



Request for Council/Committee Action from the Office of City Clerk

Date: June 15, 2011
To: The Hon. Cam Gordon, Chairman
Elections Committee
Subject: Disposition of City's Elections Responsibilities
Recommendation: Receive and file the report of the consultant.

In addition, there are two policy options provided. The Elections Committee will need to determine which option to recommend to the full City Council:

Option #1: Direct staff to develop a plan and associated timeline to consolidate all or a portion of the City's elections responsibilities and related functions with Hennepin County, including authorization to draft an interjurisdictional agreement for the provision of such elections responsibilities by Hennepin County (Elections Division).

Option #2: Direct staff to develop a plan and associated timeline to retain the City's elections responsibilities and related functions with identified improvements in service delivery, resource allocation, cost savings, and operational enhancements.

Previous Directives: On April 1, 2011, the City Council authorized the re-appropriation and use of up to \$75,000 in Fiscal Year 2010 fund balance to evaluate current elections functions performed by the City of Minneapolis. On April 14, 2011, the City Council directed staff to develop a scope of services for a professional services contract to identify a series of operating models related to the future disposition of the City's elections functions.

Prepared by: Casey Joe Carl, City Clerk 612-673-3765 Presenters in Committee: Casey Joe Carl, City Clerk; Connie Schmidt, CERA – consultant (Connie Schmidt & Associates, Inc., Election Consulting Services)
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Background

Subject to myriad federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and as provided in the city charter, the City of Minneapolis is responsible for the conduct of federal, state, and local elections within its corporate boundaries, a responsibility that is assigned to and performed by the Office of City Clerk.

In April, the City Council directed staff to explore various policy options for the future disposition of the elections responsibilities performed by the City of Minneapolis. In response, the City Clerk engaged a consultant with expertise and experience in elections administration to evaluate alternatives which might improve service delivery, maximize available resources, and increase productivity. Minimally, the consultant was tasked with presenting two operating models for consideration by the City Council: (1) consolidation of all or a part of the City's elections responsibilities with Hennepin County via an

interjurisdictional agreement and (2) a model in which the City retains its current elections responsibilities combined with recommendations for process improvements, potential cost savings, and other operational enhancements.

Financial Impact

The potential financial impact of this proposal cannot be adequately quantified at this generic level, but would require further evaluation and refinement based on the overall policy direction dictated by the City Council. In the first instance, the fiscal impact of a contractual relationship with Hennepin County would be subject to, and primarily driven by, contract negotiations and the scope of what services and functions are or are not to be consolidated and transferred to the County. In the second instance, the fiscal impact would be driven by longer-term process improvements and operational enhancements that would be tied to departmental business plans, available funds, and similar matters.

Community Impact

City Goal: Many People, One Minneapolis.