



KING COUNTY ELECTIONS
SECOND QUARTER REPORT
MAY – JULY 2008

May 20 special election

Open house

Voter registration
list maintenance

New Web site launched

Partnership in Democracy

Vote by mail progress report

Recruitment of temporary
workers

Outreach and education with
the disability community

Engagement on national
election topics

King County becomes official
translation provider for State
Voters' Pamphlet

Superintendent recruitment
update



King County
Elections

Sherril Huff, Director
Elections Division
Department Of Executive Services

As requested by the Metropolitan King County Council in Motion No. 12299, the following Second Quarter Report is provided by King County Elections. This report covers the preceding three months from April 2008 to June 2008 and provides updates relating to elections activities, improvements, new initiatives and planning for the August 19 Top 2 primary and November 4 General Election.

May 20, 2008 special elections

The May 20, 2008 Special election was the third all-mail election conducted in King County in recent memory. Approximately 60,000 mail ballots were mailed to voters in the Renton School District and Fire Protection Districts 17 and 45. Combined the special election had a 31.67 percent turnout, or a return of 18,839 ballots. With only a few temporary workers brought in to perform the insertion process, the majority of the election was processed by cross-trained election staff. Reconciled to zero discrepancies, this election represented another opportunity for the ballot processing team to gain familiarity in other functions related to the mail ballot process and refine procedures.

Staff reports to the Canvassing Board demonstrated continued excellence in reconciling ballots counted and voters credited with voting. King County's post-election audit of 4 percent of accessible voting units (or electronic voting equipment) used on Election Day resulted in a perfect match between the electronic vote totals and the paper audit trail. To date, all manual audits of King County's accessible voting units have been 100 percent accurate.

Because the election was conducted entirely by mail, no provisional or poll reconciliation reports are included in this quarterly report. Reconciliation reports used for absentee ballots and early voting can be found in Appendix 1 along with news releases about the all-mail election.

To ensure voters were aware of the all-mail election, the county included an educational insert in all mail ballot packets explaining that polls would not be open on May 20 and that voters needed to return their absentee ballot. Poll sites in the three jurisdictions had posters on doors to inform voters that their poll site was not open for voting. A copy of the educational insert can be found in Appendix 2.

The small size of this election allowed staff to implement a new feature of the Pitney Bowes sorting machines. When returned ballots are passed through the sorter, the voter information and the signature are scanned and then uploaded into our voter registration system, DIMS. At the signature verification stage, the scanned signature from the envelope is compared against the signature image on file in DIMS. This process, known as "side-by-side" signature verification, allows for increased security of ballots by minimizing handling, a benefit that is also expected to increase in production rates. Before use of the Pitney Bowes equipment, staff held the physical ballot envelope next to the signature image on

a computer screen to compare signatures, a process that required much more handling and movement of ballot materials. Though staff will continue to inspect the signature on every ballot envelope, but it is expected the side-by-side comparison of signature images will have many benefits. Staff are looking forward to using this feature in the August 19 Top 2 primary where they can begin capturing production data.

May 23, 2008 grand opening

On May 23, 2008, Executive Sims and the Elections Division hosted a public grand opening to welcome elected officials, the media and stakeholders to the new consolidated facility located in Renton. The open house started with a press conference and was followed by a guided tour through the 94,000 square foot facility. King County's new consolidated facility has been commented on by many within the elections community as one of the most elaborate security systems in any election facility in the state, if not country. The facility sits near the center of the county geographically, spans 94,000 square feet and is located at SW Grady Way and Powell Avenue in Renton. Also, unlike its former downtown location, the facility now offers the public ample free parking.

Media turnout at the event was positive with KING 5, 710 KIRO radio, the Renton Reporter, Seattle Post Intelligencer, local Chinese television station AATV, King County TV and members of the Seattle Chinese Post and NW Asian Weekly in attendance as well as more than 50 stakeholders and elected officials.

Consolidating all elections activity under one roof was the single most important security recommendation and the top overall recommendation of several oversight groups, including the King County Independent Task Force, an audit from the national nonprofit The Election Center, the council-appointed Citizens Election Oversight Committee, and the Washington Secretary of State. The move to a consolidated facility is among more than 300 reforms and recommendations completed since 2004 that have helped transform elections. The renovated elections facility formerly housed WorkSource, the state's employment and training services program. To ensure the building meets the specific needs for secure elections in the state's largest county, casino security experts, elections professionals and King County Facilities collaborated on the current design.

The building was designed with the technology and flexibility to accommodate up to 500 temporary employees in a countywide machine or hand recount and includes a 40-person phone bank, space to accommodate a regional voting center, training and multipurpose rooms, four conference rooms and a public observation loop around the entire mail ballot processing floor.

Full consolidation of the Elections Division is expected in early 2009 when the Election Distribution Center, located on East Fir Street in Seattle, which houses poll site equipment, is no longer needed in a vote-by-mail balloting system. A transition to vote by mail is expected in early 2009. Until then, the new facility

includes 14,000 square feet of warehouse space to store equipment for regional voting centers and accept bulk mail deliveries.

See Appendix 3 for a copy of King County Elections facility brochure developed to assist the public and observers visiting the facility. Appendix 4 includes the news release and a Web link to a voluminous list of recommendations and reforms made since 2004.

Voter Registration List Maintenance

In May, King County mailed 522,901 voter notification cards (voter registration cards) a federal requirement of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and Washington State law. Of the cards mailed, 379,117 cards were mailed to active poll voters and 143,784 were mailed to inactive voters whose registrations were placed on inactive status because a piece of election-related mail had been returned as undeliverable by the United States Postal Service. According to the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) a mailing must be completed at least once every two (even) years and no later than ninety days before the date of a primary or general election for federal office according to ensure that accurate and current voter registration lists are maintained. King County received permission from the Secretary of State to send a notification card to poll voters only since addresses of absentee voters are checked at least twice each year when a ballot is mailed to their address. King County performed this work in 2004 and 2006.

By June 24 King County received a total of 199,181 returned undeliverable voter notification cards from the NVRA mailing. Voter notifications returned to our office as undeliverable by the U.S. Postal Service require special handling to ensure the voter has every opportunity to correct their information if an error was made. First a cancellation confirmation is sent to the old address on file to make sure the piece of mail was not erroneously returned by the United States Postal Service. If the U.S. Postal Service returns the piece of mail with address forwarding services attached, King County staff will also send a notice to the new address. To update his or her address or cancel a registration, the cancellation form must be completed by the voter and returned to our office. This results in a significant amount of data entry and manual work that required an innovative solution to expedite the work in preparation for the absentee database to be completed in time for printing deadlines.

To handle this large volume of work, Voter Services hired a special project team of 18 employees assigned to work on the NVRA mailing. Staff was temporarily relocated to the second floor to do the work. Elections' Technical Services staff installed desk top scanners to read the voter's identification barcode to expedite the process. In addition, technical services senior IT developer Ekachai Tuntikanokporn designed a software application to interface with the Data and Information Management System (DIMS) that would place active voters on inactive status if a the voter notification card was returned and generate a confirmation card to send to the voters old and new addresses.

Voter Services also took advantage of the Pitney Bowes mail sorting equipment to date stamp the mail at a rate of 15,000 per hour. Currently, it takes one employee 7 hours a day to process 1.5 to 2 trays (at 2,000 cards per tray). Not only is this new in-house application useful for NVRA mailings, but it was also developed to process returned undeliverable ballots, cancellation confirmation notices and other mail from the U.S. Postal Service with a yellow sticker.

Overall, this new user-friendly process saves employees significant time in a very manual labor process and will save the county money in the end.

To view a copy of the voter notification card mailed to poll voters and all inactive voters, see Appendix 5.

Elections launches new Web site

King County Elections launched a newly redesigned Web site in the second quarter, an effort that began early in the year and included the migration of hundreds of pages and several applications. Testing of the site took place throughout the month of July and the site was launched publicly on July 23, a week before absentee ballots were issued for the August 19 primary. With more than 1,000 Web pages to manage, the work of managing archived Web pages to assist voters, the media, and candidates with historical election data is expected to be ongoing for a few months.

King County Elections' newly designed Web site will make it easier for voters to find information about their polling place, registration information as well as historical election results.

(Next Page)

The screenshot shows the King County Elections website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, NEWS, SERVICES, DIRECTORY, and CONTACT. Below this is a search bar. The main header features the King County logo and the text "Elections King County Elections, Department of Executive Services". A blue banner below the header says "You're in: Elections Home".

On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with the following items: Elections Home, Registration, Voting, Elections, Results, Reference & Resources, Site map, About Us, Languages: 中文版本 / Chinese. Below the menu is contact information for King County Elections: 919 SW Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057-2906, Phone: 206-296-VOTE (8883), TTY: 206-296-0109, FAX: 206-296-0108, Hours: Weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

The main content area is titled "King County Elections" and features a section for "August 19, 2008 primary". It includes a "Your Voter Guide" section with a form to find registration status, polling place, and view a sample ballot. The form fields include First name, Last name, and Date of birth (MM/DD/YYYY). There is a "Submit" button and a "Search by address" link.

Other sections include "Local Voters' Pamphlet" with links to Candidates, Measures, Print editions (PDF), and Create a custom pamphlet. There is also a "Top 2 primary" section with a link to "Learn about Washington's new, voter-approved primary".

At the bottom, there are sections for "Polling places" (List of polling places (PDF), Locate your polling place), "Register to Vote", and "Important dates" (July 28, 2008: Voters' Pamphlets mailed; July 30 - Aug. 1, 2008: Absentee ballots mailed; In person, accessible voting begins at).

Partnership in Democracy program

In the months leading up to the primary and general election staff and colleagues were asked to assess challenges the division faces in the upcoming elections. Repeatedly, the issue of how to recruit and staff the polls with 4,000 poll workers was raised by many as a significant concern both among staff and in conversations with the county political parties. By law county political parties are charged with filling poll worker positions, a responsibility which has become increasingly more difficult over the years. Significant changes in procedures, accountability and new, more technical equipment have changed the landscape of what it means to work a long day at the polls. In the past four years alone federal and state laws have changed so significantly that a new and different skill set is needed to work at the polls. As a result, hundreds of poll workers have retired from this important work in recent years. The new, accessible voting units King County implemented in 2006 require every polling place to have two pieces of voting technology to set-up, manage and take down each night, a task that requires significant accountability and reconciliation.

With the decision not to switch to an all-mail voting system this year, King County must recruit and fill 4,000 positions to staff 396 polling locations in the primary. This number includes a buffer of "on-call" poll workers to handle last-minute

cancellations, of which there were 100 in three days leading up to the February presidential primary.

The Elections Division has made poll worker recruitment a top priority in 2008. In May Larry Judd and Eva Coblentz were hired to spearhead a new recruitment effort to staff 396 polling places. The *Partnership in Democracy* program goes beyond simply recruiting individuals; it targets businesses and organizations with a passion and interest in giving back to their community, strengthening their work teams and making a difference.

Individuals in the *Partnership in Democracy* program experience are trained with the same material as other poll workers only training will also be available on-site at area businesses. The multifaceted *Partnership in Democracy* program touches four different groups with opportunities targeted to their needs: local businesses, non-profit organizations, and college and high school students. A recruitment brochure was designed in-house and Ms. Coblentz and Mr. Judd have given dozens of on-site presentations to businesses and organizations interested in being civically engaged in this exciting presidential year. By mid-July several non-profit organizations and schools including the University of Washington Communications Department, Boeing and Holy Names have expressed enthusiasm and interest in the program. It is expected the program will bring in 250 poll workers for the primary and at least 1,200 for the general election. Learn more about the program and view the KING 5 story on the Elections' Web site at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/vote.aspx> . The recruitment brochure is featured in Appendix #6.

Progress report on the implementation of vote by mail

Over the past quarter, several elements of vote by mail have been implemented and are progressing positively.

Ballot drop-off locations

When King County transitions to all-mail voting, there will be a number of ballot drop boxes located throughout the county. In anticipation of the February 2009 vote by mail transition, King County Elections is piloting nine drop boxes in the Aug. 19 primary and Nov. 4 General Election at the following locations:

- **Bellevue.** Library Connection @ Crossroads, 15600 NE 8th St., Suite K-11
- **Black Diamond.** Black Diamond Library, 24707 Roberts Dr.
- **Des Moines.** Des Moines Library, 21620 11th Ave. S
- **Fall City.** Fall City Library, 33415 SE 42 Pl.
- **Lake Forest Park.** Lake Forest Park Library, 17171 Bothell Way NE
- **Pacific.** Algona Pacific Library, 255 Ellingson Rd.
- **Seattle.** King County Administration Building, 500 Fourth Ave.

King County is working with the Seattle Neighborhood Service Centers on finalizing use of two Neighborhood Service Centers to use as drop sites in the November 4 General Election.

The drop boxes located at King County Library locations are large white boxes with the following informational decals. The boxes will be securely installed outside of the library entrance by King County Facilities.



Installation of drop boxes at the above locations will occur throughout the month of July and will be open to accept ballots starting Aug. 1 and will remain open until 8 p.m. on Aug. 19, Election Day.

Ballots will be retrieved and accounted for by two-person trained elections officials each day except for Sundays.

See Appendix 7 for a sample of the bilingual artwork used on the ballot drop boxes.

Ballot tracking and accountability

The new Pitney Bowes equipment was used for the February 19 primary and special election to open 300,213 absentee envelopes. In March, the equipment was used to scan images, crop signatures, sort to the legislative district level and generate batch listing for upload to DIMS.

Yet another step was taken in the May special election; the Pitney Bowes equipment sorted 19,025 incoming mail ballots and captured signature images off each envelope, which allowed the ballot processing team to use those images in the signature comparison process.

Regional voting centers

Initial regional voting center (RVC) site investigation has occurred throughout the county, based on approved budgets and criteria detailed in the RVC Consulting Group Recommendation Report along with distances from other RVC target areas and ballot drop boxes.

King County Elections has met with staff from the following locations, who have expressed interest in hosting a regional voting center at their facility:

- City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Northgate Community Center
- City of Redmond, City Hall

- Seattle Public Libraries, Central Library (Downtown)
- City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Center
- King County Elections, Renton
- City of Bellevue, Bellevue City Hall
- City of Federal Way
- City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Highpoint Community Center (West Seattle)
- City of Covington, City Hall
- City of Issaquah, City Hall

Procurement and leasing work for regional voting center equipment and locations are currently underway, but RVCs will not be operational until February 2009.

Tabulation

The certification process of the new equipment continues to be ongoing. The final test plan has been approved by the EAC and is posted on their WEB site at: http://www.eac.gov/voting%20systems/docs/certification-test-plan-premier-1-2-rev-08/attachment_download/file.

A draft of the test report has been completed and is available at: http://www.eac.gov/files/voting_systems/Premier%20Assure%201.2%20Certification%20Test%20Report%20Rev01.pdf.

Recruitment of temporary workers

In the first and second quarter, the recruitment of quality temporary workers to process absentee ballots, work on the phone bank, and process thousands of registrations raised the bar on recruitment by seeking a talented and diverse workforce at 26 local job fairs and through Web-based job sites. Temporary positions were listed at www.governmentjobs.com and the County jobs Web page and together attracted more than 5,000 unique Web hits. In total, Elections recruiters Rosemarie Grzetric and Marivic Dangeo screen more than 1,700 applications and tested and placed 16.8% of the highest scoring temporary employees. King County Elections relies heavily on a temporary work force to process ballots and assist with registrations and voters and looks forward to having such a skilled workforce to assist with the primary and general election. The recruiter position was among the 14 new positions created in 2005 in an effort to improve elections.

(Next page)

2008 Career Fairs and Conferences

* Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Networking Group

	FEBUARY
*February 26	Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Meeting, Hosted by F5 Networks
	MARCH
*March 25	Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Meeting, Hosted by YMCA Greater Seattle
	APRIL
April 3	NW Career Fair
April 16	Green River Community College Job Fair
April 17	Seattle Central Community College
April 22	UW Career Center (Tacoma)
April 23	Renton Technical College Annual Job Fair
April 24	North Seattle Community College – Spring Career Fair
*April 29	Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Meeting, Hosted by Fred Hutchinson Center Research Center
	MAY
May 7	BCC Job Fair
May 8	Mature Worker Recruitment Seattle - Antioch
May 14	Job Club-Neurology Vocational Services Unit (Breakfast)
May 14	Diversity Fair, Tacoma Dome
May 16	Highline Job/Career Fair Pacific Hwy
*May 20	Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Meeting, Hosted by UW
	JUNE
June 2	Work Source Seattle
June 3	Work Source Renton
June 4	Work Source Rainier
June 5	Work Source Renton
June 6	Work Source Auburn
June 10	Work Source North Seattle
June 13	Seattle Central Area Chamber of Commerce 26th Annual Junete (Diversity)
June 23	Choice, Career Fair
*June 24	Diversity Taskforce Recruitment Meeting, Hosted by Volt Services
June 24	Summer Career Fair-UW HUB
July 15	YCWA Job Fair

Outreach and education with the disability community

In April, King and Snohomish County Elections received a \$40,000 grant from the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Accessibility Grant Board to launch a joint-county voter outreach and education program targeting accessible voting options. Combined with funds received from the HAVA Board in January 2008, King and Snohomish County will share a total of \$70,000 for outreach and education, specifically targeting voters with disabilities. Education about accessible voting options for people with disabilities will ensure that this important group of voters are aware of voting options that allow them to vote independently and in secret.

King and Snohomish Counties collaboratively developed a request for proposal which was distributed widely to advocacy and community groups in both counties. Several groups responded with a proposed plan on how best to educate voters regarding accessible voting options such as accessible voting units, early voting, and polling place locations in King County. Both counties look forward to the possibility of reaching potentially thousands of voters and educating them on how to cast a private and independent ballot. For some voters, the opportunity to cast such a ballot may be a first in their lives. Activities will include an interior bus ad campaign, demonstrations, and other related efforts that are still in development and scheduled for the months leading up to the November 4, General Election.

Engaged in national election studies

King County staff were invited to participate in five working groups and speaking engagements on the topic of recounts, absentee voting, communication and media relations, and Section 203 minority language compliance as part of the ongoing work being done by the Election Assistance Commission, the PEW Charitable Trust Center and the Justice, Equality, Human dignity and Tolerance (JEHT) Foundation for the Data for Democracy Conference.

Director Sherril Huff led a conversation with colleagues from other election jurisdictions and the Election Assistance Commission in February on the topic of recounts. As one of the largest jurisdictions in the nation to conduct a hand recount in 2004, King County has provided significant input on the procedural and observer management of large recounts.

In May Bill Huennekens was a panelist at the national Data for Democracy Conference. This two-day conference brought together experts in election administration and data collection and analysis to discuss the challenges and opportunities for improving the accuracy and relevancy of election data. A significant focus was the Election Assistance Commission's Election Day survey. Mr. Huenneken's participated in a panel discussion on absentee and early voting. Learn more about this program online at <http://www.datafordemocracy.org/blog/>

Mr. Huenneken's is scheduled to be the guest speaker at the August Election Center conference. There he will give a presentation to thousands of election officials on King County's ballot security with specific focus on the division's security plan and how physical security features of the new consolidated facility work with legal and administration security procedures to protect all ballots.

Since 2005, King County Elections implements a joint information center in all countywide and high profile elections. This model closely resembles the Emergency Communication Center's model used during emergencies but has been fine-tuned over the years to suit lessons learned from each election. Communications Manager Bobbie Egan presented the county's media management/crisis communications plan to an Election Assistance Commission working group in early May. The committee was tasked with developing media relations best practices. Read the plan in Appendix 8.

Minority compliance supervisor Hong Wagner also attended an Election Assistance Commission work group in June on minority language compliance of Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act. Federal law requires counties to provide language assistance if more than 5 percent of voting age citizens in a jurisdiction are members of a single-language minority group who do not speak or understand English adequately enough to participate in the electoral process.

King County's compliance with Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act has achieved great success since the county first implemented this federally mandated program in 2002, following the 2000 census. Since 2002, King County has worked closely with a community coalition to develop an acculturation manual with community-accepted translations. The guide is referenced by staff in the translation of ballots, voters' pamphlets, notices of election, outreach and education information, signage and other election material. The manual and King County's Chinese minority language program has been heralded by the national Asian Pacific Islander Association as one of the best minority language programs in the nation. Ms. Wagner's contributions on behalf of King County were used to develop a national Chinese language glossary. The glossary can be found online at <http://www.eac.gov/voter/language-accessibility-program-1> .

King County is official translation provider for State Voters' Pamphlet

King County Elections has worked diligently in perfecting its translation quality and in May was granted the contract by the Secretary of State to be the translation service provider for the State Voters' Pamphlet. King County Chinese American voters are well-served by having consistent and superior translation quality consistent with the words communicated on their ballot and other election material. King County hired additional editors and proofers to ensure translations were accurate and to meet the very narrow deadlines between candidate filing and the printing of the State Voters' Pamphlet. King County will mail a Chinese Voters' Pamphlet to all households requesting Chinese material and make the pamphlet available at locations throughout the community as well as online.

Superintendent recruitment

Elections Division Human Resource recruitment efforts have generated a broad response from a variety of competitive candidates. At this time over a dozen applications are being examined in a screening process to be followed by scheduling an interview panel for the highest scoring candidates. Experienced election managers from around the country have responded to the aggressive recruitment conducted by staff.

Summary from the director

The second quarter has been a busy time for the Elections Division. In addition to conducting the May special elections entirely by mail, the Elections team continued to adapt functions and processes to the new facility. In the next quarter, interior signs will be installed and greatly assist the hundreds of temporary workers, visitors, and poll workers in finding their work and meeting locations in the new facility. Time and care was taken in developing a signage plan that allowed for maximum flexibility while meeting American with Disabilities Act requirements.

In the month to come, the Elections Division will conduct its first Top 2 primary and continue recruiting and training 4,000 poll workers to staff the polls on August 19th. I'm proud of the work staff continues to do to learn from successful programs initiated in other states and counties across the nation. The Partnership in Democracy program is an aggressive approach to partnering with local businesses, schools and organizations to staff polling places for the August primary and November General Election. As we look forward to the November 4 General Election, the results of this program will be critical to our ability to conduct accurate and transparent elections at 396 polling places this fall. I look forward to updating you on the progress of this initiative in the third quarterly report.