



King County

CITIZENS' ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (CEOC)

September 20, 2023 Meeting | 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Chair: Eliseo Juárez, Vice Chair: Jayson Todd Morris, Vice Chair: Jude Ahmed, Vice Chair: Mathew Patrick Thomas, Hanna Floss, Tyson Hartman, Kathy Sakahara, Stuart Holmes, Chris Hayes, Dr. Jason Frederick Lambacher, Julie Kang, Hillary De La Cruz and Stanley Tsao

Absent: Mike Flood

Elections Staff: Director Julie Wise, Janice Case, Steve Barron, and William Cavecche

Council Staff: Sherrie Hsu, Jonathan Fowler, Terna Wilson, and Tania Santiago Pastrana

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Juárez called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

2. Chair Update

Chair Juárez gave an overview of CEOC fall activities including drafting the CEOC end of year report. Member Sakahara asked if it would be appropriate for the report to make recommendations to Director Wise's legislative agenda. Staffer Santiago Pastrana said that CEOC cannot give requests to Director Wise but can make recommendations to King County Council (KCC).

3. Approve May 17, 2023 minutes

Vice Chair Thomas and Member De La Cruz made amendments to edit the spelling of their names. Vice Chair Thomas moved approval of the minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting as amended. Member Kang seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously as amended.

4. Director's Report including August Primary, Special Filing Period, and Drop Box Overview

Director Wise reported that the August primary elections were forecasted at 35% participation, however there was only a 31% turn out. Director Wise shared that 19 offices were included in the special filing period in August and there were candidates added for 10 offices. Also, the Enumclaw School District election conducted a recount for position four on August 18th. There was no change and the results were certified on August 22nd. Finally, 40,000 people signed up for the ballot alert program.

General election starts on October 18th, with an expected turnout of at least 45%. There are 1.4 million registered voters. Elections has partnered with Safeway to promote new drop box (DBs) locations. Supervisor Steve Barron provided an overview of the DB program including the criteria for placing drop boxes. Vice Chair Morris asked about the routing order of ballot collection. Supervisor Barron informed that it is coordinated. Vice Chair Morris then asked if King County Elections (KCE) is getting electric vehicles. Supervisor Barron responded saying no. Chair Juárez inquired about DB site criteria and considerations of parking needs. Supervisor Barron stated that criteria is based on access.

5. July 2023 K&H Tour Recap w/ CEOC Tour Attendees

Vice Chair Morris, Vice Chair Ahmed, Member Floss and Member De La Cruz attended the July

K&H Tour and shared their experience.

6. CEOC Workgroup Vice Chair Report Out

Vice Chairs Ahmed, Thomas and Morris shared updates on the CEOC workgroups they chair.

Best Elections Workgroup Updates

Vice Chair Morris will send his report out to staff to be distributed to CEOC members.

Voter Participation Workgroup Updates

The workgroup reviewed the King County Auditor's 2018 & 2021 report on KCE. They have discussed barriers in voting, KCC's role in advocating for legislation to address disproportionate challenges and reviewed areas of strength including the voter education fund among other topics.

Election Monitoring Workgroup Updates

The workgroup discussed the August primary and CEOC election monitoring protocols. They discussed making CEOC stronger by making the CEOC a notified party with KCE. The workgroup plans to request a change to the King County Code or policy to make CEOC a notified party.

7. CEOC Oversight Opportunity: Primary Election Event

There was recent news reports regarding a tabulation server replacement and an accuracy test of the server during the August primary election. On August 9th, KCE sent an email to disclose what transpired to CEOC. The issue occurred because of an unlocatable parameter causing the server to slow down. Director Wise reported that the server vendor sent out troubleshooting steps. Two logic and accuracy (L&A) tests are conducted every election, the first one is 26 days before elections and the Monday before an election. KCE team conducts an additional test.

KC Elections received a public records request and found that two cameras were not functioning during the primary but other cameras were capturing the area. KCE has worked with the facilities management division to repair cameras, implement redundancies tests, and establish notification of camera disruptions. All servers were functioning and legally in service during the primary election.

Vice Chair Thomas explained concerns generated with King County Republican Party (KCGOP) about lack of parties' notifications of server issues and they wrote a letter stating their concerns. Director Wise wrote back solutions. The KCGOP asked for footage and found out the cameras were out and haven't seen proof of an L&A test. The KCGOP would like proof that tests were done. Chair Juárez responded that CEOC is an advisory committee.

Member Floss referenced the risk limiting and batch audit. She expressed opinion that the election was done accurately.

Chair Juárez asked CEOC members if the report of the August primary incident that Director Wise sent out was sufficient, questioned if there are any other procedural suggestions or requests for information. Vice Chair Thomas commented CEOC should have been notified first. Member Floss would like more information so CEOC can better advise KCC. Member Tsao expressed that as the Chinese-Speaking Community Representative, he'd like more information to understand the consequences of information in order to know how and what to relay to communities and that he would like to know what CEOC's obligations are to communities with the information they receive.

Member Sakahara expressed that there seems to be a contradiction and had a question about whether server two had a “license.” Chair Juárez reminded members that CEOC is an oversight group, explained that they have received an overview of the course of the event until now. Informed members that they have no authority to adjudicate what did or did not happen. He also made request for more formalized notifications in the future and stated that the discussion now is focused on what CEOC should request of KCC and KCE to make sure CEOC has the information it needs. Vice Chair Thomas requested adding CEOC as a notified party with KCE. Director Wise informed that CEOC has been included as a notified partner moving forward and additional steps will be implemented for the November general elections. She clarified that servers have been in use for seven years and were certified and licensed during the August primary election.

Member Hays asked if server registrations are annual or only done once. Director Wise responded that L&A tests are done at every election. Deputy Elections Director Janice Case also responded that certifications occur after version updates and servers go through state certification.

8. KCC Staff Update

Staffer Santiago Pastrana shared she will be out of the office for an extended time starting in December. Staffer Fowler will continue staffing CEOC.

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

Member Kang asked if CEOC will maintain fully online meetings. Chair Juárez confirmed that meetings will continue online.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at about 1:01 p.m.