavits of candidacy for offices for which ranked-choice voting is used as the method of election.

(g) The local election official must notify the secretary of state and, if applicable, the county auditor within 30 days following adoption or repeal of ranked-choice voting.

Sec. 4. **[204E.04] BALLOTS.**

Subdivision 1. **Ballot format.** (a) If there are three or more qualified candidates, a ballot must allow a voter to rank at least three candidates for each office in order of preference and must also allow the voter to add write-in candidates.

(b) A ballot must:

(1) include instructions to voters that clearly indicate how to mark the ballot;

(2) include instructions to voters that clearly indicate how to rank candidates in order of the voter's preference; and

(3) indicate the number of seats to be elected for each office.

(c) A jurisdiction may use ballots compatible with alphanumeric character recognition voting equipment.

Subd. 2. **Mixed-election method ballots.** If elections are held in which ranked-choice voting is used in addition to other methods of voting, the ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting elections must be on the same ballot card if possible, with ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting portions clearly separated on the ballot card. A separate ballot card may be used if necessary. A jurisdiction may deviate from the standard ballot order of offices to allow separation of ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting elections.

Subd. 3. **Ballot format rules.** The local election official must establish administrative rules for ballot format after a voting mechanism has been selected, consistent with this section.

Sec. 5. **[204E.05] RANKED-CHOICE VOTING TABULATION CENTER.**

Subdivision 1. **Tabulation of votes; generally.** The local election official must designate one location to serve as the ranked-choice voting tabulation center. If the tabulation includes a manual count of physical ballots, the center must be accessible to the public for the purpose of observing the vote tabulation. Tabulation of votes must be conducted as described in section 204E.06.

Subd. 2. **Precinct tabulation.** When the hours for voting have ended and all voting has concluded, the election judges in each precinct must record and publicly declare the number of first choices cast for each candidate in that precinct. The election judges must then securely transfer all electronic voting data and ballots from the precinct to the ranked-choice voting tabulation center designated under this section. Upon receipt at the ranked-choice voting tabulation center, all electronic voting data and ballots must be secured.

Subd. 3. **Notice of recess in count.** In the event the tabulation of the ballots is conducted manually, at any time following receipt of materials under subdivision 1, the local election official may declare a recess. Notice of the recess must include the date, time, and location at which the process of recording and tabulating votes will resume and the reason for the recess. Notice must be posted on the city's official bulletin board and on the door of the ranked-choice voting tabulation center.

Subd. 4. **Recording write-in votes.** At a time set by the local election official, the election judges shall convene at the ranked-choice voting tabulation center to examine ballots on which voters have indicated a write-in choice, and record the names and number of votes received by each write-in candidate. In the event that votes cast for the write-in category are not eliminated as provided in section 204E.06, the results must be entered into the ranked-choice voting tabulation software.

Subd. 5. **Ranked-choice vote tabulation.** After all votes have been recorded, and at a time set by the local election official, the process of tabulating votes cast for offices to be elected using the ranked-choice method must begin. The counting must continue until preliminary results for all races are determined, subject to subdivision 3.

Sec. 6. **[204E.06] TABULATION OF VOTES.**

(a) Tabulation of votes must proceed in rounds for each office to be counted. The threshold must be calculated and publicly declared. Each round must proceed sequentially as follows:

(1) the number of votes cast for each candidate for the current round must be counted. If the number of candidates whose vote totals equal or exceed the threshold are equal to the number of seats to be filled, those candidates who are continuing candidates are elected and the tabulation is complete. If the number of candidates whose vote totals are equal to or greater than the threshold is not equal to the number of seats to be filled, a new round begins and the tabulation must continue as provided in the remainder of this paragraph;

(2) surplus votes for any candidates whose vote totals are equal to or greater than the threshold must be calculated;

(3) after any surplus votes are calculated but not yet transferred, all candidates for whom it is mathematically impossible to be elected must be defeated by batch elimination. Votes for the defeated candidates must be transferred to each ballot's next-ranked continuing candidate, and the tabulation process reiterates beginning with clause (2). If no candidate can be defeated mathematically, the tabulation must continue as described in clause (4);

(4) the transfer value of each vote cast for an elected candidate must be transferred to the next continuing candidate on that ballot. Of the candidates whose vote totals reach or exceed the threshold, the candidate with the largest surplus is declared elected and that candidate's surplus is transferred. A tie between two or more candidates must immediately and publicly be resolved by lot by the local election official at the tabulation center. The surplus of the candidate chosen by lot must be transferred before other transfers are made. The result of the tie resolution must be recorded and reused in the event of a recount. If no candidate has a surplus, the tabulation must continue as described in clause (5); otherwise, the tabulation process must reiterate beginning with clause (2);

(5) if there are no transferable surplus votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is defeated. Votes for the defeated candidate must be transferred to each ballot's next-ranked continuing candidate. Ties between candidates with the fewest votes must be decided by

lot, and the candidate chosen by lot must be defeated. The result of the tie resolution must be recorded and reused in the event of a recount. The tabulation process must reiterate beginning with clause (2); and

(6) the procedures in clauses (2) to (5) must be repeated until the number of candidates whose vote totals are equal to or exceed the threshold is equal to the number of seats to be filled, or until the number of continuing candidates is equal to the number of offices yet to be elected. If the number of continuing candidates is equal to the number of offices yet to be elected, the remaining continuing candidates must be declared elected. In the case of a tie between two continuing candidates, the tie must be decided by lot as provided in section 204C.34, and the candidate chosen by lot must be defeated. The result of the tie resolution must be recorded and reused in the event of a recount.

(b) When a single skipped ranking is encountered on a ballot, that ballot must count toward the next nonskipped ranking. If any ballot cannot be advanced because no further candidates are ranked on that ballot, because a voter has skipped more than one ranking, or because an undervote, overvote, or duplicate ranking is encountered, the ballot must not count toward any candidate in that round or in subsequent rounds for the office being counted.

Sec. 7. **[204E.07] REPORTING RESULTS.**

(a) Each precinct must print a precinct summary statement, which must include the number of first choices cast for each candidate in that precinct.

(b) The local election official must provide a summary statement with the following information: total votes cast; number of undervotes; number of totally defective and spoiled ballots; threshold calculation; total first choice rankings for all candidates; round-by-round tabulation results, including simultaneous batch eliminations, surplus transfers if applicable, and defeated candidate transfers; and exhausted ballots at each round.

(c) In jurisdictions where ballots are scanned and recorded electronically, the local election official must provide an electronically available spreadsheet of the cast vote record.

(d) The election abstract must include the information required in the ranked-choice voting tabulation center summary statement, with the addition of the number of registered voters by precinct, the number of same-day voter registrations, and the number of absentee voters.

Sec. 8. **[204E.08] RECOUNTS.**

(a) A candidate defeated in the final round of tabulation may request a recount as provided in section 204C.36.

(b) A candidate defeated in the final round of tabulation when the vote difference is greater than that provided in section 204C.36 may request a recount at the candidate's own expense. A candidate defeated in an earlier round of tabulation may request a recount at the candidate's own expense. The candidate is responsible for all expenses associated with the recount, regardless of the vote difference between the candidates in the round in which the requesting candidate was defeated. The requesting candidate shall file with the filing officer a bond, cash, or surety in an amount set by the filing officer for the payment of the recount expenses. Expenses must be determined as provided in section 204C.36, subdivision 4.

(c) Rules adopted by the secretary of state under section 204C.36 for recounts apply to recounts conducted under this section.

Sec. 9. **[204E.09] RULES.**

The secretary of state may adopt rules necessary to implement the requirements and procedures established by this chapter.

Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 205.13, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **Notice of filing dates.** At least two weeks before the first day to file affidavits of candidacy, the municipal clerk shall publish a notice stating the first and last dates on which affidavits of candidacy may be filed in the clerk's office and the closing time for filing on the last day for filing. The clerk shall post a similar notice at least ten days before the first day to file affidavits of candidacy. The notice must indicate the method of election to be used for the offices on the ballot. The notice must separately list any office for which affidavits of candidacy may be filed to fill the unexpired portion of a term when a special election is being held to fill a vacancy as provided in section 412.02, subdivision 2a.

Sec. 11. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 206.58, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **Municipalities.** (a) The governing body of a municipality, at a regular meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose, may provide for the use of an electronic voting system in one or more precincts and at all elections in the precincts, subject to approval by the county auditor. The governing body shall disseminate information to the public about the use of a new voting system at least 60 days prior to the election and shall provide for instruction of voters with a demonstration voting system in a public place for

the six weeks immediately prior to the first election at which the new voting system will be used.

(b) No system may be adopted or used unless it has been approved by the secretary of state pursuant to section 206.57.

(c) The governing body of a municipality may provide for the use of an electronic voting system that has been approved by the secretary of state under section 206.57 but includes an automatic tabulating equipment reallocation feature that has not been approved by the secretary of state if the municipal clerk certifies to the secretary of state, within 30 days from the date of adoption under paragraph (a), that the reallocation feature:

(1) has been certified as required under section 206.57, subdivision 6; and

(2) meets the municipality's ordinance requirements for electronic voting systems.

Sec. 12. **[206.802] ELECTRONIC VOTING SYSTEMS; PURCHASING.**

Any new voting system purchased for use in Minnesota for the purpose of replacing a voting system must have the ability to:

(1) capture, store, and publicly report ballot data;

(2) to the extent practicable, produce a single human-readable file for each contest on the ballot containing all cast vote records captured for that contest;

(3) keep data anonymous;

(4) accept ranked or cumulative voting data under a variety of tabulation rules;

(5) be programmable to follow all other specifications of the ranked-choice voting system as provided in chapter 204E;

(6) provide a minimum of three rankings for ranked-choice voting elections;

(7) to the extent practicable, notify voters of the following errors: overvotes, skipped rankings, and duplicate rankings in a ranked-choice voting election; and

(8) be programmable to print a zero tape indicating all rankings for all candidates in a ranked-choice voting election.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective upon certification by the secretary of state that equipment meeting the standards required by this section is available for purchase and implementation.

Sec. 13. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 206.83, is amended to read:

206.83 TESTING OF VOTING SYSTEMS.

(a) Within 14 days before election day, the official in charge of elections shall have the voting system tested to ascertain that the system will correctly mark ballots using all methods supported by the system, including ranked-choice voting if applicable, and through assistive technology, and count the votes cast for all candidates and on all questions. Public notice of the time and place of the test must be given at least two days in advance by publication once in official newspapers. The test must be observed by at least two election judges, who are not of the same major political party, and must be open to representatives of the political parties, candidates, the press, and the public. The test must be conducted by (1) processing a preaudited group of ballots punched or marked to record a predetermined number of valid votes for each candidate and on each question, and must include for each office one or more ballot cards which have votes in excess of the number allowed by law in order to test the ability of the voting system tabulator and electronic ballot marker to reject those votes; and (2) processing an additional test deck of ballots marked using the electronic ballot marker for the precinct, including ballots marked using the electronic ballot display, audio ballot reader, and any assistive voting technology used with the electronic ballot marker. If an election is to be conducted using ranked-choice voting, the equipment must also be tested to ensure that each ranking for each candidate is recorded properly.

(b) If any error is detected, the cause must be ascertained and corrected and an errorless count must be made before the voting system may be used in the election.

(c) After the completion of the test, the programs used and ballot cards must be sealed, retained, and disposed of as provided for paper ballots.

Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 206.89, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **Selection for review; notice.** At the canvass of the state primary, the county canvassing board in each county must set the date, time, and place for the postelection review of the state general election to be held under this section. In jurisdictions where ranked-choice voting is used, the date, time, and place for postelection review must be set by the local election official at least 30 days before the election. The postelection review must not begin before the 11th day after the state general election and must be complete no later than the 18th day after the state general election.

At the canvass of the state general election, the county canvassing boards must select the precincts to be reviewed by lot. The ballots to be reviewed for a precinct include both

the ballots counted at the polling place for that precinct and the absentee ballots counted centrally by a ballot board for that precinct. The county canvassing board of a county with fewer than 50,000 registered voters must conduct a postelection review of a total of at least two precincts. The county canvassing board of a county with between 50,000 and 100,000 registered voters must conduct a review of a total of at least three precincts. The county canvassing board of a county with over 100,000 registered voters must conduct a review of a total of at least four precincts, or three percent of the total number of precincts in the county, whichever is greater. At least one precinct selected in each county must have had more than 150 votes cast at the general election.

The county auditor must notify the secretary of state of the precincts that have been chosen for review and the time and place the postelection review for that county will be conducted, as soon as the decisions are made. If the selection of precincts has not resulted in the selection of at least four precincts in each congressional district, the secretary of state may require counties to select by lot additional precincts to meet the congressional district requirement. The secretary of state must post this information on the office website.

Sec. 15. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 206.89, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **Scope and conduct of review.** The county canvassing board shall appoint the postelection review official as defined in subdivision 1. The postelection review must be conducted of the votes cast for president or governor; United States senator; and United States representative. In jurisdictions where ranked-choice voting is used, the review must also include at least one single-seat ranked-choice voting election and at least one multiple-seat ranked-choice voting election, if such an election occurred. A postelection review of a ranked-choice voting election must be conducted for elections decided most closely in the final round, by percentage. The same requirement applies in jurisdictions where ranked-choice voting is used in odd-year elections. The postelection review official may conduct postelection review of the votes cast for additional offices.

The postelection review must be conducted in public at the location where the voted ballots have been securely stored after the state general election or at another location chosen by the county canvassing board. The postelection review official for each precinct selected must conduct the postelection review and may be assisted by election judges designated by the postelection review official for this purpose. The party balance requirement of section 204B.19 applies to election judges designated for the review. The postelection review must consist of a manual count of the ballots used in the precincts selected and must be performed in the manner provided by section 204C.21. The postelection review must be conducted in

the manner provided for recounts under section 204C.361 to the extent practicable, and where ranked-choice voting is used, must include testing of the accumulation software using stored electronic data for those precincts that are not reviewed by manual count. The review must be completed no later than two days before the meeting of the state canvassing board to certify the results of the state general election.