



Request for Committee Action Office of City Clerk

Date: August 28, 2013

To: Honorable Cam Gordon, Chair, Elections Committee

Subject: 2013 Municipal Election – Voter Outreach & Education Program

Recommendation: Receive and file report on Voter Outreach & Education Program

Prepared by: Grace Wachlarowicz, Assistant City Clerk – Phone: 673-2216

Approved by: Casey Joe Carl, City Clerk

Background Information: The Elections & Voter Services Division (Office of City Clerk) initiated a Voter Outreach & Education Program as part of its plans for the 2013 Municipal Election. At its core, the goal of this program is to ensure voters are “election-ready,” meaning that, at a minimum, voters know: (1) the election is Tuesday, November 5; (2) where to vote (location of precinct polling place); (3) ballot content; and (4) how to vote by casting a Ranked-Choice Voting ballot. To support these objectives, the Election & Voter Services Division has created a number of voter information resources. The most important of these resources is the new website—vote.minneapolismn.gov—which serves as a clearinghouse for the most accurate and timely information about the upcoming municipal election. This website, together with the use of various social media outlets, has been the primary communications venue for pushing information to voters, the news media, and the general public.

An essential component of the outreach strategy is the Voter Ambassador Program. This program seeks to engage leaders from various communities, neighborhoods, civic organizations, and businesses in the process of educating voters about the municipal election and about Ranked-Choice Voting. Complementary efforts to engage and inform voters are also being undertaken this year, including several recommendations developed by the 2013 Class of Urban Scholars.

Finally, the Elections & Voter Services Division will conduct a “mock election” in September. This mock election will provide all voters with the opportunity to participate in an RCV-simulation using the new voting equipment recently purchased by Hennepin County. The mock election will provide voters and election administrators with an opportunity to test the new equipment—including the exportable report—and to practice casting an RCV ballot comparable to the experience that will occur on Election Day (Nov. 5). The Elections Division will run the mock election over the course of several days, creating extra-large “precincts” in the north, northeast, south, and southwest areas of the city, as well as at City Hall.

This report is intended to provide more details about the Voter Outreach & Education Program, to encourage support for the Voter Ambassador Program, to demonstrate the new voting equipment, and to announce the mock election in September. No action is required at this time; staff recommends receiving and filing this report.