

**Citizens Election Oversight Committee
February 10, 2016**

MINUTES

Members Present: Marilyn Knight, Glenn Avery, Paul Berry, Chuck Gerring, Sven Kalve, Sheryl Moss, Emily Willoughby, Ellen Hansen, Bruce Huang, Frank Radford

Telephone: Monica Tracey

Absent: Linh Thai

Excused: Kristina Swanson

Elections Staff: Julie Wise, Kendall Levan-Hodson, Dale Hartman, Nathan Valderas

CEOC Staff: Hiedi Popochock

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Hansen called the meeting to order at 11:40 am.
2. **Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of January 13, 2016 were approved.
3. **Director's Report:**

Introduction of new Elections Staff

Director Wise distributed a short biography of her new deputy director, Shannon Cortez and her new interim chief of staff, Kendall Levan-Hodson. A new organizational chart of the current Elections staff was also distributed as well as background information related to the staffing changes in Elections, the Ballot Drop Off Location (BDOL) Program, the Language Assistance Program Implementation, a press release from King County Elections announcing the expansion of drop boxes, an incident report related to the Ballard drop box, the February 9th Special Election results and a list of State Legislature bills that may affect the Department of Elections.

Director Wise announced that Ms. Cortez was unable to attend the CEOC meeting due to her attending the New Hire Orientation for new King County employees. Director Wise indicated that Ms. Cortez was confirmed by the King County Council with a round of applause on Monday, February 8th.

Ms. Cortez has conducted her first election at King County-the Tuesday, February 9th, Special Election. She has over 16 years of experience in Elections. She's State and nationally certified as an elections administrator. She has conducted over 80 elections including four presidential elections. The 2016 presidential election will be her fifth. Ms. Cortez has a green belt in Lean.

Director Wise provided Ms. Cortez's business card to all members.

Director Wise introduced her ((~~interim~~)) appointed chief of staff, Kendall Levan-Hodson. Prior to Elections, Ms. Levan-Hodson worked in human resources for the County, prior to human resources, she worked in Executive Dow Constantine's Office and Executive Ron Sim's Office

completing special projects. Her background is in strategic planning, project management and administration management. Ms. Levan-Hodson will be serving as the (~~interim~~) appointed chief of staff for Elections for the next three years.

Director Wise provided Ms. Levan-Hodson's business card to all members.

Staffing Changes

Director Wise discussed the staffing changes in Elections as mentioned in her January 26th e-mail to the CEOC members. There were 12 managers for various areas in Elections which resulted in communication issues within the department. Elections employees provided feedback in the King County Employees Survey indicating that the department needs to have an overall clear vision and to have a visible leadership team. In response, Director Wise wanted to create a leadership team with individuals that wore many hats and worked in different capacities within the organization.

Director Wise discussed her priorities regarding external relations and stakeholder relationships. She commented that Ms. Levan-Hodson joined the Elections team to assist in navigating within these areas. Director Wise commented that Elections wants to play by the rules by going through the County's structure the right way- going through the protocols of requesting a capital project or budget appropriation which involves working with the Council and the Executive prior to getting to the table at Council meetings.

Director Wise reiterated that members can find the list of Election managers and their management areas attached to the e-mail that she sent to all members on January 26, 2016.

Update on Mid-Biennial Budget

Director Wise announced that the 2015-2016 mid-biennial supplemental budget for all King County departments and agencies was passed out of the Budget and Fiscal Management Committee this morning. Ms. Popochock indicated that the mid-biennial supplemental budget will be at full Council in two weeks for adoption.

Director Wise indicated that Elections' budget request in the mid-biennial budget included an appropriation for additional ballot drop boxes and an appropriation to translate voting materials in Korean and Spanish and to provide community outreach.

Ms. Levan-Hodson mentioned that Elections already has three new boxes and the budget request would provide 37 additional drop boxes for a total of 40 new ballot drop boxes. She indicated that ten existing boxes would be replaced and 30 new locations would be identified for the remaining new boxes. The request also provides funds for Elections to communicate the new locations to the public. She indicated that Elections must provide a report to the Council in April or sooner to propose the new locations for the ballot drop boxes. Ms. Levan-Hodson stated that Elections would like to engage the CEOC in the development of the ballot drop box location proposal. Director Wise stated that Mr. Valderas is responsible for the plan aspect of the proposal and Ms. Cortez is responsible for the management aspect. She also solicited names of CEOC members who would like to be on the BDOL sub-committee to assist with the planning efforts.

Director Wise stated that the new ballot drop boxes will replace the ballot drop off vans. The locations of the drop boxes will be in the same neighborhoods that the ballot drop off vans served. She also indicated that the ongoing operating costs for the ballot drop off vans will be applied to

the ongoing costs of the new ballot drop boxes. Ballot drop off vans may be utilized in a temporary capacity in the future however, it will require a budget request to implement. Director Wise expects the ballot boxes to be ready for the presidential election. She indicated that the idea is to have a phased approach- some of the new boxes would be available for the primary election and the remaining boxes would be available for the general election. Ideally, all of the new drop boxes would be available for the primary election.

CEOC members expressed interest in viewing the three new drop boxes that Elections had already. Director Wise mentioned that the procurement of the 37 new boxes will be subject to the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The new boxes purchased through the RFP process may look different from the three drop boxes that Elections currently has.

Chair Hansen expressed that some jurisdictions may have to be convinced to allow placement of ballot drop boxes. Some jurisdictions have requested the boxes to be relocated or removed. The CEOC members need to utilize their contacts to persuade those jurisdictions. Mr. Berry indicated that the King County Library System is an advocate of ballot drop boxes and possibly the Seattle Library System. Chair Hansen recommended that Elections contact the Mayor's Office for drop box location issues in Seattle.

Mr. Valderas briefly described the tasks that the BDOL sub-committee would need to achieve and the time commitment. Elections will provide a list of their proposed criteria for the sub-committee to review. There will be two to three meetings via conference call in the next month or two.

Ballot Drop Box Sub-committee members: Frank Radford, Glenn Avery, Emily Willoughby, Sven Kalve, Monica Tracey and Ellen Hansen (observer)

Director Wise briefly discussed that Elections will expand their limited English speaking outreach efforts in result of the approved budget request by Council. She has contracted a consultant, Cherrie, who has worked with the city of Seattle in the limited English proficiency area and has reached out to Mr. Huang and Mr. Thai to meet with them. Director Wise indicated that if the consultant should contact any other members or persons, let her know.

Director Wise indicated that Elections will utilize data collected in Eastern Washington for Spanish voting materials. She also stated that there is a Spanish library for election terminology that is utilized across the State that Elections will use for its voting materials. Ms. Moss indicated that the Secretary of State provides voting materials in Spanish.

Director Wise distributed a copy of the news release that was sent out announcing the new ballot drop boxes and the limited English speaking community outreach efforts.

Debrief on Special Election

Director Wise mentioned that overall the school districts were fairly well in getting their ballot measures passed. She stated that Mercer Island and Vashon Island had a drop box for this election and she's interested in the outcome.

Director Wise briefed the committee on two ballot drop box incidents that occurred in the last month.

1. The Ballard drop box was vandalized. The box had Bernie Sanders' face stenciled on it. It was sprayed on the box two times and immediately covered each time.

The plastic wrapping on the boxes are not spray paint proof. The wrapping on the box has to be replaced each time. Director Wise indicated that Elections will seek spray paint proof plastic wrapping for the new drop boxes. The incidents were reported to the Seattle Police Department.

2. The incident that occurred on Wednesday, February 3 related to a security seal on the Ballard ballot drop box that was removed and the box was sprayed with Bernie Sanders on it. Director Wise stated that since the seal was removed it must be reported to the Canvass Board. The door of the ballot drop box remained secure. The ballots were not damaged therefore, the Canvass Board accepted the processing of the ballots that were enclosed in the vandalized box. This incident was also reported to the Seattle Police Department.

Director Wise stated that Elections will explore a security plan to protect the new boxes.

CEOC members provided a report on the drop off locations that they observed.

1. Mercer Island – Mr. Huang indicated that it was a quiet night at the Mercer Island voting precinct. He mentioned that the law enforcement officer had to leave toward five minutes prior to closing to respond to an emergency call. Director Wise will communicate with the law enforcement agencies to ensure that officers that are hired for security remain on-site until the voting precinct closes.

Ms. Tracey mentioned that she visited the Mercer Island drop off location as well. She imagines that the turnout at the Mercer Island location will be low and it wasn't well utilized. The location is out of the way. It takes time for people to realize that it's there.

2. Ballard – Mr. Avery indicated that everything went well at the Ballard location as well.
3. Auburn – Mr. Berry indicated that if we continue to use a ballot drop off van for this location, we may want to change the location of the sign. There were signage/banner issues for voters. Also, there was an event occurring at city hall and parking was limited.
4. Federal Way – Mr. Kalve indicated that they were provided with a temporary light to increase visibility. There was a law enforcement officer that was present and he did a wonderful job.

4. Legislative Session Update:

Ms. Moss indicated that there are big deadlines coming up.

There are a couple of bills that are still alive:

Automatic Voter Registration Bill [House Bill 2682] – Any organization that has citizenship as part of their processing or criteria, the State can take their electronic files of those citizens and register them to vote.

Voter Registration Deadlines Bill – Change the deadlines to register to vote: by mail = 28 days; in-person and electronic = 11 days. Currently, it is 29 days by mail and electronic; 8 days for in-person. The Secretary of State’s Office supports this bill.

Director Wise indicated that she supports of Secretary Wyman’s voter pre-registration for 17 year olds and the automatic voter registration bills. She has testified in support of these bills in Olympia.

5. Presidential Primary:

Director Wise mentioned that Elections will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to show the CEOC members regarding the Presidential primary at the April 13th meeting.

Ms. Moss passed around an example of what the back of the ballot envelope will look like and also the insert. She indicated that voters can visit the Secretary of State website to review the frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the Presidential primary.

<http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/2016-Presidential-Primary.aspx>

Director Wise stated that voters can visit King County’s Department of Elections’ website to obtain information regarding precinct caucus information. It is featured on the rotating banner on the homepage of the website.

6. Technology Update:

Mr. Hartman indicated that the deadline for the Request for Information (RFI) on the tabulation system was extended nine days (February 18). The reason for the extension was due to the vendors asking questions regarding the RFI and Elections responding back to those questions. The questions and responses must be posted online for public view and sent to all the vendors. Mr. Hartman stated that once the RFI closes, he will engage with the CEOC Technology Subcommittee to review the RFI responses.

7. 2016 Work Plan:

The CEOC members reviewed the 2015 Work Plan to develop the 2016 Work Plan.

Mr. Radford suggested changing item number 3 listed on the 2015 Work Plan under “The CEOC will” section:

- 3. Get briefings and participate in trainings conducted by Elections staff or staff from the Secretary of State’s Office on various aspects of elections to be held at committee meetings. This work program element will have a specific focus in 2015 2016 on the areas of ~~ballot printing and production, and technology projects (including for system replacements for elections management and ballot tabulations).~~*

What are we focusing on in 2016? Presidential election, ballot tabulation.

Mr. Radford also suggested adding an item number 6 on the 2015 Work Plan under “The CEOC will” section:

6. Work with the newly elected director and the new staff to establish clear channels of communication and working relationships.

Chair Hansen suggested adding a new item number 2, 3 and 4 on the 2015 Work Plan under “The CEOC will” section:

2. Provide input and assistance to Elections on placement of new drop boxes including providing any assistance needed in dealing with jurisdictions in the placement of the drop boxes.
3. Monitor the Elections Technology Strategic Plan by involving the CEOC Technology Subcommittee.
4. Provide assistance to Elections to increase outreach efforts in limited English proficient communities.

Ms. Popochock indicated that she will draft the 2016 Work Plan with the suggested changes provided by Mr. Radford and Chair Hansen. She will circulate the draft to all members for review. Chair Hansen stated that the CEOC members may have to adopt the 2016 Work Plan via e-mail since the next meeting is in April.

8. Housekeeping:

Ms. Popochock mentioned that the statement of financial and other interest forms are due from all CEOC members on April 15, 2016. The last opportunity to return the form in-person is at the next meeting on April 13, 2016. She indicated that she will e-mail the form to members.

Ms. Popochock discussed the King County retention schedule for all CEOC members for e-mail correspondence relating to CEOC activities.

Ms. Popochock announced that Mr. Avery was confirmed by the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee on Tuesday, February 9. The full Council will approve the Motion for his confirmation next week.

She also announced that newly elected Councilmember Kohl-Welles-Councilmember Larry Phillips’ successor-has expressed interest in attending a CEOC meeting in the future.

Director Wise announced that all councilmembers will be invited to observe the processing of ballots for the April election and leading up to the Presidential.

Chair Hansen reviewed the 2016 CEOC meeting schedule with the members.

9. Good of the Order:

Chair Hansen commented that the junior taxing district position is still vacant on the CEOC.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Hiedi Popochock