

# Ranked Choice Voting Blue Ribbon Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes May 30, 2007

The fifth and final meeting of the Blue Ribbon Review Panel to discuss the Implementation of Ranked Choice Voting in Pierce County was held May 30, 2007 at the Election Center, located at 3009 South 36<sup>th</sup> Street in Tacoma.

Pat McCarthy, The Pierce County Auditor, began the meeting at 6:00 pm with a welcome and introductions. Present were:

### Panel Members

Katie Blinn	Office of the Secretary of State
Nathe Lawver	Pierce County Democratic Party
Deryl McCarty	Pierce County Republican Party
Ruth Bennett	Libertarian Party of Washington State
Kevin Phelps	Chamber of Commerce
Dennis Jones	Pierce County Veterans Advisory Council

### Election Staff

Pat McCarthy	Pierce County Auditor
Keri Rooney	Chief Deputy Auditor
Lori Augino	Elections Manager
Michael Rooney	Elections Supervisor
Rebecca Brauhn	Election Specialist - RCV
Gina Eckhart	Elections Clerk – RCV
Christie Rupert	Election Specialist
Michelle Ackers	Election Specialist
Geri Powers	Poll Worker Coordinator
Mary Johnson-Hall	Election Specialist
Shannon Cortez	Election Specialist
Dave Heinemann	Elections Clerk
Kimi Adams	Elections Clerk

Others present were:

John Arntz	Director of Elections, San Francisco
Scott Konopasek	ForeFront Election Solutions, Managing Partner
Paul Griego	Sequoia Voting Systems, Sales Executive

David Moreno  
Al Rose

Sequoia Voting Systems, RCV Product Manager  
Pierce County, Prosecuting Attorney

Also present were 20 persons representing the general public.

Pat McCarthy re-introduced the discussion topic for this meeting. The topic was:

### **Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) – Voter Education**

The three scenarios presented last week by Pat McCarthy were reviewed:

- Scenario No. 1 Reach all the voters at least **five** times
- Scenario No. 2 Reach all the voters up to **three** times
- Scenario No. 3 Reach all the voters **once** or **twice**

The panel members were asked to consider four things during the deliberation and discussion time:

- To inform and educate all Pierce County voters (Broad Spectrum)
- To support and enhance voter's comprehension
- To promote ballot marking effectiveness and accuracy
- Promote confidence in the process and minimize voter error

### **Scenario No. 1: Input and Feedback**

- Pros-- Need to hit the voter multiple times in order to get the message out
- Voters will listen to the message during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> hit
- Need to hear it 7 times, so they'll think they thought of it themselves
- Utilize a billboard, with a message to drive people to a website
- Use the schools to educate (youngsters and adult students)
- Use focus groups, clubs, cultural services, and non-traditional media
- Blogs, website links, and free media – i.e., KLAY
- Set aside some funds (25%), to be used in the last month
- Good investment – Can reuse materials
- Focus on inexpensive methods early
- Keep the message simple
- Timing is critical
- San Francisco started in mid August, during mailing of ballots
- September was the key month for San Francisco
- Tribune articles early on and multiple times
- Need to educate the media
- Education should focus on 'How to Mark the Ballot'
- Provide materials to explain RCV
- San Francisco had 5 ballot cards last RCV election

Cons-- Over the top - you don't get much more for the money  
Over kill  
Still won't reach some people

**Scenario No. 2: Input and Feedback**

Pros-- Probably the best value  
Use the news media multiple times  
Hit the voters at least 3 times

Cons-- none

**Scenario No. 3: Input and Feedback**

Pros-- none

Cons—Not enough

**Scenario No. 4: Input and Feedback**

Pros-- Need to explain why RCV candidates are not on the primary  
Look at the marketing strategy of the 'Good to Go' campaign  
Look at what they're spending  
How did they research the topic?  
Measure who is hitting our website and how often  
Talk to them  
Do they understand RCV?  
Allow them to ask questions and give them answers  
Keep track of how they heard of RCV and invest in that marketing  
Invest it in the last month of the campaign  
Exit polling/surveying to measure the level of understanding  
Learn from the 'Pick-a-Party' education campaign  
Voters did not like it but they understood it  
Allow some of the primary voters to try the system  
Extra staff to cover the phones – Phone Banks  
Multiply the education: We still have 'Pick-a-Party' with no box  
And RCV will not appear on primary ballot  
Start the education this summer (2007)  
Website  
Sample ballots  
Use 'focus groups' to study the development

Cons—none

During the discussion, John Arntz, San Francisco-Director of Elections, gave an overview of San Francisco's RCV experience and answered questions the Blue Ribbon Review Panel had at this time.

All the Blue Ribbon Review Panel members contributed to the discussion. The discussion time continued for approximately 2 hours which included information from John Arntz on 'The San Francisco Experience':

San Francisco had only 6 months to implement RCV  
Software algorithm did not work initially  
Counting time was lost due to this fact  
It takes time to report the algorithm results, ( it's not as easy as pushing a button),  
limiting the reports to a day or two after the election, and  
periodically after that until certification is the preferred  
schedule in San Francisco  
SF is presently experiencing voter drop off since implementation  
Elected candidate/campaigns did not realize the impact to them in  
an RCV election  
"How to Mark the Ballot" is the most important issue for education  
You'll need to reach the voter numerous times to educate them  
John commented that "Pierce County is working on a very good plan thus far"

After the discussion time, Pat McCarthy gave a recap of the Blue Ribbon Review Panel meetings, highlighting the 4 topics of discussion which were:

Filing for Office  
Results Reporting  
Voting Options  
Voter Education

As a result of these meetings, eleven items were identified and will be presented to the County Council for review on Monday, June 11, 2007 at 11:00 am.

Pat McCarthy continued the meeting with an explanation of 'what's next' on the RCV time line in order to move forward with the Ranked Choice Voting implementation process.

Three minute time periods were given to the public to present comments to the panel and the Pierce County Election staff. Ten public attendees addressed the panel:

Karen Willard  
Rich Anderson-Connolly  
Roxy Giddings  
William Giddings  
Robert Hill  
Chris Karnes  
Kelly Haughton  
Erika Crammer  
David Minikel  
Renee Rich

Note: a recording of the Public Comment period can be heard on this website.

After the public comment period, each panel member was given an opportunity to share their concluding statements. Each member responded with a “thank you” to Pat McCarthy and her staff, for the well organized and educational experience of serving on the panel, offering to help in the future with education/outreach and preparation for the County Council review meeting. Pat then asked to reserve the right to reconvene the Blue Ribbon Review Panel for purposes of facilitating Speakers Bureaus for RCV.

Pat concluded the meeting with a “thank you” to all the Blue Ribbon Review Panel members and special guests. Each panel member was presented with a certificate of appreciation and a ‘Blue Ribbon’ to commemorate their contribution and hard work.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm..