



King County

CITIZENS' ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (CEOC)

Members Present: Chair: Eliseo Juárez, Vice Chair: Jayson Todd Morris, Hanna Floss, Linda Grez, Tyson Hartman, Jude Ahmed, Kathy Sakahara, Mike Flood, Hillary de la Cruz, Dr. Jason Frederick Lambacher, Stuart Holmes, Julie Kang, Mathew Patrick Thomas, and Christopher Hays

Absent: Stanley Tsao

Special Guests: King County Councilmember Sarah Perry

Elections Staff: Director Julie Wise, Deputy Elections Director Janice Case, Kendall LeVan Hodson and Jerelyn Hampton

Council Staff: Tom Goff, Sherrie Hsu, Angelina Pogolian, and Tania Santiago Pastrana

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

CEOC Chair Eliseo Juárez called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m

2. Approve October 21, 2022 minutes

Member Mathew Patrick moved approval of the minutes of the October 21, 2022 meeting. Member Kathy seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. King County Councilmember Sarah Perry

Chair Juárez introduced King County Councilmember Sarah Perry.

Chair Juárez: Initial thoughts on switching to even-year elections, potential future rank-choice voting (RCV), and election bills in the legislature?

CM Perry: I support even-year elections, and they were just passed for King County. Same-year elections will allow mindful spending and greater vote potential. In odd year elections, we receive half the response than we do in even years. I would like more information on the details of RCV.

Tyson Hartman: Have you come across concerns, issues, or questions relative to access and integrity of elections. Can you share with us where the CEOC can focus to make a difference?

CM Perry: Smaller communities in and near Skykomish and Snoqualmie Pass can't be left behind. Communities including Fall City and Redmond Ridge need more attention. Reaching out to multicultural communities in their cultural hubs, rather than drawing them elsewhere.

Chair Juárez: Your predecessor had shared that she received several perceived issues around the integrity and validity of elections. Is this something you are hearing from constituents?

CM Perry: My predecessor and I had different constituent bases. My predecessor's constituent base might have been listening to verbiage regarding election validity. Elections Department did a stellar

job in debunking those myths. When someone brings election validity forward to me, I don't dismiss them. Asking questions and giving them space to unpack usually reveals an unmaterial fear.

4. **CEOC New Member Introduction**

King County Council recently appointed Christopher Hays to fill the registered voter CEOC vacancy. Chair Juárez welcomed Member Hays.

5. **Director's Report**

The Director's Report included a recap of the General Election. King County Elections (KCE) expects to land at a 65% turnout this midterm election. 60% of ballots were returned by ballot drop box. More than 20,000 ballots were returned to Ballard and Renton headquarter locations. There were 17,000 outstanding signature issues. KCE reached out to those voters.

Vote centers and drop boxes were extremely busy. There were more voters than projected at nearly every location on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. 190,000 ballots came into drop boxes on election day alone. Some boxes were picked up as many as 6 times on election day. There was 290 observer visits, starting as early as 6am.

There were 1,370 voters on Lumen Field on election day causing a 2-3 hour line. Staff were redeployed from other voting centers to speed things up. If a person is in line, then they are on time, and the last person registered was at 10:30pm.

Results are taking longer than usual due to a large number of ballots turned in on election day, capacity issues, and a large scanner was down. There was no race in the recount range or mandatory recounts for local ballot measures.

Issues will be brought to the Canvassing Board. For example, at Burien Town Square drop box, an individual tossed a ballot into the bin as the staff was trying to secure the drop box. The ballot was isolated, and KCE is waiting on direction from the Canvassing Board. Also, one of KCE driver teams found 4 unsecured ballots without a clear disposition. These ballots were isolated, and the voters were contacted, but canvassing board determines next steps.

Kathy Sakahara: I heard that voters at Lumen Field were outside on election day. Why did so many people wait to register and what can we do about it? Are any candidates encouraging people to wait until the last minute?

Julie Wise: Yes, people were outside. Once we were made aware, we decided with Lumen Field to bring them inside. We had line workers that reported folks were in good spirits. During the 2020 election, ballots were turned in the first weekend after ballots were sent out. How quickly ballots are turned in can depend on the election cycle. There are numerous reasons why people vote late.

Kendall LeVan Hodson: Many of the voters on election day were brand new voters or people who recently moved.

Jude Ahmed: Regarding voting in jails - When staff went in on two Saturdays, were folks registered to vote and received ballots?

Kendall Hodson: We were there October 27 and October 29. We got 19 folks their ballots.

Jude Ahmed: Will the responses from jail voting survey be shared with us?

Kendall Hodson: The last number I heard was 41 responses. Someone is compiling the data, and responses are being processed. We can share what we learn.

Jude Ahmed: Regarding signature verification – Does King County consistently call, email, and mail every voter? Or is there a prioritization process of how a voter is contacted or who is contacted?

Julie Wise: We encourage voters to include their contact information on the back of their ballot. We always mail anyone who has a signature issue. We email and call if contact information was provided.

Hillary de la Cruz: Since people who are in line by 8pm still get to vote, what does that look like on the ground? Who is there making that determination?

Julie Wise: Depending on the site, we have a staff member at the end of the line and managing the line. Getting everyone into one room and lock the door at 8pm. We have security at every location.

6. Election of Officers

Per the bylaws, Chair Juárez passed the gavel to Vice Chair Jayson Todd Morris for the election of officers. The following candidates were approved by the Committee.

- EJ Juárez - Chair
- Jude Ahmed – Vice Chair of Voter Participation
- Mathew Patrick Thomas – Vice Chair of Election Monitoring

Vice Chair Morris passed the gavel back to Chair Juárez.

7. Annual End of Year Survey Results

A total of 64% of CEOC members completed the 2022 CEOC End of Year Survey. CEOC members expressed an interest in learning more about what CEOC is tasked to do, restart committee structure, share with the community what CEOC is tasked to do, and get an update regarding stipends for volunteering on CEOC. Regarding feedback on communication with Director Wise, all of the comments made were positive. Topics of interest for 2023 include the Voter Education Fund, language access, security topics, and legislative changes and implementation updates.

8. Approve 2023 Content Calendar

Chair Juárez shared the newest draft of the 2023 Content Calendar. Member Kathy Sakahara moved approval of the 2023 Content Calendar. Member Matthew Patrick Thomas seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Discuss Draft CEOC Report to the King County Council

CEOC is required to submit a report to the council by February 1. Chair Juárez will email committee members a draft report. Members plan to approve the report at the January 2023 meeting.

10. KCC Staff Update

There was no staff updates.

11. New Business and/or for Good of the Order

Jayson T. Morris: Interested in creating a “best practices” one pager that describes what a robust election system looks like versus an exclusive one.

Matthew Patrick Thomas: Sounds like a great idea. We have a great system and should showcase it.

Kathy Sakahara: There are several national organizations who recommend best practices. Washington integrates almost all of them. I suggest demonstrating pro-democracy organizations that start with best practices. We don't have to copy or agree, but it can showcase the best practices that we have incorporated.

Mike Flood: I agree looking at national studies. Rather than saying how great we are, we should point out differences, and then it will be obvious which system is most effective.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at about 12:55 pm.