

WENDY DOWNS
CITY RECORDERKURT BRADBURN
MAYORMATTHEW HUISH
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council Members

From: Wendy Downs, City Recorder

Date: 4/9/2021

Re: Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)

Salt Lake County Clerk, Sherrie Swensen, recently announced that they would offer Ranked Choice Voting. My main concern in October 2020, when Ranked Choice Voting was being discussed, was the possibility of not being able to contract with the County. Since that is an option now, my focus is on the timeline of making the decision, getting notices published, and making sure we have enough time for outreach and education for the citizens.

I'm going to share with you a few items regarding a traditional election and RCV and how it could impact my office.

1. Election Notice Deadline

UCA 10-3-301 requires my office to publish in the newspaper a notice identifying the municipal offices to be voted on, and the dates for filing the declaration of candidacy. If Sandy continues to go with traditional voting, the filing dates are June 1-7, 2021. If you decide to go with RCV (with no primary), the filing dates are August 10-17, 2021.

I need to send the notice, with the filing dates, to be published in the newspaper (for Deseret News) no later than April 27, 2021.

2. Candidate Information Materials

With a traditional election, we already have our documents prepared for candidate filing, the candidate information packet, and the candidate orientation. Each election year we update dates and code sections to make sure everything is current.

With RCV, it initially will take more staff time to amend and prepare those documents before the filing dates. With this said, it would only be for the first

RCV election and not ongoing. We then can update the prepared documents like we do now with the traditional election.

3. Community Outreach and Education

For a traditional election, we send out general information about election dates, where to find information on the candidates, and when and where to vote or drop their mail in ballot off.

Ranked Choice Voting will take more staff time to educate citizens on how to vote, in addition to what we already do. After speaking with the Vineyard City Recorder, she said they held trainings and demonstrations on how to fill out the ballot and educate not only the citizen's but staff as well. This will take more staff time to schedule and hold these trainings.

I've been told that the Lt Governor's office currently has funding that they can use to work with a marking firm to help create educational materials and share them with the cities that select RCV. This will help tremendously in our outreach and possibly decrease the amount of time and funding of putting materials together as a City.

4. Possible Elimination of a Primary Election and costs

With the possibility of eliminating the primary by choosing Ranked Choice Voting, that would decrease the cost of our election with Salt Lake County. It would also give us more time before the August filing dates, to educate citizens, candidates, and staff on RCV before ballots are mailed.

As the City Recorder, I am interested in hearing your thoughts on Ranked Choice Voting and am looking forward to moving ahead in either direction.