The 2013 Municipal Election:

A Report on Final Plans & Preparations

MINNEAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL
Standing Committee on Elections

Wed., October 30, 2013

Final Plans & Preparations for the 2013 Municipal Election

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— SUMMARY —

On November 5, Minneapolis voters will have the opportunity to participate in the 2013 Municipal Election using the Ranked-Choice Voting methodology. This year marks the City's second use of RCV, following its implementation in 2009. With 108 candidates in 22 different municipal races, including a record-setting 35 mayoral candidates, as well as two ballot questions related to a plain-language revision of the City Charter, the 2013 Municipal Election will be an exciting experiment in local democracy.

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I.   IMPROVING SERVICE TO VOTERS

New Polling Place Locations

Following the 2012 Presidential Election, staff conducted detailed, on-site inspections of each of the City's 117 polling places. These inspections verified that many of the City's polling places were stretched beyond capacity, attempting to serve overly-large precincts based on numbers of pre-registered voters.[1] A full report of these findings was submitted to the City Council's standing committee on Elections on February 27, 2013. As reported, the historic turnout experienced by Minneapolis in 2012—including more than 50,000 same-day registrants—highlighted the fact that many polling sites are no longer adequate to meet the City's needs.[2]

Accordingly, for the 2013 Municipal Election, the City Council authorized polling place changes in the following wards and precincts:

- **Ward 2-Precinct 4: Weisman Museum**
- **Ward 2-Precinct 9: Augsburg College Oren Gateway Building**
- **Ward 6-Precinct 2: Seward Towers East**
- **Ward 8-Precinct 2: Lyndale Community School**
- **Ward 8-Precinct 5: St Joan of Arc Church (also serves Ward 8-Precinct 4)**
- **Ward 10-Precinct 2: Jefferson School (also serves Ward 10-Precinct 1)**

[*For a full list of all polling sites, see Exhibit A – 2013 Precincts & Polling Places Map.*]
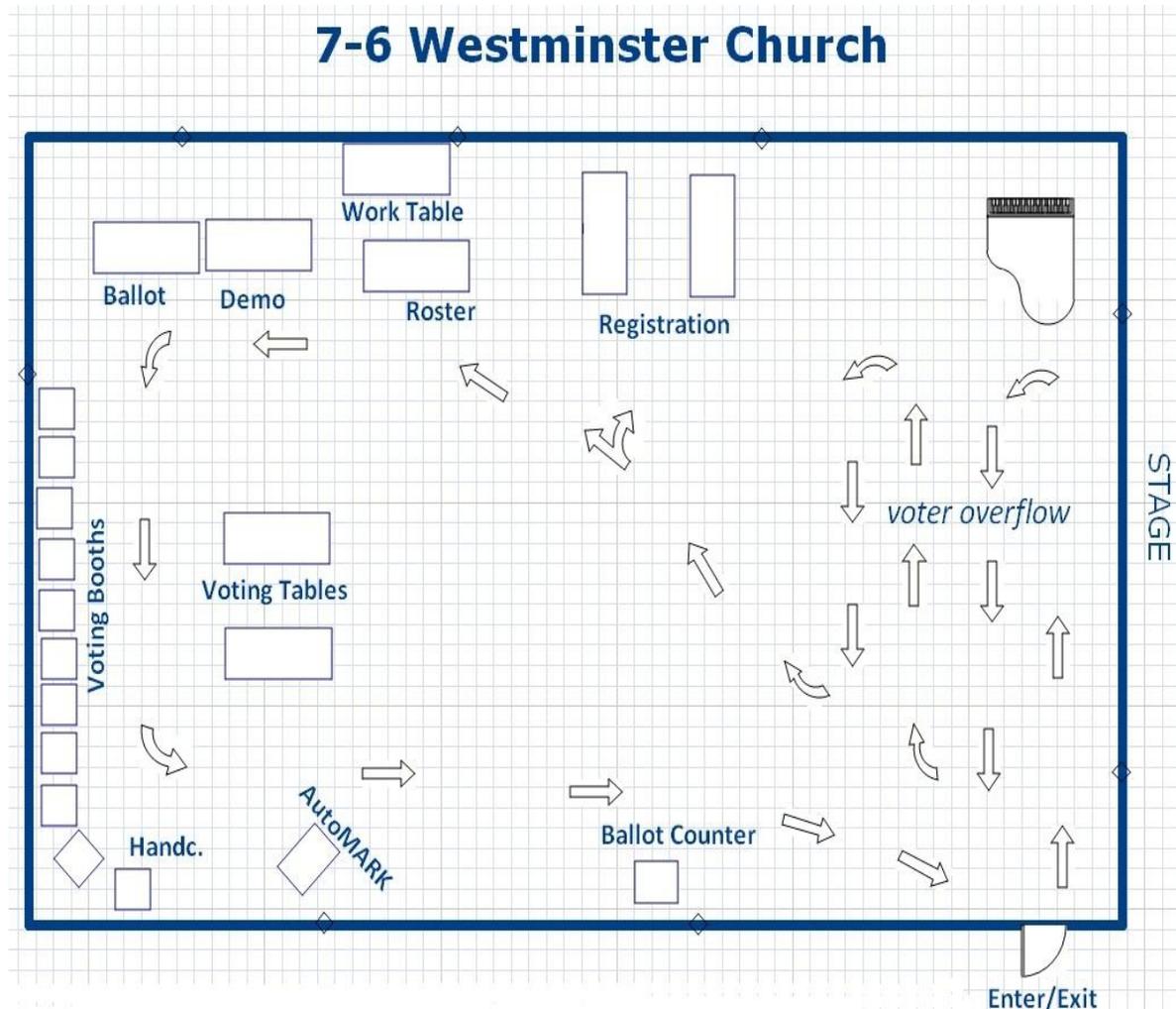
Staff recommends further polling place changes in advance of the 2014 Gubernatorial Election, which may necessitate additional modifications to existing precinct boundaries as well as the creation of new precincts. Staff plans to begin this analysis in early 2014, after completing all work associated with the 2013 Municipal Election.

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[1] The City of Minneapolis reduced the number of its precincts in 2012, from 131 to 117, as a budget-saving measure. Concurrently, the number of pre-registered voters was equalized to achieve greater consistency in the number of pre-registered voters served in each precinct. As a result, the average precinct—prior to the 2012 Presidential General Election—served approximately 1,844 pre-registered voters, which fell within state guidelines for precinct size. Because of the historic turnout (81%) that year, Minneapolis had 25 precincts serving more than 2,500 pre-registered voters, which exceeds the guidelines for recommended precinct size, based on data from the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) maintained by the Office of Secretary of State.

[2] In the 2012 Presidential General Election, a total of 50,668 voters used same-day registration to cast their ballots, equivalent to 1 of every 4 voters participating in the City's 117 precincts on Election Day.

Site Assessments & Customized Layouts

As directed by City Council, the Elections & Voter Services Division conducted on-site assessments of all 117 polling places. [3] These assessments involved review of mandated requirements, such as ADA-compatible entrances and pathways, as well as some highly-desirable characteristics, like interior queuing space and parking availability. [4] A customized layout was created illustrating a possible configuration for each polling place [*see example below*], which will be refined and finalized with input from head election judges prior to the 2014 Gubernatorial Election. These site-specific layouts will streamline the organization and set-up of the polling place in the early morning hours on Election Day and maximize use of space to serve voters.

7-6 Westminster Church

Work Table

Ballot   Demo   Roster   Registration

Voting Booths

Voting Tables

STAGE

voter overflow

Handc.   AutoMARK   Ballot Counter

Enter/Exit

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[3] On December 7, 2012, the City Council directed staff to conduct on-site assessments of polling places to identify and address potential barriers and challenges and to identify potential new polling place locations, including the option of using one polling place to serve multiple precincts. Subsequently, at its regular meeting on March 7, 2013, the City Council authorized the formation of a Polling Place Work Group to engage community stakeholders in this comprehensive assessment of all polling places as well as the development of a Polling Place Assessment Guide.

[4] The Polling Place Work Group identified a number of desirable characteristics and specific recommendations to guide the future selection of polling place locations. For details, see *Exhibit B – Polling Place Assessment Guide*.

Improved Polling Place Signage

Feedback from voters and the Polling Place Work Group indicated a strong desire for better signage at polling places. Improved signage would be especially helpful to those voters who are new to their polling place or who are new to voting in general. In response, staff designed a series of signs to be used at polling places to better assist voters, including:

- **In outdoor areas leading to the polling place, large signs labeled** IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE BLUE LINE, VOTE HERE**, with a precinct map clearly outlining the territory covered by the specific polling place;**

- **Within the polling place, large** START HERE **signs to better direct voters toward the registration/roster area, specifically in larger-sized polling places where the queuing area may not be immediately visible or obvious; and**

- **In precincts known to have larger voter populations with limited English proficiency, all directional and voter-assistance signs will be translated into the primary non-English languages spoken in that precinct, as well as information about how to access translation assistance or language support.**

Staff plans to post the new signage at select locations for this year's election, based on polling place assessments, to gauge how well they work. It is anticipated between 25 and 50 polling sites will receive the new signage. Staff will deploy new signage at all polling places as part of the 2014 Gubernatorial Election.

Polling Place Management & Operations

EXPANDING THE ROLE OF HEAD & ASSISTANT HEAD ELECTION JUDGES

An important lesson from the 2012 Presidential Election is the need for dedicated management in polling places. In past years, the head and assistant head judges were responsible for managing polling place operations as well as backing-up the various team judges, and filling-in when necessary, throughout the day. This dual focus overly overburdened head and assistant head judges, taking time away from their management responsibilities. Worse, the overall effect undermined service to voters. This was especially problematic in the City's largest precincts, where high voter turnout, combined with significant same-day registrations, quickly overwhelmed the capacity of election judge teams. In the post-election debriefing with head election judges, this issue was repeatedly identified as one of the biggest challenges and one of the biggest concerns for the future.

Accordingly, beginning in 2013, all head and assistant head judges will no longer be included in the base count of team judges to be deployed. Instead, staff will increase the base number of team judges that are deployed to each precinct to ensure adequate coverage in all polling places throughout the day (*see next section*). By adding these positions above the base coverage, head and assistant head judges will be able to focus on the "big picture" of serving voters and tending to the efficient operation of his or her assigned polling place. A new (mandatory) training for all head and assistant head election judges was designed to focus on the expanded management expectations for polling place operations.

A **HEAD & ASSISTANT HEAD ELECTION JUDGE MANUAL** was developed to provide these leadership positions with the tools, information, and resources needed. The manual includes step-by-step instructions of duties and responsibilities specific to the head judge and a guide for poll management. The guide focuses on three functions to enhance the voter's experience: line management; voter flow in the polling place; and monitoring and mentoring team judges. These functions emphasize the goal of maximizing the voter flow to minimize wait time in an efficient and voter friendly manner. Monitoring and mentoring team judges will enhance accuracy and performance. This new training class for head and assistant head election judges began October 9, 2013.[5]

These simple changes will enable these leadership positions to be accessible at all times throughout Election Day, to supervise polling place activities, to interact with and respond to voters needing assistance or information, and to make any necessary adjustments to ensure a positive experience for all voters. In addition, staff has implemented a new evaluation process with clear criteria in evaluating the performance of team judges. A post-election debrief will also be scheduled to evaluate the process in 2013. This feedback is anticipated to help the Elections & Voter Services Division identify and monitor issues, discover potential problems or challenges, and pursue opportunities for further improvements to the management of polling places and the recruitment and training of new election judges.

STAFFING ANALYSIS: A NEW APPROACH TO DEPLOYING ELECTION JUDGES

A successful election cannot be conducted without election judges to staff the polls. As a consequence, the Elections & Voter Services Division must recruit, train, organize, and mobilize a massive one-day workforce each year to conduct regularly-scheduled elections. The total number of election judges that must be deployed exceeds the combined full-time employee count in the City's three largest departments (Police, Fire, and Public Works). Few public-sector jobs could be considered more critical to the health of America's democracy; after all, voting equipment, registration databases, and polling place procedures are only as effective and fair as the poll workers can make them. In fact, poll workers have been referred to in national studies as the "foot soldiers of democracy."

Minnesota law requires every precinct to be served by a minimum of 4 election judges.[6] Additional staffing is determined according to the percentage of estimated voter turnout. Although there are no exact formulas, generally the approach is 1 election judge per 150 registered voters. This basic rubric is used in conjunction with the following variables, which are known to impact voter turnout:

1. **Analysis of voter participation data from previous comparable elections;**
2. **The type of election in the regular cycle: local, state, or federal as well as primary or general; and**
3. **Ballot content, that is the offices to be elected, the candidates in each race, and any ballot questions which may be included.**

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[5] *See* 2013 HEAD & ASSISTANT HEAD ELECTION JUDGE MANUAL, from the election website at: http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/judges/WCMSIP-115318. All election judge training materials, manuals, duty cards, etc., are posted to the City's election website for public access and transparency.

[6] Minn. Stat. § 204B.22, subd. 1

For the 2013 Municipal Election, preparations were based on a projected 75 percent turnout of registered voters. As of January 28, 2013, the City had a registered voting population of 247,104; thus, 75 percent of that total population is 185,328. Based on an average of 1 poll worker assigned for every 150 voters, the total number of poll workers needed for the 2013 Municipal Election was set at 1,235. As of October 28, the City had successfully recruited, trained, and assigned 1,124 team election judges to cover its 117 precincts on Election Day. The Elections & Voter Services Division continues to recruit poll workers and will endeavor to reach the original projected goal. Using the higher projection will help assure the City has recruited a sufficient number of poll workers to cover last-minute cancellations and other challenges, which provides a necessary cushion related to staffing issues.

As already stated, the total number of team judges does not include the head and assistant head judges for each precinct (a total of 234 leadership positions). In addition to increasing the base number of poll workers across the city, the Elections & Voter Services Division made special efforts to recruit additional greeter judges and language support judges who are assigned to provide translation assistance for voters.

For more details, see *Exhibit C - 2013 Municipal Election Staffing Analysis*.

IMPROVED LINE MANAGEMENT

Voters have a right to expect good service when they go to the polling place. And that means *full service*—not just *fast service*. First and foremost, election administrators must assure compliance with legal requirements, and these requirements can—unfortunately—slow the process of serving voters. Based on lessons learned from the 2012 Presidential Election, staff believes that by increasing the number of greeter judges at each precinct, the City can better assist voters and provide proactive management of voter lines. For the 2013 Municipal Election, greeter judges will be tasked with the following:

- **Verifying voters are in the correct precinct;**
- **Organizing queuing lines for pre-registered versus same-day registration service to expedite wait times and reduce unnecessary delays;**
- **Providing same-day registration materials so voters can complete this paperwork in line;**
- **Verifying voters using same-day registration have the proper identification required by law;**
- **Identifying language support or translation needs and coordinating that assistance for voters;**
- **Offering voters explanatory materials about how to cast an RCV ballot properly;**
- **Assisting voters experiencing physical discomfort or who may be physically unable to wait in line to vote, including curbside voting assistance when required; and**
- **Distributing sample ballots to voters so that they can familiarize themselves with the ballot (and ballot content) while waiting in line to expedite the time spent in the voting booth.**

II. VOTER OUTREACH, EDUCATION & RESOURCES

In preparation for the 2013 election, a comprehensive Voter Outreach & Education Plan was developed with the goal of ensuring all voters are "**election ready**." This means all likely and potential voters know:

- **The date of the election — November 5, 2013, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.;**
- **How to register to vote — either in advance or in-person on Election Day;**
- **The location of the polling place serving their assigned precinct;**
- **The specific races and questions on the ballot; and**
- **How to properly mark and cast as RCV ballot.**

Several strategies have been developed and deployed as part of the Outreach & Education Plan to reach all Minneapolis voters with election information. Two of the all new strategies first being used in 2013 include the Voter Ambassador Program and the Candidate & Public Information forums, described below.

Branding & Voter Engagement Tools—

The City's Communications Department prepared a dynamic communications strategy to focus outreach and engagement efforts on the goal of assuring all voters are "election ready." This work included the design of an overall brand that summed up the importance of this year's municipal election for voters:

YOUR CITY. YOUR VOTE.

Print materials and multi-media tools (including videos) were created and deployed to assist in distributing key messages. To expand the reach of the new branding and engagement tools and messaging, these materials were provided to a variety of partners engaged in voter outreach and education efforts.

Several other low-cost/high-impact communications strategies have also been used to reach as many voters as possible, including bus cards on selected Metro Transit routes within the city, public service announcements airing on Comcast throughout September and October, and advertising on digital billboards highlighting key messages leading up to Election Day.

There have also been multiple initiatives this year to create all-new voter engagement tools , including an election website, use of social media, holding mock elections, and mailing out voter information guides to all households.

NEW ELECTION WEBSITE

A new election website was developed to provide accurate, up-to-date information about the 2013 Municipal Election. The new website is filled with useful information, including (but not limited to):

- **Access to precinct-specific sample ballots which voters can use to determine their first, second, and third choices in each race and use (for reference) in the polls on Election Day;**
- **Tools to help voters look-up polling places, pre-register or verify registration status, and request and track absentee ballots;**
- **Access to PDF copies of each candidate's affidavit of candidacy, providing the candidate's name, party affiliation or political principle, and campaign contact details;**
- **An inclusive calendar of non-partisan, election-related events in the community, including information about ambassador and election judge trainings;**
- **Basic voting instructions, fact sheets, an interactive practice ballot, and a multitude of instructional videos, brochures, and flyers that demonstrate the RCV-ranking and tabulation processes and inform voters about what to expect in the polling place on Election Day; and**
- **Voter resource information, including rideshare information for those who need assistance getting to the polls, details about curbside voting, and information about rights for all voters as provided in Minnesota election law.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Elections & Voter Services Division enhanced its use of social media outlets to capitalize on additional outreach avenues in 2013. These social media sites help the City inform the electorate in a timely, user-friendly, and efficient manner. The staff will continue to use these social media sites through Election Night (November 5) and the following days to provide instant access to results data.

Twitter – www.twitter.com/votempls

YouTube – www.youtube.com/user/cityofminneapolis

Facebook – www.facebook.com/votempls

Minneapolis 311 Application –

Android: http://tinyurl.com/mplsand

iPhone: http://tinyurl.com/mplsios

MOCK ELECTION

A mock election was held to give all interested individuals an opportunity to learn about the 2013 Municipal Election, to test the new voting equipment, and to learn about Ranked-Choice Voting and how to properly cast an RCV ballot. In addition, the mock election served as a "full dress rehearsal" for City and Council election administrators, providing an opportunity to test the new systems, procedures, ensure they are operational, and run-through all election procedures and protocols prior to going "live" on Election Day/Night. The mock election was conducted weekday afternoons at City Hall, from September 5 through 16, and at four community-based locations as follows:

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

- **Patrick Henry High School cafeteria, 4320 Newton Ave. N.**
  Sept. 10, from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.

- **Washburn High School cafeteria, 201 W. 49th St.**
  Sept. 11, from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.

- **Edison High School small gym, 700 22nd Ave. NE**
  Sept. 12, from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The mock election allowed participants to rank and vote on various park-themed issues in races designed to mimic the actual 2013 Municipal Election ballot, including both single-seat and multi-seat races. The mock election ballot also included two ballot questions, just like the actual ballot. The results of the mock election were posted to the City's website on September 24 for public access.

An additional benefit of conducting mock election events in local high schools was the opportunity to strengthen connections with students—the "next generation of voters." Staff gave presentations to government classes at Washburn High School and South High School about the 2013 Municipal Election, Ranked-Choice Voting, and the functions and responsibilities of city government and its impact on the community. In addition, staff used these opportunities to recruit student election judges and encouraged students to engage as voter ambassadors.

Minneapolis Voter Ambassador Program

The Voter Ambassador Program is at the heart of this year's outreach and education plans. **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.** One of the goals of the Voter Ambassador Program is to target and engage populations that historically have demonstrated low levels of participation in elections, particularly at the municipal level. Using a train-the-trainer approach, staff educated all ambassadors on the fundamentals of election law and regulations, voting procedures, voter resources available through the City, and Ranked Choice

Voting. Each ambassador was supplied polling place location maps; a variety of instructions and explanatory materials; demonstration and sample ballots; videos; and RCV-specific guides to address frequently asked questions and common concerns. All of these materials were made available in multiple languages to facilitate effective outreach to all voters.[7] In addition to serving as resources within their own civic circles, neighborhoods, and organizations, ambassadors have assisted staff in reaching voters through formal trainings and informational sessions.

Voter Information Guide

Finally, in addition to other communications strategies and tools, the Elections & Voter Services Division prepared and mailed to every Minneapolis household a Voter Information Guide, a copy of which is also posted to the new election website and included for reference in this report as *Exhibit D – Voter Information Guide*. **The Voter Information Guide includes the basics voters need to know to be ready for Election Day - what's on the ballot, how to register, how to find where to vote or to vote absentee, how Ranked Choice Voting works, and what types of assistance are available to voters in the polling place. Also included in the mailing are the polling place list and map and a sample ballot based on each household's ward and precinct.** The guide was mailed to all Minneapolis households beginning October 24, and will be delivered to households between Monday, October 28, and Wednesday, October 30.

Candidate & Public Information Forums

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

III. RANKED-CHOICE VOTING: SYSTEMS, PROCEDURES & IMPROVEMENTS

New Election Management System & Voting Equipment
Testing & Certification

Hennepin County purchased a new election management system from Election Systems & Software (ES&S), which will be deployed for its first use in the 2013 Municipal Election. The new EMS includes an operating system—called ElectionWare™—as well as new precinct-level voting equipment. Under Minnesota election law, voting systems must comply with both federal and state certification requirements. ES&S's ElectionWare Version 5.0, the base application, was federally certified, and the Version 5.1 upgrade—which has been deployed in Hennepin County—was certified by the Minnesota Secretary of State. Although the entire voting system has been certified at both federal and state levels, those certifications do not address enhancements that are specific to Ranked-Choice Voting. That's

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[7] With assistance from the City's Neighborhood & Community Relations Department, voter education materials are available in English, Hmong, Lao, Oromo, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Materials are 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.

because there are no federal or state standards for alternative voting systems (like RCV). Federal certification is based on standards established in 2005, and those standards do not anticipate alternative voting systems like RCV. Similarly, Minnesota election law is silent on Ranked-Choice Voting; consequently, the Secretary of State has no authority to certify RCV-specific components of a voting system. And, as previously reported, there simply is no equipment available in the marketplace today for use in Minnesota that automates the processing and tabulation of RCV ballots.
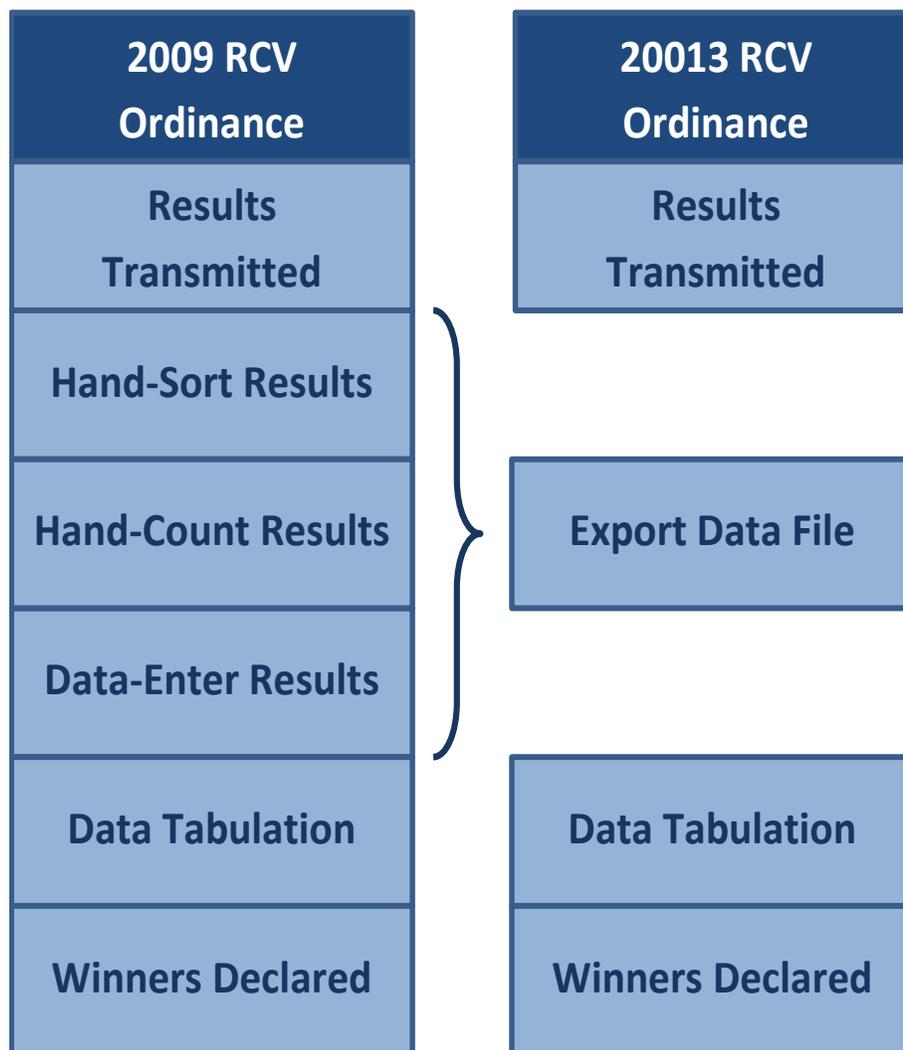
Of course, this does not mean the new system and equipment have not been rigorously tested. All election equipment vendors—including ES&S—submit their products for evaluation and testing by a federally-certified Voting System Test Laboratory (VSTL) before putting those products on the market. ElectionWare Version 5.1 was tested by Wyle Laboratories, an independent, federally-accredited test laboratory specializing in engineering, scientific, and technical services. Based on testing conducted by Wyle Laboratories, ES&S's ElectionWare Version 5.1 has been certified at federal and state levels and is compliant with federal and state standards. To address more fully the operability of the unique export utility that is included in the new equipment, the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County included a contract provision allowing for additional independent testing of this component of the system. The results of that independent testing are included under Section V. INDEPENDENT ANALYSES (*see page X*).

The *Minneapolis Method* [8], developed in 2009 and further refined in 2013, minimizes the handling of each ballot and allows for simultaneous counting of multiple races, resulting in results being delivered in as short of time as possible. The CVR file produced by the new equipment contains a report of all votes cast for each three-choice combination of candidates in every race on the ballot. This report is produced in a format that is compatible for use with Microsoft Excel. The City will use this spreadsheet—exactly as done in 2009—to complete the tabulation process, following rules established in the City's ordinance. **Thus, the exportable CVR file that is produced by the new equipment eliminates the most time-consuming and costly components of the 2009 experience; specifically: the hand-sorting and hand-counting of all ballots and the hand-entry of all ballot data into the spreadsheet.** [9] In 2013, the City's election team will simply import the raw data from the CVR file into the spreadsheet and immediately begin tabulating. The effect is to reduce from six steps in 2009 to four steps in 2013.

The charts on the following page illustrate the key differences between the 2009 and 2013 processes.

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[8] The City of Minneapolis was presented the Guardian Award in 2010 by the National Association of Election Officials (also known as the Election Center) for its work to implement Ranked-Choice Voting in Minneapolis in conjunction with the 2009 Municipal Election, including the development of the *Minneapolis Method* for hand-counting and reporting RCV election results for both singles-seat and multi-seat races and ballot design. The Guardian Award recognizes work which exemplifies the Association's professional code of ethics, industry principles and best practices, and standards for elections administration.

[9] In the 2009 Municipal Election, Minneapolis lacked voting equipment that could tabulate RCV ballots; consequently, a full hand-count of all ballots was required. This necessitated the employment of approximately 100 (full time equivalent) election judges to complete the sorting and hand-counting of ballots before the tabulation team could begin its work. This process required a total of 15 days (18 calendar days). Labor, materials, and facilities expenditures totaled $135,441, as reported to City Council on April 26, 2010. From its analysis, staff believes that the 2013 improvements (described above) will eliminate the need for a full hand-count process. The use of the Excel report produced by the export utility available in ElectionWare Version 5.1 is anticipated to eliminate two distinct phases from the 2009 Minneapolis Method, saving an estimated 1 full working day for each 5 percentage points of voter turnout. Additional process improvements achieved through ordinance amendments are anticipated to achieve significant time savings in the tabulation phase. These procedural modifications assure a high probability that results for all races in 2013 could be available by the Friday following Election Day, for races where additional rounds must be conducted in multiple races.

2009 RCV Ordinance	20013 RCV Ordinance
Results Transmitted	Results Transmitted
Hand-Sort Results	
Hand-Count Results	Export Data File
Data-Enter Results	
Data Tabulation	Data Tabulation
Winners Declared	Winners Declared

Process Improvements in 2013

Pursuant to Ordinance No. 2013-OR-055, the City Council authorized a number of amendments to Ranked-Choice Voting as it is used in Minneapolis.[10] Of these, three amendments provided substantive changes, focused on:

1. **Authorizing the use of voters' first-ranked choices against a maximum possible threshold based on the total number of ballots to declare unofficial winners on Election Night;**

2. **Requiring write-in candidates to file no less than 7 days before the date of the election to be individually tabulated in the election results, and all other write-in candidates to be reported in aggregate; and**

3. **Modifying the rules for determining voter intent to provide a greater opportunity for every ballot to remain in play if additional rounds are required.**

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[10] The Elections & Voter Services Division produced a line-by-line summary of all amendments in the 2013 Ranked-Choice Voting Ordinance, a copy of which is attached for reference as *Exhibit E – 2013 RCV Ordinance: Line-by-Line Summary of Amendments* .

Each of the substantive changes included in the 2013 RCV Ordinances is discussed in the following sub-sections.

USE FIRST-RANKED CHOICES TO DETERMINE ELECTION NIGHT RESULTS

Citizens, candidates, constituents, campaigners, and the news media all want (demand) quick results on Election Night. The expectation that results from all 117 precincts across the city should be processed, tabulated, and ready to announce within two hours (or less) of closing the polls creates enormous back-end challenges for election administrators. In truth, that timeline is unrealistic. Nevertheless, expectations persist. Therefore, to meet expectations for quick yet accurate results, the City has authorized the use of first-ranked choices to determine unofficial winners in races where subsequent rounds of counting are unnecessary to fill all seats for a particular office. To accomplish that objective, the City will use a "maximum possible threshold" based on the total number of ballots cast in each race.

The maximum possible threshold is determined by the total number of ballots cast in a particular race—including votes, over votes, and under votes—divided by the sum of the number of seats to be elected plus 1, then adding 1, disregarding any fractions. This is shown as:

$$\text{Maximum Possible Threshold} = \frac{\text{Total Ballots Cast}}{\text{Number of Seats to Elect} + 1} + 1$$

Calculating the maximum possible threshold based on the total number of ballots has the effect of increasing the threshold required to declare a winner. That is because the total number of ballots would include any over-votes and under-votes as well as actual votes cast in each race. **Thus, if any candidate meets or exceeds the maximum possible threshold using only first-ranked choices on Election Night, that candidate will have a sufficient number of votes necessary to win the race and it would be mathematically impossible to be defeated by any other candidates. In that instance, the City would be able to definitively declare a (unofficial) winner on Election Night.** However, if no candidate meets or exceeds the maximum possible threshold on Election Night using only first-ranked choices, then additional rounds of counting will be required, as specified under the ordinance, and that process will be initiated the following afternoon.

Each race requiring additional rounds of tabulation will be conducted in ballot-order, beginning with the mayoral race. For Council Member (ward) and Park and Recreation Commissioner (district) races, the order was randomly selected at the Public Accuracy Test. [11] Based on the results of the random drawing, the tabulation order will be as follows:

➢ MAYOR (1 seat)
➢ CITY COUNCIL (13 seats)
  o Ward 13
  o Ward 11
  o Ward 3
  o Ward 12
  o Ward 6
  o Ward 8
  o Ward 7
  o Ward 1

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[11] The Public Accuracy Test, required pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 206.83, was conducted October 29, 2013.

- o Ward 5
- o Ward 9
- o Ward 2
- o Ward 10
- o Ward 4
- ➢ BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION (2 seats)
- ➢ PARK BOARD COMMISSIONER – At-Large (3 seats)
- ➢ PARK BOARD COMMISSIONER – By District (6 seats)
  - o District 4
  - o District 1
  - o District 5
  - o District 2
  - o District 3
  - o District 6

If this process improvement had been in place for the 2009 Municipal Election, the winners of 15 of the 20 single-seat offices on the ballot that year could have been declared on Election Night. However, under the 2009 RCV Ordinance all ranked choices had to be hand-sorted, hand-counted, data entered, and then tabulated before any winners could be declared. The amount of time needed to have results for all races would have been cut in half in 2009, from 15 working days to approximately 8 working days. This process improvement will allow all results to be known many days earlier than they otherwise would.

REQUIRING WRITE-IN CANDIDATES TO DECLARE IN ORDER TO BE INDIVIDUALLY TABULATED

Write-in candidates who wish to have their votes individually tabulated must first file a declaration with the City's election office no less than 7 days before the date of the municipal general election. **All votes for undeclared write-in candidates will be reported in aggregate, rather than by individual name.** In round-by-round tabulation undeclared write-in candidates will be defeated as a single group at the beginning of the second round. This amendment (a provision granted to charter cities) brings the City of Minneapolis into alignment with statutory provisions for processing write-in candidates in county, state, and federal elections. In addition to Minneapolis, the cities of Blaine and Saint Paul have also adopted similar requirements for their municipal elections. **This process improvement will save significant time and costs to complete the tabulation of write-in candidates. If any write-in candidate wishes to be tabulated and have the results reported individually, a simple declaration filed with the City at least 7 days before the election is all that is required.**

With this amendment in place, the cut-off for filing a declared write-in candidacy in the 2013 Municipal Election was 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 29, exactly seven days before the scheduled date of the election. At the time this report was published, the City's Elections & Voter Services Division had not received any filings from potential write-in candidates.

In 2009, documenting and counting all write-in candidates consumed a significant amount of time during all phases of the Minneapolis Method. Election judges had to complete separate sorting and counting processes for each write-in candidate, which in turn created additional data entry and tabulation work. This delayed the start of the tabulation phase, and then increased the length of time necessary to complete the tabulation of all results in each race by several days. The 2013 amendment eliminates this challenge, which will further expedite the time required to complete the entire election.

IMPROVING THE RULES FOR DETERMINING VOTER INTENT

Voter intent is a ballot evaluation process identified and regulated by Minnesota election law.[12] In any election—whether federal, state, or local, and regardless of the method used—there exists the possibility that voters will inadvertently mark ballots in a manner which does not allow all votes to be automatically counted. Although Minnesota has extensive regulations governing the determination of voter intent, those rules and regulations do not address aspects unique to RCV ballots. As applied specifically to Ranked-Choice Voting, these types of errors include:

- Over-voting, which is choosing more than one candidate at a single ranking;
- Repeating a candidate in multiple rankings; and
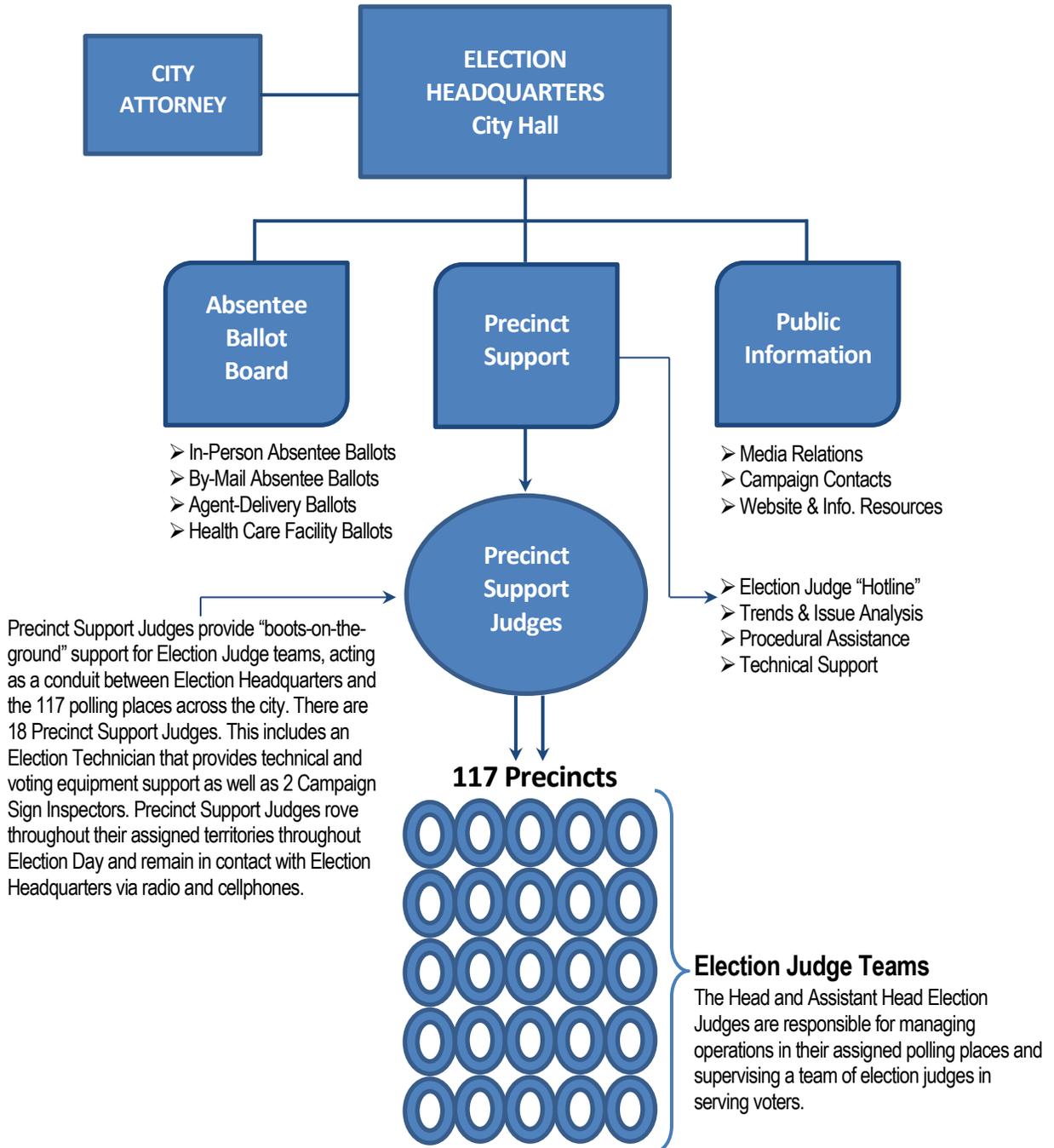- Skipping a ranking, but choosing a candidate at a lower ranking.

Therefore, the City adopted policies to provide consistent guidance on how non-conforming marks on RCV ballots are to be interpreted and corrected so that such ballots may still be included in the final tabulation, if possible. These policy choices are codified in the ordinance and are used to address any technical errors discovered during the processing of RCV ballots.

The 2013 amendment related to voter intent corrected inconsistencies that existed under the original 2009 ordinance with respect to the treatment of ballots with technical errors. This approach benefits the voter by assuring his or her choices can be counted toward a preferred candidate, despite any such technical errors. The amended voter intent rules also correspond with similar rules applied in the city of St. Paul.

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[12] Minn. Stat. § 204C.22, provides that ballots must be deemed valid if a voter's intent is determinable, despite technical errors that might otherwise cause rejection. The statute provides rules on how to determine intent in traditional (plurality) elections. The policy intent behind these statutory protections was to preserve as many ballots as possible in any election, regardless of the type of election process (traditional or alternative) that may be used. Because of this legal requirement, the City of Minneapolis had to create policy rules related to the unique tabulation process for Ranked Choice Voting prior to its first use in 2009. These policy rules provide consistent guidance on handling any potential marking errors on RCV ballots so that as many ballots as possible may be preserved and included in the election process.
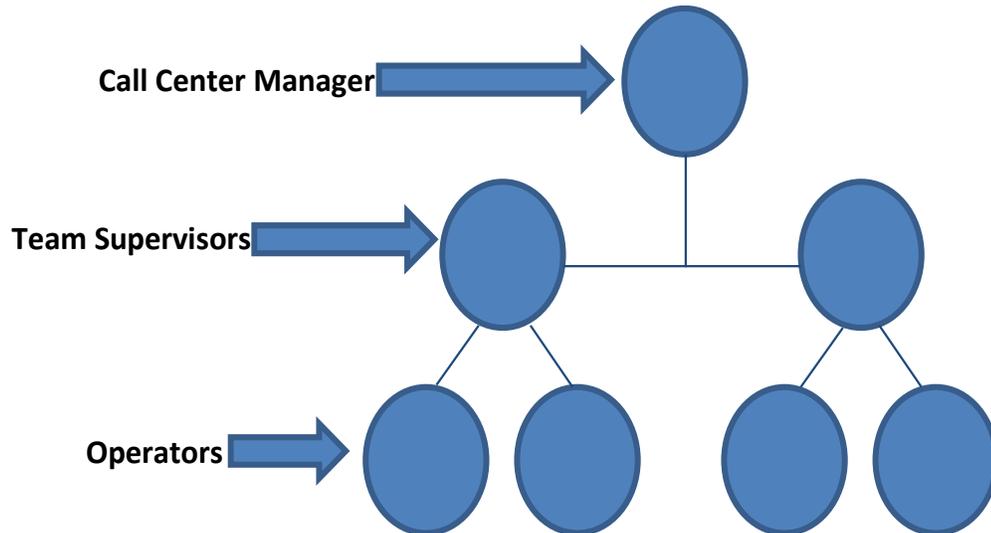
IV. ELECTION DAY & ELECTION NIGHT EXPECTATIONS

On Election Day, the Elections & Voter Services Division deploys all of its resources, much like a military deployment—months of meticulous planning and preparation are put into action to serve all voters across all 117 precincts, starting at 7 a.m. This chart illustrates how Election Day operations are structured.

CITY ATTORNEY

ELECTION HEADQUARTERS City Hall

Absentee Ballot Board

Precinct Support

Public Information

➤ In-Person Absentee Ballots
➤ By-Mail Absentee Ballots
➤ Agent-Delivery Ballots
➤ Health Care Facility Ballots

➤ Media Relations
➤ Campaign Contacts
➤ Website & Info. Resources

Precinct Support Judges

➤ Election Judge "Hotline"
➤ Trends & Issue Analysis
➤ Procedural Assistance
➤ Technical Support

Precinct Support Judges provide "boots-on-the-ground" support for Election Judge teams, acting as a conduit between Election Headquarters and the 117 polling places across the city. There are 18 Precinct Support Judges. This includes an Election Technician that provides technical and voting equipment support as well as 2 Campaign Sign Inspectors. Precinct Support Judges rove throughout their assigned territories throughout Election Day and remain in contact with Election Headquarters via radio and cellphones.

117 Precincts

Election Judge Teams

The Head and Assistant Head Election Judges are responsible for managing operations in their assigned polling places and supervising a team of election judges in serving voters.

Election Judge "Hotline"

After polls open at 7 a.m., Election Headquarters provides on-going support to the precinct-based teams of election judges. An "election judge hotline" is used to triage contacts on a range of topics, including scheduling and election judge coverage; registration and absentee ballots; voting equipment, machines, and supplies; election procedures; and emergency situations. The hotline is supervised by a team of election administrators (staff) with support from two operators who actually take and process the calls.

As calls are taken, individual Incident Logs (one per call) are created. The logs help the Cell Center Manager and Team Supervisors identify trends and activities that may require corrective action or response by Election Headquarters. These trend reports are provided to the City Clerk and Assistant Clerk (Director of Elections) throughout the day. If necessary, a broadcast phone call to all head election judges can be issued to provide instructions or clarifications about emerging issues or challenges. Precinct support judges provide "boots on the ground" support to all 117 precincts throughout Election Day, and provide regular reports to Election Headquarters about polling place activities.

As a further component of contingency planning, 4 "Precinct-To-Go" kits are ready to be dispatched to any polling place that is not unlocked and available to election judge teams by 6 a.m.

Minneapolis 311: Serving Voters & Supporting Election Judges

Minneapolis 311 Customer Service Agents field public calls, alleviating the team at Election Headquarters of a significant call volume related to routine inquiries and common questions or concerns. 311 Agents are trained on a variety of election procedures and can quickly and efficiently provide assistance to callers. When necessary, 311 Agents can escalate a call to the appropriate individuals at Election Headquarters. An Election Day Complaint queue was implemented in 2012 to collect complaint calls that require a response, which will be made in the days after the election is completed. This procedure has enabled election staffers to remain focused on triaging the more immediate demands on Election Day, reserving call-backs for a later date. For example, if a complaint about illegal Election Day campaigning is confirmed (in a polling place or within 100 feet of a polling place), the campaigns and/or candidate is notified by election staff. The 311 Agents also assist election judges by connecting them with language support if there is a voter who needs that additional support but no translator is available.

Security & Response

Minneapolis Emergency Communications (911) has a listing of all 117 polling places noted in their system to expedite dispatch, if needed. Calls from election judges are automatically programmed to receive prompt attention. In addition, the Elections & Voter Services Division collaborates with the Minneapolis Police Department to assure a swift response to any potential problems in any of the City's polling places on Election Day. Detailed instructions about how to address emergency situations in the polling place are included as part of the Head & Assistant Head Election Judge Manual and are covered in training.

The "Three Touch Rule" & RCV Instructions

Despite the City's aggressive outreach and education campaign, it is possible some voters will arrive at the polling place and not know how to cast an RCV ballot. To counter this unlikely scenario, the Elections & Voter Services Division instituted a new polling place procedure referred to as the "**Three Touch Rule**." **Essentially, this means that election judges will have contact with every voter at least three times before the voter finally casts his or her ballot in order to verify that the voter understands how to properly mark and cast the RCV ballot. Additionally, printed instructions on how to properly mark and cast an RCV ballot will be made available to all voters, in various languages.**

These three points of voter contact—which are in addition to signage in the polling place, written instructions, and a printed guide that is incorporated on the ballot itself—include the following:

1. The **Greeter Election Judge** will give each voter a printed copy of the "How to Complete a Ranked Choice Ballot" handout that includes text and illustrations about the proper way to mark an RCV ballot, which voters can take into the voting booth with them.

2. The **Demonstration Election Judge** will show all voters the correct marking procedure using an RCV Sample Ballot, using the following generic script: "This is a Ranked-Choice Voting election. You may rank up to three different candidates in each race, according to your preference: first, second, and third. You should rank only one candidate as your preferred choice in each column. You are not required to choose more than one candidate, if you choose not to do so. There are also instructions at the top of your ballot and on the RCV handout. Do you have your printed handout on how to mark an RCV ballot, or do you need another copy? Do you have any questions?"

3. The **Ballot Election Judge** will remind all voters to complete both sides of the ballot (front and back) using the pen provided or the AutoMARK, and remembering to completely fill-in the ovals for the selected candidates in each ranking in each race. The Ballot Election Judge will inform voters that if they choose to write-in a candidate, they should first fill-in the oval and then clearly and legibly write the name of the candidate in the space provided. The Ballot Election Judge will explain that if a mistake is made, the voter may request a new ballot.[13] Finally, the Ballot Election Judge will inquire if the voter has any questions or concerns about completing the RCV ballot.

Absentee Ballot Board

Under Minnesota election law, qualified electors have the right to vote absentee to participate in an election beginning 46 days prior to Election Day. Absentee voting may be done in-person, by mail, or by agent. Additionally, absentee voting is offered to voters in nursing homes, hospitals, and other long-term care facilities (20 days before Election Day); to participants in the Minnesota Safe at Home Program; and

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[13] A spoiled ballot occurs whenever a voter requests a replacement ballot from the Ballot Election Judge due to an error made by the voter. The ballot with the error is "spoiled" and a new ballot is issued to the voter to complete. As required by state law, the spoiled ballot is retained by election officials as part of the records of the overall election.

for military and citizens outside national borders, pursuant to the Uniformed & & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA).

As authorized under State law, an Absentee Ballot Board is responsible for the handling and processing of all absentee ballots submitted to the City of Minneapolis.[1] The Absentee Ballot Board examines each absentee ballot and accepts or rejects it, as provided by law. **The City's Elections & Voter Services Division has established a goal of providing 24-hour turn-around on all rejected absentee ballots so a new ballot can be sent to those individuals with adequate time to be completed and returned.**

Absentee ballots can be opened, sorted, and processed beginning four days before Election Day. In 2013, that means the Absentee Ballot Board will begin processing all accepted absentee ballots on Saturday, November 2. The Absentee Ballot Board will continue to receive, accept or reject, and process absentee ballots on Election Day, which includes those absentee ballots received by mail and those ballots returned by agent delivery on Election Day by 3:00 pm. Under State law, counties are responsible for tabulating absentee ballots; thus, the City's ballot board accepts or rejects and processes all absentee ballots, then securely transports those ballots to Hennepin County for tabulation.

Polls Close at 8 p.m.—
Initial Results Reporting

At 8 p.m., the election ends. The head election judge and their team in each precinct will close out the polls, which includes printing and posting results tapes from the tabulator. As part of this process, results from each precinct are wirelessly transmitted to Hennepin County. The County Elections Division will merge results data from all 117 precincts with the absentee results data. Staff anticipates this process will be completed sometime between 8:30 and 10 p.m., depending on how quickly individual precincts close and successfully transmit results. The County then reports all merged ballot data to the Secretary of State, which produces a precinct-by-precinct display that is posted to its website.

Once the polls have closed and results have been successfully transmitted to the County, the head election judge in each precinct will remove and secure the memory stick from the tabulator along with the printed results tape which, together with all election returns and materials, will be transported to the Election Warehouse. Upon verification that all 117 precincts have returned their materials, the sealed envelopes containing the tabulator memory sticks and printed results tapes will be sorted by ward, placed in a lock box, sealed, and secured at the Election Warehouse.

City Tabulation Center

At the same time that data is being transmitted to the Secretary of State, Hennepin County will deliver a complete data set of all results to the City's Elections & Voter Services Unit. This report will include the total ballots cast in each race—including all votes for each candidate in each race by first, second, and third rankings; the total number of write-in candidates in each race; the total number of over-votes; and the total number of under-votes. This report is generated by the Cast Vote Record (CVR) produced by the new voting equipment.

Using the complete results data provided by Hennepin County, the City's Elections & Voter Services Division will determine if any candidate in any race meets or exceeds the maximum possible threshold and, if so, can be unofficially declared the winner of that race. In each race where a definitive winner can be declared, that information will be posted to the City's election website (vote.minneapolismn.gov) together with the complete results of all first-ranked choices in that particular race. If a definitive winner

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[1] Minn. Stat. § 203B.121.

cannot be identified in a particular race, additional rounds of tabulation will be required, and an annotation to that effect will be posted to the City's election website. In all cases, round-by-round tabulation will begin the following afternoon, Wednesday, November 6, and will be completed by ballot order, beginning with the mayoral race.

An example of what the Election Night web-posting will look like (in each case) is provided below for reference: Scenario 1 (left) involves a race where a definitive (unofficial) winner is declared; Scenario 2 involves a race where a definitive (unofficial) winner cannot be declared and additional rounds of tabulation are required.[14]

Scenario 1: Election Night Winner Declared

2013 Minneapolis Election Results: City Council Ward 99
1 to be elected

	First ranked votes
Jupiter	46
Mercury	202
Neptune	53
Saturn	94
Write-Ins	
Undervotes/Overvotes	4
TOTAL BALLOTS CAST	4011
Maximum possible threshold	2006

Maximum possible threshold has been met.

Declared Winner: Mercury

Scenario 2: No Election Night Winner Declared

2013 Minneapolis Election Results: City Council Ward 99
1 to be elected

	First ranked votes
Jupiter	493
Mercury	1997
Neptune	535
Saturn	941
Write-Ins	3
Undervotes/Overvotes	42
TOTAL BALLOTS CAST	4011
Maximum possible threshold	2006

No candidates has received enough votes to be elected. Round-by-round tabulation will continue beginning 11/6/2013.

The City will not be able to post its results until all precincts have reported, since the City results will be based on city-wide, ward, or district totals, rather than by precinct. Still, voters are strongly urged to refer to the City's elections website for results data, since it will be more inclusive than the data which will be posted by the Secretary of State's office. The Secretary of State's website will direct users to consult the City's election website for additional information, which includes the declaration of winners or the need for additional tabulation (similar to what was done in 2009).

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[14] The examples provided reflect data pulled from a sample election used for testing and verification purposes by the Minneapolis Elections & Voter Services Division and is not representative of any real/actual election results.
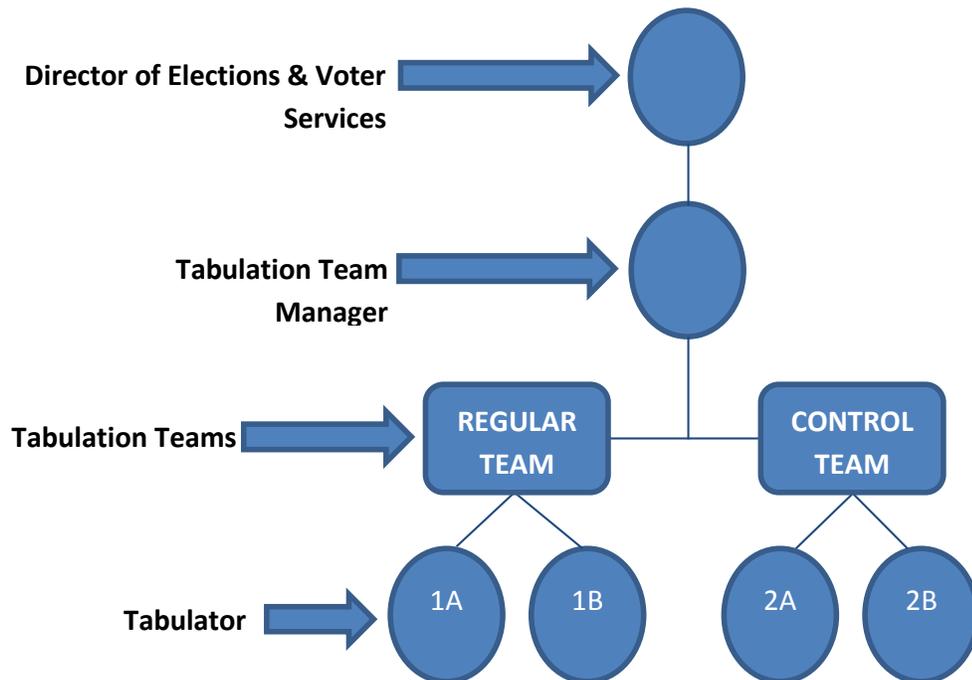
TABULATION BY ROUNDS – BEGINNING WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Additional rounds of tabulation will be required for all races where a definitive winner cannot be declared on Election Night. That process will begin sometime in the afternoon the following day, Wednesday, November 6, at City Hall. Round-by-round tabulation will be conducted in ballot order, beginning with the mayoral race. Results for each round of tabulation will be announced as each round is completed, including the declaration of an unofficial winner at any round where it is mathematically possible to do.

Tabulation will not commence until after noon because City and County election administrators will need to use the morning hours to physically pull all data results from the memory sticks of all 117 precincts, which must first be securely retrieved and transported from the City's Election Warehouse to the Hennepin County Government Center. The County's elections staff will proceed to download the data from each precinct memory stick into its Election Management System (EMS), which is the certified system used to program, test, and conduct the election. Once all this data has been downloaded into the EMS, the County will produce the Cast Vote Record (CVR) files which the City will use to tabulate results. A separate CVR file will be produced for each of the 22 races on the ballot. Each CVR report will be burned onto a read-only compact disc (CD-R). These discs will be provided to the City's elections staff, and chain-of-custody procedures will be followed and documented throughout the various transactions.

TABULATION CENTER OPERATIONS & STAFFING

In the City's Tabulation Center, working under the direct oversight of the Assistant City Clerk/Director of Elections & Voter Services, will be two tabulation teams. A Tabulation Team Manager will supervise the work of the two tabulation teams.

Once the Cast Vote Record (CVR) files for each of the 22 races have been amalgamated by Hennepin County and burned onto the read-only compact discs (CD-R), the Tabulation Team Manager will upload that data into the Excel spreadsheet on computers in the City's Tabulation Center. Before any tabulation begins in any race, the CD-R data will be checked-in to the City's Enterprise Content Management System

(ECMS), which date-and-time-stamps an unalterable image of the files for security purposes. This provides a baseline for tabulation purposes in each race.[15]

The two tabulation teams work in tandem on the same race, using the same data, to determine the results of each round. As each round is completed, the data files are checked-in to the ECMS to create additional date-and-time-stamped, unalterable images for security purposes. At various checkpoints in the process, the tabulation teams must verify they are reaching the same results. If at any time during the tabulation process the results or counts of the two teams do not match, the teams will stop tabulating and look for any errors. If errors cannot be found, both teams will re-perform tabulation starting at the check-point when the results of both teams last agreed. Both tabulation teams must reach the same results before moving to a new round or declaring a winner in a particular race.

City Hall Information Center—
Announcing Results to the Public

The Elections & Voter Services Division will maintain an Information Center in the rotunda area of City Hall where candidates and campaign representatives, the news media, and the general public can get accurate, up-to-date information about the election. The Information Center will be activated just before polls close on Election Night and will remain open in the days that follow any time that tabulation is underway.

The Information Center will be the location where election results will be physically posted, in addition to the City's election website. As each round of tabulation is completed, the Tabulation Team Manager will prepare a round results summary sheet, which must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Elections & Voter Services. Printed copies of these summary sheets displaying the results of each round of tabulation will be made available for distribution at the Information Center. In addition, staff from the Elections & Voter Services Division will be available at the Information Center to answer any questions or concerns. Candidates/campaigns are encouraged to have a representative at the Information Center to monitor the results postings.

Recount Trigger

In recognition of the accuracy of modern voting equipment, the Minnesota State Legislature decreased the calculation that is used to determine if a recount is automatically required in county, municipal, and school district elections.[16] Specifically, in races with more than 50,000 votes cast, the vote difference is now 1/4 percent instead of 1/2 percent. The following chart shows when a recount will be required:

STATUTORY CHANGES RELATED TO ELECTION RECOUNT TRIGGERS

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES CAST FOR THE OFFICE	A recount is required if the vote difference between candidates is...
400 or less	10 votes
More than 400 but less than 50,000	1/2% of the total votes for that office
50,000 or more	1/4% of the total votes for that office

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[15] This check-in procedure using the City's Enterprise Content Management System (ECMS) mirrors what was done in the 2009 Municipal Election.

[16] Minn. Stat. § 204C.36

The City's RCV Ordinance, as amended in 2013, no longer references a specific percentage as a recount trigger; rather, the amended text merely references the statute. This change assures the recount trigger matches state law and eliminates the need to amend the ordinance again if the Legislature changes the law at a future date.

If for any reason a recount is triggered, a full hand-count (either of the particular race or the entire election, as necessary) will be conducted, using the Minneapolis Method first developed in 2009 but updated to reflect the new procedures that conform to the 2013 amendments (described above).

V.   INDEPENDENT ANALYSES

Given that this year's election is only the second experience Minneapolis has had with the alternative Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) methodology, combined with the fact that the City will be using new voting equipment, the Elections & Voter Services Division diligently pursued outside evaluations by industry experts to assure the accuracy and integrity of the election.

Independent Audit & Evaluation

Working in conjunction with Hennepin County's Elections Division, the City retained Freeman, Craft, McGregor Group, Inc., (FCMG), a Florida-based corporation with expertise in testing and evaluating election systems. FCMG was specifically retained to conduct an independent audit of the CVR export utility and its functionality according to specifications. FCMG also evaluated the City's overall process and related procedures for tabulating election results. Through extensive testing and review, FCMG found that the election system produces accurate results data and the City's tabulation procedures are sufficient to determine (unofficial) winners. Listed below is a synopsis of the key findings and recommendations by FCMG, along with the responses of the City's Elections & Voter Services Division and the Hennepin County Elections Division.[17]

FCMG FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The system performs accurate tabulations. The tabulated totals on each of the reports generated during the test matched expected totals. Audits of sample RCV Export Report Files showed that the contents of the files were identical to those of the marked ballots. Overall, the test deck provided 21,120 choices.

2. The utility used to generate the Report File is easy to use and requires no special setup. The System's precinct and central count devices capture a data set, called the Cast Vote Record, for each ballot processed. Using the content of the Cast Vote Records, the utility creates a Microsoft Excel file. The greatest potential for operator error when this file is created lies in the possible failure to ensure that all ballot data has been uploaded. If this error occurs, it can be readily detected by comparing the number of cast vote records represented in the file to the number of ballots tabulated in a given contest. The risk of an operator error occurring while the RCV Export Report File is being generated is low. The files should be written to a non-rewritable CD in order to create an unalterable master copy of the RCV Export Files. The capability of Excel to sort data makes auditing the content of the File to the tabulated results an easy task. In light of this, the sorted candidate votes for each ranking should be audited against the candidate totals for each ranking from Election Night results prior to undergoing RCV Tabulation.

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[17] *See Exhibit F – FCMG Independent Evaluation*, titled "Evaluation of ES&S ElectionWare, Release 5.1.0.0, and Procedures Proposed for Its Use by the City of Minneapolis to Tabulate Ranked Choice Ballots for the November 5, 2013, Municipal Election."

The RCV Procedures Manual has a detailed chain of custody protocol that requires the use of a non-rewritable compact disc (CD). Also, the City has incorporated into its procedures the process of confirming that the Cast Vote Record files match the candidate vote totals for each ranking and total ballots from Election Night results.

FCMG FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

3. The ability of the system to telecommunicate results meets expectations, particularly the ability to handle the volume of calls anticipated on Election Night. This functionality was exercised in two separate tests. No identifiable telecommunications errors could be simulated. Given a stable cellular network, adequate pretesting and testing network access from each location there should be no telecommunications failures. However, when a machine does fail to transmit its data, the error message displayed on the unit does not provide clear directions to poll workers as to what corrective actions they should take. In order to reduce calls to the help center on Election Night this error message and the proper response should be thoroughly covered in both poll worker and call center operator training as well as in written instructions provided at the polls.

RESPONSE BY HENNEPIN COUNTY ELECTIONS DIVISION:
Wireless election results transmission has been in place in Hennepin County since 2006. At that time, Hennepin County staff partnered with Election Systems and Software (ES&S) and Cingular Wireless to increase the speed of results reporting on Election Night. (Hennepin County's current wireless vendor is AT&T.) Wireless results reporting was first used by Hennepin County in the 2006 State General election and has been used in many elections since, including most recently in the 2012 Presidential election. As with all aspects of the voting system, the wireless transmission of results was thoroughly tested for security and reliability when implemented. The system is again tested before every election as part of pre-election testing. While the voting system purchased by Hennepin County in 2013 is new, its wireless results reporting capabilities are a continuation of those that have been used successfully in Hennepin County for 7 years.

RESPONSE BY MINNEAPOLIS ELECTIONS & VOTER SERVICES:
The Head & Assistant Head Judge Manual includes troubleshooting transmission errors with screen shots and instructions. Election staff also is trained to assist election judges, either by calls to Election Headquarters using normal protocols, or by on-site assistance from a precinct support judge or election technician.

FCMG FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

4. The DS 850 (central count) processed ballots quickly, smoothly and with minimal operator assistance. There were also a few ballots that could not be scanned due to a mark that the machine could not read, but where there were no unidentifiable marks on the ballot. While it appears to be unlikely that the machines will convert an unidentifiable mark to a vote, it does appear that they will reject some ballots for unidentifiable marks when all marks appear sufficient to be identified. Although this only occurred a few times during the course of testing, on Election Night even a low percentage of these occurrences could result in a significant number of ballots and increase the demand for duplicated ballots to substitute for those the machines deemed to be unreadable. The County should contact ES&S and ask them to recalibrate the DS 850s. After the recalibration has been completed, the City and County should retest the 850s.

Hennepin County calibrated the cameras on all DS850s prior to performing pre-election testing on each machine. There were no ballot scanning issues encountered during pre-election testing on any DS850. As has been the case in every past election where central scanners were used, any voted ballots with marks unreadable by the machine will continue to be out-stacked and duplicated as required under Minnesota Statute 204C.22.

FCMG FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

5. The 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. However, at best, the tabulation process is complex and provides a high risk for human error. The City's approach using two independent teams consisting of two people per team and comparing the results of the two teams provides a reasonable assurance that errors will not go undetected. The audit trail created in the Excel worksheet will also make it easier to resolve any differences found in between the results of the two teams. Over time, operator fatigue will increase the risk of error. In order to mitigate this risk, teams should be closely monitored for signs of fatigue, provided with frequent breaks and supplemented with relief operators.

RESPONSE BY MINNEAPOLIS ELECTIONS & VOTER SERVICES:
The City's Elections & Voter Services Division has two additional tabulators on hand to rotate in after completed rounds as appropriate to minimize operator fatigue as well as taking frequent breaks.

FCMG FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

6. At the time of our review of the procedures for tabulating results using the Report File, City staff was developing a procedures document intended to be used during RCV Tabulation. During the course of our review these procedures were followed and a number of points were discovered where modifications to the document would make the step-by-step instructions easier to follow. Suggested changes were discussed with City staff. The suggested edits should be adopted and the City is encouraged to continue to refine the document based on future user experiences.

RESPONSE BY MINNEAPOLIS ELECTIONS & VOTER SERVICES:
These suggested edits were adopted. It clarified steps using verbiage that a user could easily understand. The RCV Procedures Manual was further enhanced by lessons learned from the tabulation of the mock election results and through the preliminary testing procedures as required by Minnesota election laws.

Management Consultation & Evaluation

As a further effort to secure outside expertise in this year's 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. Ms. 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

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 will partner with Kate McGregor (of FCMG) to conduct a formal management audit of the November 5th General Municipal Election. A comprehensive report of their findings and observations will provide an analysis of the Elections & Voter Services Division's performance to determine if it is operating efficiently and effectively and in compliance with legal and policy requirements. The management audit report will also identify further proves improvements for the future. Schmidt and McGregor will be on-site the week before and the entire week of the election to observe all election-related tasks, including absentee voting, polling place operations, Election Day support techniques, Election Night returns, and the full RCV tabulation process. Staff anticipates the management audit report will be presented to the Elections Committee in the first quarter of 2014 as part of a comprehensive debriefing on the 2013 Municipal Election.

Voter Survey

As was done in 2009, the City of Minneapolis, through its Elections & Voter Services Division, will be conducting a post-election survey of voters, election judges, and candidates. The 2009 survey was done by the Saint Cloud State University Survey Research Lab. Unfortunately, due to reduced capacity, SCSU's Research Lab is unable to provide a similar survey in 2013. Therefore, the City's Elections Division will contract with another vendor to conduct a survey similar to what was done in 2009, thereby providing the City with an apples-to-apples baseline comparison of survey results from both the 2009 and the 2013 experiences with Ranked-Choice Voting. The selected vendor is Minneapolis-based market researcher The Morris Leatherman Company. As in 2009, the 2013 survey will consist of a telephone survey of groups of registered voters in Minneapolis—both those who voted and those who did not vote—as part of the 2013 Municipal Election. In addition, written surveys will be completed by election judges and candidates on the 2013 ballot. The results will be tabulated and presented in a written report which will be presented to the City Council, through its standing Elections committee, as part of a full election debrief in the first quarter of 2014.

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Report presented to:
Minneapolis City Council
Standing Committee on Elections – The Hon. Cam Gordon, Chair
Wednesday, October 30, 2013

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Recognitions
The Elections & Voter Services Division gratefully acknowledges the participation and contribution of several partners who have contributed to plans and preparations for a successful 2013 Municipal Election:

- The City's corps of dedicated head and assistant head election judges, team election judges, precinct support judges, seasonal staff, and temporary workers, without whom the election (and this report) would not be possible.
- The Hon. Mark Ritchie, Secretary of State.
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- Hennepin County Elections Division (Virginia Gelms, interim director).
- Election Systems & Software.
- Connie J. Schmidt, election consultant.
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- Morris Leatherman Company.
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- Members of the Minneapolis Polling Place Work Group.
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- Municipal Building Commission (Erin Delaney, interim executive director).
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  - Communications (Sara Dietrich, director);
  - Community Planning & Economic Development (Jeremy Hanson Willis, director);
  - Emergency Communications – 911 (Heather Hunt, director);
  - Finance & Property Services (Kevin Carpenter, chief financial officer);
  - Information Technology (Otto Doll, chief information officer);
  - Minneapolis 311 (Don Stickney, director);
  - Minneapolis Police Department (Janeé Harteau, chief of police);
  - Neighborhood & Community Relations (David Rubedor, director); and
  - Public Works (Steve Kotke, director and city engineer).