



# ELECTION CONNECTION

APRIL 2014

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### Special Election 2014

Gail Dorfman resigned from her position as Hennepin County District Three Commissioner on February 28, 2014 to pursue a new career. There will be a special election to fill the vacancy until the term expires on January 5, 2015. The special primary election will be held April 29, 2014 and the special general election on May 13, 2014.

Hennepin County District 3 comprises a large portion of southwest Minneapolis as well as the entirety of St. Louis Park. In total, thirty-five Minneapolis precincts will be involved in the special election.

Dorfman's career in government has spanned many years, and along the way she has taken on a variety of roles. Her service began as a city council member and mayor in St. Louis Park. She has served as the county commissioner since 1999. Dorfman is currently working as Executive Director for St. Stephens, a Minneapolis non-profit working to end homelessness.

### From the Director of Elections:

Thank you for the incredible work you did to make the 2013 RCV Municipal Election so successful! It was a year full of new procedures, new equipment and assisting voters with the RCV ballot. You embraced these changes with patience and professionalism and it was an honor to have had such high caliber judges.

We received excellent suggestions and feedback from our Precinct Support and Head/Assistant Head Judge debrief meetings. Your input is critical as it is our number one priority to provide you with the supplies, tools and resources you need to make your job easier to focus on serving the voters.

As you may know, we will be conducting a special election to fill the Hennepin County Commissioner District 3 vacancy-in 35 of our precincts. We are seizing this as a great opportunity to try out some of your suggestions and fine tune some of the procedures implemented in 2013. Many of the judges are HEJs from other precincts-participating to help critique these enhancements so we are ready for the gubernatorial election this fall.

2014 will also be a year of new procedures, no-excuse absentee balloting and implementing new laws. We will need many election judges to help us prior to Election Day; assisting in absentee voting weekdays and the 2 weekends prior to each election and preparing supplies and materials to name a few. Stay tuned for more information on our website for updates and opportunities.

I look forward to working with you,  
**Grace Wachlarowicz, Director**



# TRAINING UPDATES

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As we move through the 2014 election cycle there are a few new initiatives that we are planning to implement with regard to training. The following is a working list, as I'm sure we will revise our plans going forward.

The first idea is the utilization of alternate training sites. While we will still use the Minneapolis warehouse as the primary location for training, we are looking into the addition of a few alternate sites to be used in a complementary capacity. This initiative was created with Election Judge feedback in mind regarding accessibility and capacity concerns for training conducted at the Minneapolis warehouse.

Second, we would like to blend the training of Student Election Judges with that of our Team Judges. This initiative would work in conjunction with the alternate training sites in that these new sites would also serve as the primary classroom for our Student Election judges.

With that in mind, we hope to work with local schools to potentially serve as these alternate sites. We think that ultimately it will be a benefit for our Student Judges to learn alongside our typically more experienced Team Judges. We received positive feedback with regard to the placement of Head Judges alongside Team Judges in the same classes in 2013, and so we hope to expand on that.

Next, the training experience Minneapolis Elections offers online has been a focal point of ours recently. We are very excited about the plans we have to update and further modernize the training tools that are available online. We want to make sure that Judges have easy access to as much educational material as possible to ensure that they feel ready to execute their duties on Election Day.

We are also working on a variety of ways to streamline and simplify the forms where possible in the polling place. The duty cards and polling place open / close guides are of particular focus, and those Election Judges serving the special election will have an opportunity to review and provide some first-round feedback. We look forward to your input!

Lastly, one of our greatest training-related goals this year is to create a comprehensive, Minneapolis-specific Election Judge guide. In 2013 a Minneapolis Head Election Judge guide was deployed, and we would like to expand on this project and make it a tool useful for every judge in the polling place. We are keeping in mind those who have in the recent past expressed interest in providing feedback on this guide, and will be contacting you soon to move forward with this.

We appreciate your ideas! If you ever have a suggestion, please feel free to contact us.

# ELECTION UPDATES

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## CALANDAR OF EVENTS 2014

**April 29**

**Special Election Primary - 3rd District  
County Commissioner**

**May 13**

**Special Election General - 3rd District  
County Commissioner**

**Late April**

Polling Place / Precinct Changes approved for the State Elections

**May**

EJ assignment letters mailed

**May 20-June 3**

Candidate Filing

**June - July**

Training Classes for Primary

**August 12**

**Primary Election**

**August - October**

Training classes for General

**November 4**

**General Election**

### OFFICES ON THE 2014 BALLOT

United States Senator

United State Representative

Governor and Lt. Governor

Secretary of State

State Auditor

Attorney General

State Representative

County Commissioner

County Attorney

Sheriff

Soil and Water Conservation District

Minneapolis School Board Directors

Supreme Court Justice

Court of Appeals Judge

District Court Judge

## Precincts & Polls:

It's a big year for precincts and polling places! We are poised to present various recommendations for precinct additions and polling site changes to the City Council later this month—all in an effort to make precincts that are reasonable in size (in terms of registered voter count) and to operate in locations conducive to effective voter service.

We are excited to be able to make such changes—all of which we believe will help us (and you!) improve the voter experience for affected residents.

Keep an eye out for approval of all such changes in the April 25, 2014 City Council meeting.

### Other news:

We have created special Black-on-Yellow **VOTER PARKING ONLY** boulevard signs (*and hooded meters, in a few applicable spots*), and will continue to deploy them at many, but not all, voting locations. We have made a few tweaks based on poll worker comments, but please continue to let us know if placement of such signs and/or hoods can be improved at your location. Spread the word for voters to look for the Black-on-Yellow signs!!

Last year, we tested some outdoor signage at around 40 polls showing a precinct map, the precinct location, and the wording, **"IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE BLUE LINE, VOTE HERE"**. We will deploy these signs to *all* precincts in the gubernatorial election this year, sending them along with the voting booths and other equipment for storage at polling sites. We'll discuss placement of such signs in our training sessions, and work with judges on determining a preferred placement going forward.

# STAFF UPDATES

## **Judy Schwartau Retires as Elections Trainer**

Judy Schwartau retired from Minneapolis Elections this past January. She leaves a legacy that is 25 years strong and will be missed by all who have worked with her.

In addition to training the Minneapolis corps of election judges, Judy participated in many professional partnerships and work groups. In 2006 she received the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Medallion Award "for excellence in elections and creativity in civic engagement." In 2009 she attained accreditation as a Certified Election & Voter Registration Administrator (CERA) through the National Association of Election Officials/Auburn University.

In retirement Judy will find use of her time and talents among her family and friends, traveling and becoming more involved in the local arts community as well as spending a lot more time with her mother in Red Wing, MN. She will celebrate the upcoming 2014 State Primary with a visit to her polling place on Election Day.

We thank Judy for her years of service to Minneapolis Elections. Please welcome Chris Irving as the new Election Judge Trainer for the 2014 Election season!

### **Note from Judy:**

Dear Minneapolis Election Judges - It has been my pleasure and honor to work with you to help you serve the voters of Minneapolis. I honor you for sharing your time, your commitment and your endurance with your neighbors. At the end of each and every very long Election Day, I hope you continue to find great rewards in serving the voters of Minneapolis.

## **Jim Howitt**

After four years with Minneapolis Elections Jim Howitt has taken a position at Hennepin County Elections. In 2013 he was responsible for warehouse operation and led the tabulation team which calculated the Ranked-Choice Voting results.

At Hennepin he'll be programing and testing voting equipment, which will allow him to keep working closely with his warehouse buddies. He will be greatly missed as an asset to our Elections Team. Good luck on your next journey, Jim!

## **Chris Irving**

Hello Minneapolis Election Judges! My name is Chris Irving, and I am proud to be serving as the new Election Judge Trainer for the City of Minneapolis this year!

A little history about me: I've been a Minneapolis resident almost all of my life, living in a variety of neighborhoods throughout that time. I attended Seward Montessori School when I was younger, was a Tiger at South High School, and later graduated from the University of Minnesota with a B.A. in political science and Spanish studies in 2012. Soon after graduation I began work with Hennepin County as an Elections Assistant. I worked there until this past February when I joined the Minneapolis Elections team.

Minneapolis is a wonderful, vibrant city full of rich culture and wonderful people. It is a pleasure to live here and to work for the people of such a great city. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you serving as judges in the elections to come! Thank you all for your service!

## CURRENT ELECTIONS STAFF



**CITY HALL STAFF**

Left to right: Grace Wachlarowicz, Dani Connors-Smith, Tim Schwarz, Jilla Nadimi, Chris Irving.



**WAREHOUSE STAFF**

Left to right: Nick, Bob Filipek, Matt Reid

### **Seasonal Positions Available**

Our office will be hiring more seasonal workers this year to assist with election preparations here at City Hall and at our Election Warehouse.

Duties include answering phones, assisting absentee voters and processing mail, packing supplies and equipment, computer work, Somali language assistance and assisting with logic and accuracy testing.

We anticipate review of applicants beginning in June 2014 for a start date in early July. Stay tuned for postings available on our website in May.

See our website for further information: [vote.minneapolismn.gov/judges/seasonal](http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/judges/seasonal)

### **Committee Report**

The Elections Division presented their elections report to the City council on March 22, 2014. You can view the entire report by clicking on the link.

[www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-122335.pdf](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-122335.pdf)

**Minneapolis Elections would like to invite Student Judges to participate for the first time ever to work a Primary Election in this city.**

Our student judges were essential in 2013 to the success of RCV election. This year will be inviting our Veteran Student Judges from 2013 to join us as Student Judges for the 2014 Primary Election. If you know of any students 16 years or plus that would be interested in participating in our Student Election Judge program, please contact Mary Davis at [Mary.Davis@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Mary.Davis@minneapolismn.gov)

### **Move to 201**

The Elections Division has made the move to Room 201 from Room 1B in City Hall. The move was a part of the City Hall building's safety upgrade project.

The Safety Upgrade is a multi-stage plan that updates new fire alarms, smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, heating system, air conditioning system and ventilation system.

The project initially started in 2000 and is planned to be finished in 23 stages that will be completed by 2016. As of right now, the plan has reached stage 18.