

# **Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) Blue Ribbon Review Panel**

## **Meeting Minutes April 25, 2007**

The second meeting of the Blue Ribbon Review Panel to discuss the Implementation of Ranked Choice Voting in Pierce County was held on April 25, 2007 at the Election Center, located at 3009 South 36<sup>th</sup> Street in Tacoma.

Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Auditor, began the meeting at 6:05 pm with a welcome and introductions. Present were:

### Panel Members

Jeff Even	Office of the Attorney General
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
Barbara Seitle	League of Women Voters of Washington

### Election Staff

Pat McCarthy	Pierce County Auditor
Keri Rooney	Chief Deputy Auditor
Lori Augino	Elections Manager
Michael Rooney	Elections Supervisor
Rebecca Brauhn	RCV Support Staff
Gina Eckhart	Elections Clerk

Also present were 8 persons representing the general public.

The Mission Statement and Ground Rules were reviewed for this meeting along with confirming the schedule of the remaining meeting dates and topics to be discussed:

May 9, 2007 6pm	Results Reporting and Certification
May 23, 2007 6pm	Voting options
May 30, 2007 6pm	Education and Outreach

Pat re-introduced the discussion topic for this meeting. The topic was:  
Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)-Candidates Filing for Office Scenarios. Four  
Scenarios were presented by Pat as a conversation starter:

- Scenario #1 Accept all filings “as is”
- Scenario #2 Each major party provides a list of approved candidates prior to  
filing week
- Scenario #3 Each major party approves the list of candidates after filing week
- Scenario #4 Any new Scenario?

The panel members were asked to give consideration to current laws and guidelines in  
each of the following areas:

- a) Impacts to the candidates filing for office
- b) Partisan candidates and the role of the political party  
(Major, Minor and Independent)
- c) Expectations of the public

Scenario #1 input and feedback:

- Pros-- No change, status quo  
Allows more people to run for office (ballot access)
- Cons-- Is it legal? Probably not.  
Denies party right  
Parties make the choice, this may be legal  
How do we communicate to the public what the ‘rule’ for that  
election will be?  
Signature inequities

Scenario #2 input and feedback:

- Pros-- none discussed
- Cons—Deny access to ballot  
Candidate may be denied the right to file  
Reimbursement of filing fee?  
Signature inequities  
Major party vs. Minor and Independent candidates

Scenarios #3 input and feedback:

- Pros-- none discussed
- Cons-- Base the notification dates on the time for Independent/Minor party  
Conventions—not on filing week  
Could deny access to ballot  
Candidates forced to do an Independent Candidate filing as a fail  
safe to ensure ballot access  
Candidate may be denied the right to file  
Signature inequities

Scenario #4 input and feedback:

One panel member gave this scenario:

The Major parties have the option to exercise their right to pick candidates by a predetermined date. This date would be prior to Minor and Independent convention notices being due in the paper

If they do—Scenario #2 or #3

If they don't – Defaults to Scenario #1

Pros-- Could allow more people ballot access

Must communicate to the Auditor

Can renew on an annual basis

Need to allow party ability to OK candidates filing during special Filing period

Seek Council action to put an issue to ballot to allow Minor/Independent Candidates same process as Major parties. State Law?

Cons-- Education of the candidates

Extra notification for deadlines

Need to establish signature requirements for late filing,

appointments to vacancy in Major Party filings during filing week

Inequity to Independent/ Minor party

Signature inequities for Minor and Independent candidates

Additional comments were:

Major parties will be required to formally notify the Auditor whether or not they will participate in the process for selecting candidates who will use the party label in the upcoming election year by a certain date (February 1). Parties must respond either way. Opting in or opting out.

Major party shall provide a list of candidates by a certain time. The time shall be prior to the deadline to start and initiate the Minor/Independent convention process. This would allow candidates to pursue this option. Need to focus on Minor/Independent party dates.

We do not want to eliminate or restrict candidate's ability to file and get on the ballot as this goes against the inherent intent of the Charter Amendment.

Everyone should have ample ability to file. The parties are not saying who can file, but who can use the party label. No one is denied the right to run. They may be denied the right to use a label.

We may need legal interpretation regarding conflicts between Charter intent and existing state law.

All candidates should have the option to run as an Independent when they file?

Parties indicate that they would most likely implement and perform some functions through the convention and caucus process.

If a Minor party became a Major party, would they have enough time to organize to meet the opt in deadline of February 1?

One party could opt in, one party not.

Sheriff would file "as is". If it becomes non-partisan.

Parties may choose to only designate candidate(s) in certain races.

It was suggested that we would want to give proper notification and error on extra notification regarding filing for RCV offices.

Panel Members, Katie Blinn, Jeff Even and Ruth Bennett submitted their input and feedback in written form. These submittals can be viewed on the Pierce County website.

All Blue Ribbon Review Panel members contributed input to the discussion. The discussion lasted for approximately 45 minutes.

The second half of the meeting was presented by Pat McCarthy and Lori Augino, Elections Manager. RCV Realities were defined:

- Volume
- Staffing
- Space and Storage
- Ballot Reconciliation
- Hardware/Software/Firmware Parameters

Sample ballots illustrating the multiple ways an RCV ballot could be marked were displayed and an explanation of ballot processing and tabulation was given.

Questions were raised regarding the need to define Ranked Choice Voting parameters in more detail through a formal process in Pierce County. Pros and Cons were discussed including short timeline to implement and possible long delays or changes associated with codifying.

Prior to the next meeting, panel members were asked to:

- Review the three scenarios
  1. Apply RCV algorithm and report RCV results daily
  2. Apply RCV algorithm on an interim reporting schedule
  3. Apply RCV algorithm once after all ballots are counted  
On or after certification
- Brainstorm other scenarios
- Provide feedback and input
- The Pros and Cons of each scenario
- Considering laws, guidelines and impacts
- Come to the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting prepared to discuss

Pat concluded the meeting with a thank you to all panel members.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25.