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**2013 Municipal Election:
An Update on Process Improvements**

**Presentation to the Standing Committee on Elections
Wednesday, February 27, 2013**

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Status Report

- ▶ Follow-up to 2012 Presidential General Election: An Analysis & Recommendations
 - ▶ State Legislative Platform Issues
 - ▶ Recommended Local Improvements
- ▶ Direction requested on:
 - ▶ Multi-Year Financing Model for Elections
 - ▶ 2013 Municipal Election Supplemental Funding
 - ▶ New Voting Systems & Equipment
 - ▶ Evaluation of Precincts & Polling Places
 - ▶ Voter Outreach & Education Campaign
 - ▶ Ranked Choice Voting – Process Improvements

Multi-Year Financing Model

▶ **Four-year election cycle —**

Cycle Year	Election Type	Funding Required
Year One	Presidential (Federal & State)	Very High
Year Two	Mayoral (Municipal/Local)	Moderate
Year Three	Gubernatorial (Federal & State)	High
Year Four	No scheduled elections	Low

- ▶ **Voter turnout, staffing and resource needs, operating costs, and other factors fluctuate widely between the years.**

Multi-Year Financing Model

ELECTION COSTS – BY ACTUAL EXPENDITURES (2008-2012)

Election Year →	2008 Year 1	2009 Year 2	2010 Year 3	2011 Year 4	2012 Year 1
Categories ↓	Presidential	Mayoral	Gubernatorial	Special(s)	Presidential
Election Judges	\$384,400	\$234,200	\$336,800	\$98,300	\$382,600
Seasonal Support	\$118,110	\$250,000	\$83,200	\$51,300	\$130,800
Staff Overtime	\$47,700	\$52,000	\$18,100	\$6,300	\$49,000
Election Expenses	\$79,500	\$238,800	\$75,900	\$26,400	\$87,200
TOTALS	\$629,700	\$775,300	\$514,000	\$182,300	\$649,600
AVERAGE PER-VOTER COST					
Voter Turnout	209,102	45,968	140,363	9,065	215,804
Cost-per-Voter	\$3.01	\$16.87	\$3.66	\$20.11	\$3.01

Multi-Year Financing Model

- ▶ **CORE BUDGET** = Fixed operating costs required to maintain a stable elections unit, includes: permanent staff; equipment and supplies; rent; office systems and technology; self-insurance fund; etc.
- ▶ **CONTINGENCY FUND** = Funds for unplanned/unknown election events and implementation of changes in election laws.
- ▶ **ELECTION EXPENSES** = Funds required to actually plan, organize, coordinate, and conduct an election, specific to each type of planned election in the four-year cycle.

Multi-Year Financing Model

PROJECTED MULTI-YEAR ELECTION OPERATING BUDGET (2014-2017)				
Election Year →	2014	2015	2016	2017
Categories ↓	Gubernatorial	Special	Presidential	Mayoral
CORE BUDGET	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$700,000
CONTINGENCY FUND	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
ELECTION EXPENSES	\$525,000	\$50,000	\$700,000	\$700,000
TOTALS:	\$1,425,000	\$950,000	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000

2013 Municipal Election – Supplemental Funding Request

Propose using FY2012 year-end savings
from the Office of City Clerk

2013 SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST		
	APPROVED	ADJUSTED
CORE BUDGET	\$700,000	\$700,000
ELECTION EXPENSES	\$498,646	\$598,646
Budget (sub-total)	\$1,198,646	\$1,298,646
Supplemental	\$100,000	\$385,800
TOTALS:	\$1,298,646	\$1,684,446

BREAKDOWN OF REQUESTED SUPPLEMENTAL - \$385,800	
Tabulation & Contingency	\$240,000
Operations	\$95,800
Voter Outreach & Education	\$50,000
TOTALS:	\$385,800

New Voting Systems & Equipment



Hennepin County released its Request for Proposals on Friday, February 15. Responses are due by Friday, March 1.

Polling Places: Number/Capacity

- ▶ **117 polling places:**

- ▶ 110 polling places same as in 2004, 2008, and 2010
- ▶ 7 polling places were new in 2012 – not previously used
- ▶ While all 117 polling sites will be assessed, 11 have been elevated to a higher priority ranking for review.

W2-P9: Seward Towers East

W3-P3: Marcy Open School

W3-P4: Spring Manor Highrise

W5-P6: Heritage Commons

W6-P2: Seward Square Apartments

W8-P2: Painter Park

W8-P5: Watershed Charter High School

W10-P2: Ballentine VFW Post

W12-P3: St. Peder's Church

W12-P6: Minnehaha United Methodist

W12-P8: Sibley Park Recreation Ctr.

Precincts & Polling Places

- ▶ Of the 117 current polling places, the City has about 25 locations which have more than 2,500 pre-registered voters according to the latest data provided by the Secretary of State's Office.
- ▶ That exceeds SOS recommendations for precinct size of no more than 2,500 pre-registered voters.
- ▶ A list of these precincts/polling places that exceed these recommendations is shown in Exhibit A to the report.

Precincts & Polling Places: Polling Place Work Group & Assessment Guide

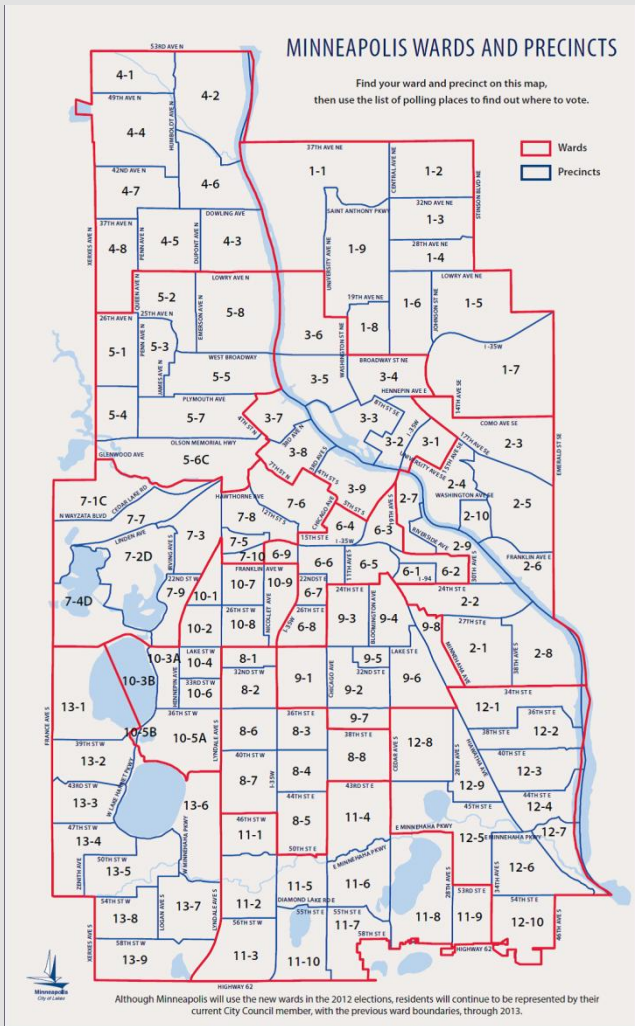
- ▶ Staff is working on developing an assessment guide to be used in conducting annual site inspections.
- ▶ Each polling place will be designed to maximize the efficient use of space, eliminate bottlenecks, and assist voters in casting their ballots.
- ▶ Customized diagrams illustrating polling place set-up, photographs, and details on accessible entrances, parking, proximity to public transit, and the intended flow of voters through the polling place will be developed.

Precincts & Polling Places: Polling Place Work Group & Assessment Guide

- ▶ **Staff proposes the formation of a Work Group to provide input on and to validate staff work on assessing the City's polling places.**

- ▶ **Membership should include representation from:**
 - ▶ Election judges (primarily precinct support and chair judges)
 - ▶ Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities
 - ▶ Senior Citizen Advisory Committee
 - ▶ Special School District #1 (Minneapolis)
 - ▶ Neighborhood representation, including the NCEC & NCR
 - ▶ Targeted ESL populations
 - ▶ Others

Voter Outreach & Education



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Ranked Choice Voting – Minneapolis Method: Recommended Process Improvements

- ▶ **Use Election Night totals of the first choice results to declare unofficial winners**
 - ▶ In 2009, this process improvement would have enabled staff to quickly process 16 of the 20 municipal seats—leaving only 4 single-seat races that would have had to be hand-counted.

- ▶ **Count only declared write-in candidates**
 - ▶ Set by state law for federal, state, and county elections—municipal elections are the exception, not the rule (which involves significant time and resources).
 - ▶ Some charter cities have already enacted similar provisions by ordinance for municipal elections.

Ranked Choice Voting – Minneapolis Method: Recommended Process Improvements

- ▶ **Modify (or retain) the Voter Error Accountability process**
 - ▶ Retain 2009 Model: Conforms to pending RCV legislation (HF0367/SF335); but treats different voter errors inconsistently.
 - ▶ Alternative 1: Consistent treatment of voter errors across all rankings and yields first round hand-count results that most closely match Election Night results; but exhausts a ballot if a voter makes an error so no further rankings are counted.
 - ▶ Alternative 2: Allows the next-highest ranking choice in a race to be counted, giving greater flexibility to the voter and conforms to the system implemented in St. Paul for its Ranked Voting method.

Next Steps

- ▶ Refer the proposed multi-year funding model, covering fiscal years 2014 to 2017, to the Ways & Means/Budget Committee for its consideration.
- ▶ Recommend the re-appropriation of 2012 year-end savings from the Office of City Clerk totaling \$385,800 to the Fiscal Year 2013 budget for the Office of City Clerk – Elections & Voter Services Unit to be used for the 2013 Municipal Election.
- ▶ Direct staff to notify Hennepin County that the City of Minneapolis intends to participate in its Request for Proposals for the procurement of new voting systems and equipment.

Next Steps

- ▶ Request clarification from the Secretary of State on the potential impact of state-mandated certification requirements with respect to the processing and tabulation of RCV ballots.
- ▶ Authorize the formation of a Polling Place Work Group to participate in a comprehensive evaluation of the City's polling places and the development of a Polling Place Assessment Guide.
- ▶ Direct staff to provide final recommendations related to precincts and polling places for the Municipal Election, including whether the City should modify the total number of precincts and/or polling places along with other improvements that will enhance voter service. That report should be available in May 2013.

Next Steps

- ▶ Direct staff to present details and final recommendations for the planned 2013 Voter Outreach & Education Campaign in May 2013.
- ▶ Direct staff to partner with appropriate language support providers to translate voting materials into alternate (non-English) languages.
- ▶ Direct staff to draft appropriate amendments to the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Chapter 167 [*Municipal Elections: Rules of Conduct*], to be introduced for the March 29 Council cycle; specifically:
 - ▶ Use Election Night totals of first choice results to declare unofficial winners;
 - ▶ Require write-in candidates to file a request no later than seven days before the election to be included in the tabulation election results; and
 - ▶ Modify (or retain) the rules for normalizing ballot errors specific to Ranked Choice Voting.

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