BEFORE THE KING COUNTY ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

In Re Challenges to the Voter Registration of: Shelly Farnham, and Geoff Holden	)	FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER DENYING CHALLENGES

I. INTRODUCTION

THIS MATTER came before the King County Elections Director pursuant to chapter 29A.08 RCW and upon the challenges filed by Daniel J. Cassidy to the voter registrations of Shelly Farnham and Geoff Holden.[1] In his challenges,[2] Mr. Cassidy alleges that Ms. Farnham and Mr. Holden do not maintain legal voting residences at the addresses shown on their voter registration records. Ms. Farnham and Mr. Holden both appeared for the challenge hearing; Mr. Cassidy did not appear.

II. FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The voter registration challenges were initiated in writing and filed by Mr. Cassidy. Mr. Cassidy submitted the challenge for Ms. Farnham on November 11, 2025. Mr.

[1] These challenges were filed more than forty-five days prior to the next election and pursuant to RCW 29A.08.820(3), are therefore decided by the King County Elections Director, rather than the King County Canvassing Board.

[2] Mr. Cassidy also filed a challenge to the voter registration of Frank Martin making the same allegation as made against Ms. Farnham and Mr. Holden. The challenge to Mr. Martin's voter registration was dismissed by the King County Elections Director pursuant to RCW 29A.08.840(1). The challenges brought by Mr. Cassidy are all against currently serving council members for the Skykomish Town Council. Mr. Cassidy ran unopposed as a candidate for Skykomish Council Position No. 3 in the November 2025 General Election. He was defeated by Mr. Holden, who was a declared write-in candidate.

Cassidy submitted an initial challenge to Mr. Holden on November 13, 2025. That challenge was dismissed pursuant to RCW 29A.08.840(1). A subsequent challenge to Mr. Holden was submitted to King County Elections on December 7, 2025. King County Elections then sent letters to the challenged voters with copies to the challenger setting the hearing for January 7, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

2. For Ms. Farnham's challenge, Mr. Cassidy alleges that Ms. Farnham does not maintain a legal voting residence at the address shown on her voter registration record, 120 3rd Street North in Skykomish ("Farnham Skykomish Address"). Mr. Cassidy alleges that Ms. Farnham actually resides at 1136 13th Avenue #102 in Seattle ("Farnham Seattle Address"). In support of this allegation, Mr. Cassidy provided, amongst other documents, a recorded residential lease for the Farnham Seattle Address which lists Ms. Farnham and April Denton as shareholders for the lease. Mr. Cassidy also claimed, amongst other claims, in a document entitled "Evidence to Support Challenge – Shelly Farnham," that Ms. Farnham acknowledged at a public candidate forum that she lives in Seattle.

3. For Mr. Holden's challenge, Mr. Cassidy alleges that Mr. Holden does not maintain a legal voting residence at the address shown on his voter registration record, 604 Old Cascade Highway East in Skykomish ("Holden Skykomish Address"). Mr. Cassidy alleges that Mr. Holden actually resides at 4028 Midvale Avenue North in Seattle ("Holden Seattle Address"). In support of this allegation, Mr. Cassidy claimed, amongst other claims, in a document entitled "Evidence to Support Challenge – Geoff Holden," that he is familiar with the Holden Skykomish Address and based on his "own personal observations nearly daily" that the home is "not occupied, shows no signs of continuous habitation, and is not used as a primary residence."

4. Prior to the hearing, both challenged parties submitted materials to King County Elections in response to Mr. Cassidy's challenges.

5. Ms. Farnham submitted an affidavit declaring that she has owned the house at the Farnham Skykomish Address since 2014, that she "physically resides" there, and that it is her "primary residence where [she] maintains [her] abode." Ms. Farnham explained in a separate document, "Declaration of Residency in the Town of Skykomish" that the Farnham Seattle address is condominium property that she co-owns with her sister, April Denton, who has always been the sole occupant of the Farnham Seattle Address.

6. Mr. Holden submitted an "Affidavit of Residence" in which he declared that he has resided fulltime at the Holden Skykomish Address since 2021 and has not lived at the Holden Seattle Address since December 2020.

7. Testimony and argument were presented at the hearing by Ms. Farnham and Mr. Holden, who each provided information on their own behalf after being placed under oath.

8. Ms. Farnham testified that although she travels back and forth between Skykomish and Seattle for work, the Farnham Skykomish Address is her home, her primary residence, and where she is registered to vote. Ms. Farnham noted discrepancies with Mr. Cassidy's challenge materials, including that the Farnham Seattle Address has never been her home, but is a property that she co-owns where her sister resides.

9. Mr. Holden testified that he has been a full time resident of the Holden Skykomish Address since 2021 and that he does not have another home. Mr. Holden testified that he has not lived at the Holden Seattle Address since 2020.

10. These challenges were brought pursuant to RCW 29A.08.810(c)(i) which allows a challenge to a voter's residential address if the challenger provides what he alleges to be the

voters' actual addresses on the challenge forms. Mr. Cassidy did provide what he alleges to be the challenged voters' actual addresses on the challenge forms he filed and the challenges are therefore properly before me.

11. As provided in RCW 29A.08.840, the person challenging another's voter registration has the burden to prove by clear and convincing evidence that the registration is improper.

12. In the present circumstances, therefore, Mr. Cassidy has the burden to prove, by clear and convincing evidence that Ms. Farnham's registration at the Farnham Skykomish Address is improper and, separately that Mr. Holden's registration at the Holden Skykomish Address is improper. RCW 29A.08.840. The Washington Supreme Court has described clear and convincing evidence as sufficient to convince the trier of fact "that the fact in issue is 'highly probable.'" *Colonial Imports v. Carlton N.W.,* 121 Wn2d 726, 735 (1993). Therefore, the ultimate question to be answered in this matter is whether Mr. Cassidy has proven that based on the evidence, it is highly probable that Ms. Farnham does not reside at the Farnham Skykomish Address and that Mr. Holden does not reside at the Holden Skykomish Address, both for voter registration purposes.

13. For purposes of voter registration, "residency" is defined by RCW 29A.04.151 as "a person's permanent address where he or she physically resides and maintains his or her abode". Analogous case law provides that residence requires physical presence plus an intention to make that place one's home. *In re Lassin's Estate*, 33 Wn.2d 163, 204 P.2d 1071 (1949); *Fiske v. Fiske*, 48 Wn.2d 69, 290 P.2d 725 (1955); *Freund v. Hastie*, 13 Wn. App. 731, 537 P.2d 804 (1975); *Marriage of Strohmaier*, 34 Wn. App. 14, 659 P.2d 534 (1983). If either physical

residence or the intent to presently make that place a permanent home is lacking, residence will not be established. *Id*.

14. After considering the materials presented by all of the parties in this matter, both before and during the challenge hearing, I find the materials and testimony presented by Ms. Farnham and Mr. Holden to be credible. I find the allegations made by Mr. Cassidy in both of his challenges to lack credibility.

15. Based on the evidence presented and the high burden of proof set forth in RCW 29A.08.840, I find that Mr. Cassidy has failed to meet his burden to prove that Ms. Farnham's and Mr. Holden's registrations are improper. The allegations do not establish by clear and convincing evidence that Ms. Farnham's and Mr. Holden's registrations are improper.

III. ORDER

For the reasons set forth above, the challenge is DENIED.

ENTERED this 14th day of January, 2026.

JULIE WISE, Director of Elections
King County Elections