AGENDA
CHARTER COMMISSION MEETING
ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA
April 25, 2019
6:00 p.m. – City Hall, Council Chambers

The mission of the Charter Commission is to evaluate and propose changes which are warranted in the city’s Home Rule Charter as provided by state statute. Home rule charters are, in effect local constitutions passed by local voters and cannot conflict with state laws. Commissioners are appointed by the Chief Judge of Hennepin County District Court and serve on a volunteer basis. (Commissioners are not appointed by city council.) Staff provides assistance to prepare agendas and performs other administrative duties.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call & Attendance
3. Approval of Minutes
   a. March 13, 2018 Charter Commission Meeting
4. Old Business
   a. Presentation - Update on ranked-choice voting outreach, education, and implementation
5. New Business
   a. Proposed Annual Report for District Court – Year 2018
   b. Election of Officers
   c. Legislative Update – Verbal
   d. Potential Charter review to identify/update outdated provisions and language
6. Future Meetings
7. Communications
8. Adjourn

For more information or questions regarding this agenda, please contact Melissa Kennedy at mkennedy@stlouispark.org or Chair Sara Maaske at smaaske@outlook.com

Auxiliary aids for individuals with disabilities are available upon request.
To make arrangements, please call Administrative Services at 952-924-2525.
1. **Call to Order**

Chair Maaske called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call and Attendance**


Members Absent: Gary Carlson (absence excused), Matthew Flory

Others Present: Nancy Deno (Deputy City Manager/HR Director), Soren Mattick (City Attorney), and Melissa Kennedy (City Clerk)

3. **Approval of Minutes**

a. Minutes of January 10, 2018 Charter Commission Meeting

b. Minutes of February 13, 2018 Charter Commission Meeting

c. Minutes of March 6, 2018 Charter Commission Listening Session

*It was moved by Commissioner Gothberg, seconded by Commissioner Rose, to approve the minutes of January 10, 2018, February 13, 2018, and March 6, 2018 as presented. The motion passed 9-0.*

4. **Old Business**

a. **Proposed Charter Amendment related to Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)**

Chair Maaske asked for comments from the commission on the proposed Charter amendments.

Commissioner Gothberg read a prepared statement:

“I still don’t believe we need RCV in St. Louis Park. Although Minneapolis and St. Paul have been successful with RCV, anyone who has watched their divisive city elections in the past understands why they needed to do something different and it’s great that they have been successful. People say RCV will make elections more civil. St. Louis Park has a history of civil, positive elections for city offices. It’s only been state and federal elections that become divisive due to party influences.

Some say it eliminates the “spoiler” issue. In any election with more than two candidates some candidates will be viewed as spoilers – particularly supporters of the non-winners. Single issue candidates will be reduced. There will always be some single issue candidates. In RCV the impetus is to tell all the voters what they want to hear. I would rather have candidates speak honestly.

RCV claims to result in a clear majority winner. Actually, it results in a consensus plurality by eliminating voters’ votes. The result in RCV is some voters get two votes counted,
some get one vote and some get zero votes because they didn’t vote for the “right candidates”. I have always believed in one voter, one vote.

General wisdom is that RCV encourages more non-traditional candidates. In my opinion, if I was a non-traditional candidate, I would feel more positive if I only had to receive more votes than the other candidate and win with a plurality. I believe RCV would encourage deal making between traditional candidates and try to shut out the non-traditional candidates. Beware of unintended consequences. Or, perhaps this is just a way to shut out non-traditional candidates. Is that the true objective of RCV in St. Louis Park? I hope not. St. Louis Park has always been a welcoming community.

There is no evidence to support the need for RCV in St. Louis Park. By eliminating primaries we have shortened the duration of campaigns and made it more feasible for more candidates, both traditional and non-traditional, to enter city elections. With more candidates election interest should increase, raising voter turnout. I don’t believe we need RCV to do this.

I may be wrong, but I would like to see some evidence that we need RCV before we take this step.

One item that has not been publicized strong enough by City staff is that not only did we eliminate the primaries, we also increased the number of petition signatures required to be placed on the ballot. This needs to be emphasized much more broadly before the next election.”

Commissioner Brimeyer stated that when the decision was made to eliminate primary elections he really felt it was for a good reason and he thought a natural progression from that decision would be moving to RCV. He noted that no voting method will ever solve the issue of divisiveness in elections because that is part of the culture. He agreed St. Louis Park generally has civil elections and he does not believe RCV is going to change that either, because that is not the culture in this community. He stated the major thing he learned from the Expert Q&A Panel was that RCV works and it is a good thing to have – the key is educating people. He referenced the comments received at the Listening Session, focusing on the concerns that were raised regarding fraud, flaws in the counting method, and that the voting process itself is complicated. He explained he discussed some of the concerns raised with the City Clerk to learn more about the counting process used in Minneapolis, the ballot styles used in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the capabilities of the existing tabulation equipment. He stated although he acknowledges that parts of the counting process did seem a bit complicated, he feels that staff will be able to figure out an easier and quicker way of tabulating results. He added that St. Louis Park should have been the first city in the State to switch to this voting method for city elections. He questioned why the city should wait for a problem to happen and then react to it versus making a proactive decision. He noted that the education piece is extraordinarily important and he wants to make sure that is not overlooked.

Commissioner Beckstrand stated he has considered this issue from the perspective of an unwavering desire to ensure that all eligible voters have an opportunity to vote and are able to have their ballot counted accurately and securely. He explained if voter turnout is actually increased, he is in favor of it. If candidate diversity will improve, he is in favor of it. If it diminishes overtly negative campaigning, he is in favor of it. At the same time if it instills fear or uncertainty because of the education component or prevents an eligible voter from exercising their right to vote, he is against it. If it increases the complexity in terms of tabulation or introduces avenues for fraud, he
is against it. If it overly homogenizes candidates’ messaging because there is too little differentiation between candidates, he does not like the idea of simply creating a false majority. He added that he also does not necessarily believe that there is a specific problem to be solved. He is of the mindset that the Charter can exist as a living document that can be changed to reflect the changing needs of the community. He stated he serves in an appointed position on the Commission, he is not elected, and he does not have to answer directly to the voters – that is the role of the council. He explained he does not want to stand in the way of the council being able to do the job for which they were elected, and he does not want to stand in the way of this moving forward. He noted he is extremely proud of the deliberative process the Charter Commission has gone through to consider this policy question and stated staff has been extremely helpful and easy to work with. He added that he values the diversity of opinions on the Commission and that they are able to have open discussions and work together in a respectful manner.

City Attorney Mattick stated that a resolution was prepared that would formalize the Commission’s recommendation to adopt the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Dyer stated in his role as a commissioner he has to look at policy questions from the perspective of what is best for St. Louis Park as a whole. He explained when this discussion first started his main concern was making sure that people in St. Louis Park had a voice in this decision. He stated he liked the process the Commission went through to research, gather information, and hear from the people because it has helped him make a clear decision. He added he feels that the Commission has done its due diligence on this policy question.

Commissioner de Lambert agreed with Commissioner Dyer’s statements. He thanked city staff and all those who participated in the Expert Panel discussion and Listening Session and he found all of the input to be valuable.

Commissioner Dwyer thanked city staff for their hard work and the time they put in to assisting the Commission throughout this process. He stated although he will be voting in favor of moving forward with the amendment, it is not with the same enthusiasm he had at the onset of the Commission’s discussions. He noted that is a testament to how thorough the process has been to study and learn about this issue. He stated that RCV is not perfect. The process has shortcomings and he hopes that some of those shortcomings won’t materialize in St. Louis Park’s implementation. He noted in some respects RCV is a workaround to a broader process that is outside of the city’s control to fix. He stated he is hopeful that in the broader system the things that are not within our control but can affect us may cause us to revisit this issue in the future. Perhaps we will have a more engaged voting process, perhaps voting itself will be easier and more accessible. He reiterated that RCV is not perfect but this is not necessarily all about solving problems, it is about establishing and communicating the values we want this community to have.

Commissioner Smith thanked city staff and stated throughout the process they were very responsive to the requests from the Commission and from the public. She also thanked her fellow commissioners for the thoughtful and respectful discussion throughout the process.

Commissioner Maaske echoed all of the thanks other commissioners previously mentioned. She stated this has been a very fruitful process and an opportunity to dig deeper into an issue she initially did not know very much about. She agreed that RCV is one option for St. Louis Park to consider. She questioned if the city was a business serving a customer base the size of St. Louis Park and they were embarking on a system change for product delivery that would affect the entire customer base, would they just go with the company that made the most aggressive sales pitch.
She stated she believes the city would evaluate the options and choose the solution that creates the best value, the least impact on service, and improves the customer experience. She added that when asked why St. Louis Park needs RCV, they should identify the problems that exist and then determine what policy options are available to help address those problems. She noted that RCV is not the only option available to St. Louis Park. She stated advocates of RCV have presented data in a way that is persuasive and compelling for their case because that is what advocates do. However, the analysis is incomplete because it does not take into account the other variables that affect how and why people vote or decide to run for office. She explained like Minneapolis and St. Paul, St. Louis Park also had a high turnout during the 2017 election cycle – the highest since 2001. The climate of the electorate is at least one other variable that factors into people going to the polls to vote. She stated she has also heard that by making this move they are reflecting the progressive values and the tradition of engagement in St. Louis Park, yet they have seen and heard from virtually the same faces and voices throughout this process. She noted she was personally disappointed in their ability to engage people whose voices aren’t loud and not typically heard. The result is a small group of people telling voters that they know what type of voting system is best, even though they have not truly heard from the populous or examined all of the options. She offered for consideration an incremental step for the next election cycle that would allow more time to examine all of the options. She stated combining the 2019 at-large races into one race in which the top two vote-getters are elected, mirroring the same voting process used for school board elections, it would make both seats more competitive and provide more consistency for voters across the ballot. She explained for all of the reasons she has outlined, she will not support a recommendation to council to advance RCV in St. Louis Park.

*It was moved by Commissioner Brimeyer, seconded by Commissioner de Lambert, to approve Resolution No. 18-001 recommending that the St. Louis Park City Council adopt a Charter Amendment by Ordinance Authorizing Ranked Choice Voting. The motion passed 10-2 (Gothberg, Maaske).*

b. **Verbal Update on Amendment related to Campaign Finance Contribution Limits**

Ms. Kennedy stated that the Council adopted the ordinance to amend the City Charter related to campaign finance contribution limits on February 5, 2018. The amendment takes effect 90-days after passage and publication according to law, on May 16, 2018. She noted that the Charter would be updated and distributed to the Commission once the amendment officially takes effect.

5. **New Business**

a. **Proposed Annual Report for District Court – Year 2017**

*It was moved by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Brimeyer, to approve the 2017 Annual Report and to direct staff to submit to the report to the District Court. The motion passed 12-0.*

b. **Election of Officers**

Chair Maaske stated that the Election of Officers for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary takes place at each annual meeting.
It was moved by Commissioner Dyer, seconded by Commissioner Dwyer, to appoint Sara Maaske as Chair of the Charter Commission until the next annual meeting of the Charter Commission. The motion passed 12-0.

It was moved by Commissioner Beckstrand, seconded by Commissioner Rose, to appoint David Dyer as Vice Chair of the Charter Commission until the next annual meeting of the Charter Commission. The motion passed 12-0.

It was moved by Commissioner Gothberg, seconded by Commissioner Rose, to appoint Terry Dwyer as Secretary of the Charter Commission until the next annual meeting of the Charter Commission. The motion passed 12-0.

c. Legislative Update – Verbal

Ms. Kennedy stated staff was notified on Monday that a bill had been proposed in the House regarding a prohibition of Ranked Choice Voting. She noted the bill was H.F. No. 3690 and the companion bill from the Senate had just been released, S.F. No. 3325. She stated staff would continue to monitor the progress of this bill and would keep the Commission apprised of any significant changes or actions.

Ms. Kennedy also noted that the City Council had mentioned a need for a more thorough review of the Charter to update any outdated language, insert gender-neutral language, and to make sure there are no conflicts with State law. She stated this would be brought back to the Commission at a later date once more information and direction was received from council.

6. Future Meetings

The Commission set the date of their next annual meeting for March 12, 2019 at 6:00 pm at City Hall. The Commission asked staff to inform them if a meeting was needed to conduct business prior to that date.

7. Communications

a. Public Communications received by staff since February 28, 2018 meeting

8. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Beckstrand, seconded by Commissioner Brimeyer, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 12-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk
Executive summary

Title: Ranked-choice voting outreach, education and implementation update

Recommended action: No action is required. The goal of this discussion is to review the plan that has been developed to implement ranked-choice voting and improve the education and outreach relationship with all St. Louis Park voters.

Policy consideration: Does the scope of the proposed education and outreach plan meet the identified needs of St. Louis Park voters?

Summary: Ranked-choice voting presents a significant change to the voting method that people are accustomed to in St. Louis Park. This change also presents a significant opportunity to develop programs dedicated to educating and engaging the community around all aspects of elections and the services we provide. Over the next few years there are many changes that St. Louis Park voters will experience. In 2019 the first ranked-choice election will be held. In 2020 the state will participate in the first ever Presidential Primary in early March, a traditional August Primary, and later that year voters will participate in the Presidential election at projected record rates. The elections team will be responsible for not only administering these elections, but also for educating voters. Following the 2020 election, the city will also go through a redistricting process using 2020 census data that will require us to engage the community to re-evaluate our precinct boundaries and polling location needs to best serve voters. Our strategic priority to build social capital through community engagement can be implemented within elections through a targeted outreach and education program designed to promote inclusion through civic participation.

Voters in St. Louis Park already participate in elections at a relatively high rate, similar to other nearby communities. Existing data shows that St. Louis Park has more registered voters, and regularly exceeds peer communities in turnout percentages. However, existing data also shows that there is still room for improvement, particularly in traditionally underserved populations and in municipal elections when overall engagement drops off. We know that there are many reasons why people are active or inactive in elections. We primarily want to focus our efforts in areas that will be most impactful to the community from the beginning.

The mission of the strategic plan outlined by the elections team is to close the civic literacy gap in St. Louis Park. This is not something that can happen after one meeting or one education session, and it is not something that many communities focus on. In order to build social capital and provide more education our plan focuses on a relational model that seeks to form lasting partnerships with civically engaged community leaders to reach a broader scope of voters.

Strategic priority consideration: St. Louis Park is committed to creating opportunities to build social capital through community engagement.

Supporting documents: Discussion, Outreach and Education Programs Table, Ordinance 2548-18

Prepared by: Michael Sund, Elections Specialist – Outreach and Education
Robert Stokka, Elections Specialist
Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk
Discussion

Strategy: The elections team has devised a strategic plan using our experiences with voters in St. Louis Park and existing research data about voter behavior in general to address the gap for voters being introduced to ranked-choice voting. Our intention is to simultaneously address other disparities in knowledge and access for our voting process and to develop relationships with community members. These ongoing efforts will help us ensure that community capital is generated through our elections and voting. Our strategy works to address the existing civic literacy gap. This is a concept developed by the Center for Civic Design which uses design thinking and applies it to elections administration. It encourages the use of a variety of materials in plain language to address the gaps in understanding for voters at every stage of learning about and participating in civic processes. These materials focus on areas that voters find confusing or misleading, and provide tactics to address those challenges.

We also used purpose mapping exercises to develop a strategic map that utilizes SWOC/T and stakeholder analysis. These internal documents, along with our racial equity and inclusion work, guide our development of program materials to address existing gaps.

Research: Using the American Community Survey provided by the Census Bureau and historical voter data provided by the Office of the Secretary of State, we have begun to research the composition of the electorate in St. Louis Park. We have also begun research to identify and understand the groups of people who generally do not participate in the democratic process, or who only participate in even-year elections. We are using this data to develop targeted materials, programs, and messaging. We are also using the information to create baseline data by which we will be able to measure the effectiveness of our materials and programming over time to see if improvements are being realized or to identify additional areas for improvement.

Target Audiences: Based on our research and personal experience with the St. Louis Park electorate, we are breaking our target audiences down into a few groups, some of which may overlap:

Future voters - We are working with St. Louis Park area schools and Community Education to introduce civics to students and youth in a more collaborative way. Working with Superintendent Osei and other district staff we have established a Student Election Program at the high school and have committed to teaching a 6-class series for middle school students through community education in the spring. These efforts serve the dual purpose of both engaging youth about elections and civic leadership on a more consistent basis, as well as recruiting future student election judges who will serve a critical role in being able to staff polling places in coming years. This project allows us to create an ongoing relationship with students who will eventually become voters and, in the interim, can help us inform the adults in their lives and encourage them to become or continue to be active voters.

19 - 39 years old - Voters under the age of 40 make up the majority of the electorate in St. Louis Park. They are frequent voters in even years, but participate at much lower rates in municipal elections. In order to engage this audience we are creating digital content for social media and regular sites people in this demographic frequently use to get information and communicate. Additionally, we are collaborating with local community partners to engage residents at events they already attend and places they gather, such as local sporting or arts/entertainment events,
Charter Commission Meeting of April 25, 2019 (Item No. 4a.)

Subject: Ranked-choice voting outreach, education and implementation update

community or neighborhood gatherings, local businesses, and large-scale events such as Parktacular.

40 - 65 years old - This tends to be our most engaged group of voters. They are registered at higher rates and prefer early voting (absentee) to other methods. They are more likely to be single-family home owners and to be longtime residents. We intend to create leadership opportunities to encourage people who already actively participate in their community to engage their peers about the upcoming election and the changes related to ranked-choice voting.

65 and older - Seniors in our community make up the majority of our election judges and are a group that receive targeted services from the city, such as health care facility voting. Because this age group is more likely to be educated on voting and familiar with the community, we are seeking their feedback on election materials. We are also expanding existing outreach programs to seniors who don’t live in statutorily defined health care facilities but live in large residential communities such as Park Shore, Menorah Plaza, and Tower Light.

Working Professionals - We are engaging the business community through avenues like the Rotary Club and the St. Louis Park Business Roundtable. Our goal is to partner with small businesses to assist with the distribution of election materials. We also seek to communicate with large employers in the area to engage their employees in the election process through messaging from their leadership and by providing space for us to work with employees. This could also lead to the recruitment of new election judges who can eventually take the place of some of our long-time judges who may be looking to retire from their work on Election Day.

Community Leaders - People who are already active within the community are some of our core partners, including leaders in the civics space like the League of Women Voters and FairVote. We are also seeking partnerships with religious organizations and multicultural groups to bring education opportunities and conversations to places people already gather in our community. We will continue to develop these partnerships alongside other community engagement efforts the city may already be working on. For example, collaboration on the work already being done by Darius Gray, our new Community Organizer, and work on the 2020 Census with Community Development staff.

Historically underrepresented communities – The elections team has met with Alicia Sojourner, race equity manager and worked with data analytics to identify communities that have been historically left out of the voting process. This group can have a diverse set of needs but all experience roadblocks when seeking to engage in the electoral process. Our team will use this research to design several specialized events and materials to address specific needs. This can include our efforts in mobile voting, language translation of material and our ambassador program. In our research voters seek resources from two common sources, local officials and community leaders. Our ambassador program is designed to bridge the gap between our elections office and underrepresented communities in partnership with community leaders.

Elected Officials and Candidates - We are presenting our plan and materials to the city council as well as the St. Louis Park School Board. We are also working to update our candidate filing materials to be inclusive for potential candidates seeking to understand what the requirements are for running for office, what councilmembers do and the role they serve, city operations, the
commitment level required to be on council, and the details of ranked-choice voting and how some aspects of the election will be different than in past years. Due to our need to remain impartial and unbiased, certain work in this particular area is out of the scope of the elections team. To bridge that gap we have discussed this challenge and are partnering with outside non-profits, like League of Women Voters and FairVote, to provide avenues for potential candidates to learn more about campaigning in a ranked-choice election and other details that may impact their decision to run for office.

**Longtime Residents** - Registration and participation are high in even year elections. We are going to research, report and take action on working with longtime residents to better understand how odd-year elections affect them. We are using data to identify trends in regional (ward) participation and the differences that our geographic information system (GIS) can reveal. These will lead to regionally focused events held in targeted areas of the community highlighting that there is an election this year, that voting will be different and how it will impact this community.

**New Residents** - People who are new to St. Louis Park are already welcomed by a packet they receive while homesteading. We are developing simple, short materials to distribute in that packet that include a welcome letter, a get started guide, voter registration materials, and a magnet with key elections information and contact details. Because 1/3 of our voters and nearly half of our residents live in multi-family housing we are partnering with organizations like SPARC and local property owners and building managers to distribute the same information when a resident signs a lease or purchases a condo or other multi-family housing unit. Ideally these partnerships will give city staff access to community space within larger buildings to hold brief education or drop-in sessions for residents.

**New Voters** - Residents who have never voted, typically do not vote, or who have not voted in a long time are a core focus of the work done by the Center for Civic Design. Research has revealed that these voters usually do not participate due to basic lack of understanding of the process of voting itself, and out of a lack of traditional knowledge surrounding voting. They may not have any family members or friends who vote, or may not know where to begin or what to expect. Our action-oriented guides, both online and distributed via educational pamphlets will include the step-by-step process without distracting information about how previous city elections have worked. They will also include ongoing resources to stay engaged, such as social media or subscriptions through GovDelivery texts and emails that can remind or inform voters of crucial deadlines and dates and stay active in elections.

**Occasional Voters** - These voters are likely our core audience. They are familiar with voting but may only participate in even-year or presidential year elections. They typically seek to understand the value proposition of voting in municipal elections. The change in voting method will need to be communicated; however, exit polling completed by FairVote indicated that most regular voters understood the ranking process. These voters typically have questions regarding tabulation and the path their specific vote takes after they have cast their ballot. We will be creating short pocket guides for voters that provide easy-to-understand and basic information and identify other resources for those that want to learn more. Additionally, we will be recording videos that specifically follow each potential voting scenario (ex. ranking the same candidate for all three choices, skipping a ranking, not ranking, etc.) on a ranked-choice ballot and how each scenario is tabulated and affects the outcome of a race. The videos will be short
and will hopefully encourage “occasionally engaged” voters to click through to more educational resources on our website or to attend an event in the community.

*Avid Voters* - These voters are a resource. They understand and follow elections in news media and regularly participate. They tend to vote out of a respect for the process itself or out of a sense of civic duty. Our overall outreach campaign is starting with and targeting this group in the February Park Perspective with a very detailed FAQ regarding all things ranked-choice. The same information is also available on our website. We hope these interested, active voters will become educators informally in their community or participate in volunteer events with city staff.

**Timeline:** We are focusing on a three-stage approach centered around our mock elections. Each mock election has a strategic goal or purpose and will begin a new stage of work.

*Mock Election #1* - This will be held with the St. Louis Park High School and will only be open to students, not the public. Students attending the Career Fair on April 24th will have an opportunity to vote on an issue that is important to them. Student education on ranked-choice and voting will be coordinated with the school district to take place in the weeks leading up to April 24. Students in 9th – 11th grade attend the career fair and will represent three distinct groups of voters. We hope to use this opportunity to further educate and engage youth in our partnership with St. Louis Park schools. The main goal of this mock election is to test our internal administrative procedures including ballot design and printing, equipment testing and programming, polling place procedures and materials (signage, instructions by demo judges), transmission of results, tabulation, and reporting of results. It is best to do this for the first time using a smaller, fixed number of voters and ballots.

*Mock Election #2* - This event will take place at Parktacular in June. This will serve as a major outreach event for the elections team and will allow us to talk to a general audience of voters. Anyone who wants to participate and cast a ballot is welcome, they don’t have to be registered voters and they don’t have to be 18 or older. We hope to educate people on ranked-choice voting and build awareness around the upcoming municipal election this year. We will use this to test an absentee-like procedure and the instructional materials we are required to distribute with absentee ballots. Volunteers and city staff will work with each voter to help them understand their mock ballot, get feedback on ballot design and instructional materials, and answer questions before people vote. These ballots will be run through a central count machine, similar to what happens with absentee ballots now, and then we will again perform our tabulation process and report results to the community.

*Mock Election #3* - This will be a large, city-wide event in late August/early September. We will open four precincts (one in each ward) for residents to come in and vote. Precincts will be staffed by our election judges who will go through training prior to working and will use the materials and supplies we have developed for use in precincts. This election will be run almost exactly like a real election, with a few exceptions. The polls will be open for a shorter period of time, and voters will not have to go through a check-in and registration process prior to voting. This is primarily because we want to encourage as many potential voters to participate as possible and we want to limit the need to produce and program unnecessary resources — such as loading voter data on poll pads or requiring someone to go through the registration process. We will have resources available for voters to register if they need to, but it will not be a
requirement. Also, no absentee voting will be offered for this mock election simply because we will need to dedicate our internal resources at this time of the year to preparing for the real election in November, recruiting and training election judges, and preparing for the start of absentee voting at the end of September.

This mock election will allow us to test any remaining administrative procedures, get feedback from election judges and voters prior to the real election in November, stir up some excitement and positive publicity for the upcoming election, decrease voter anxiety about ranked-choice, and further promote civic engagement.

This will also begin a busy period of outreach and educational events to promote the upcoming election, voter registration, and the opportunities available for voters to participate. We know that voters typically seek information on voting weeks to days prior to actually participating. While they may have participated in an educational session earlier in the year, the information will be much more relevant and memorable if delivered close to Election Day.
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<tr>
<th>Program/relationship</th>
<th>Purpose/goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Election Program</td>
<td>Monthly educational and collaboration session with St. Louis Park High School students who will have opportunities to learn about civic processes, collaborate on community engagement strategies, and identify future career paths in local government. Interested students will be asked to help with outreach and education activities on a regular basis and serve as election judges in November.</td>
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<td>Community Education Programs</td>
<td>The elections team will teach a series of 6 classes (one series for middle school students and one series for adults) with curriculums based on learning about civics, local government, and elections at the state and local levels.</td>
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<td>Elections Ambassador Program</td>
<td>Identified community leaders and stakeholders who can act as liaisons to connect the communities they interact with on a regular basis with resources to learn about and participate in elections and can provide feedback on barriers and effectiveness of different communication strategies. A similar type of program was used effectively in Minneapolis and also for the Vision 3.0 process in St. Louis Park.</td>
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<td>Election Judge Workgroup</td>
<td>Focus group comprised of 6-10 election judges helping to test, design and provide feedback on materials to be used during absentee voting and at the polls on Election Day, and to help develop new election judge training modules.</td>
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<td>Mock Elections</td>
<td>Three separate events where we can test internal administrative procedures, get feedback on ballot design, inform the public on how to vote in a ranked-choice elections and let voters interact with the new system and ask questions.</td>
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<td>Election Outreach Toolkit</td>
<td>Set of educational and interactive materials for civically engaged groups (League of Women Voters, Election Ambassadors, neighborhood leaders, candidates, etc.) and individuals to interact and engage with their friends, family, and neighbors on ranked-choice voting and basic elections information. Will be available online and print form in Q2 of 2019.</td>
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<td>Traveling Education Program</td>
<td>Series of lesson plans and presentations of varying lengths of time that can be used when the elections team is requested to attend meetings or events to provide information. Requests can be made directly on our website or by contacting elections staff. Each lesson plan is largely interactive and utilizes activities to engage audiences in the process of elections and how ranked-choice voting works. These activities include a board game, interactive/live online voting and tabulation elements, short videos, and worksheets to design a polling place and ballots.</td>
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<td>Neighborhood Association Program</td>
<td>The elections team plan to work with neighborhood leaders in conjunction with the new Community Organizer (Darius Gray) to engage these leaders in election outreach activities and establish opportunities for the leaders to connect the elections team with the neighborhood they serve.</td>
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<td>Boards and Commissions</td>
<td>The elections team has visited the Human Rights Commission and the Multi-Cultural Advisory Commission both to seek their advice and to engage their members in election outreach opportunities. The team is coordinating visits to other commissions with staff liaisons. Ongoing education opportunities for all members is planned.</td>
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<td>St. Louis Park Employee Training</td>
<td>The elections team will be engaging all employees in every division of the city such that they will know what ranked-choice voting is, will be able to answer very basic questions about elections and/or redirect questions they may receive in the office or the community to elections staff.</td>
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<td>Key collaborations</td>
<td>The elections team has met and will continue to meet regularly with key civic groups including the League of Women Voters, Fair Vote, and the St. Louis Park school district to educate each group, coordinate messaging, and collaborate on identified outreach needs and opportunities in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile voting</td>
<td>Pilot project that will be tested in 2019 at 2-3 traditionally underserved areas of the community to see if voter participation can be increased and to gain more information about the barriers that prevent regular participation within particular communities. Using the community outreach vehicle the elections team will take a mobile version of city hall to a specific area of the community during the absentee voting period, outside of regular office hours, and help people register to vote and/or vote early by absentee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ordinance No. 2548-18

Ordinance amending the St. Louis Park City Code Chapter 10 by adding Article I, Sections 10-3 to 10-16 related to the conduct of municipal elections

PREAMBLE

Whereas, the St. Louis Park Home Rule Charter has been amended to allow voters to elect the city’s elected officials by single-transferable voting (also known as ranked-choice voting or instant runoff voting); and

Whereas, the St. Louis Park Home Rule Charter states that the city council must provide by ordinance the method of counting votes and of breaking a tie

The City of St. Louis Park does hereby ordain:

Section 1. Chapter 10 of the St. Louis Park City Code is amended by adding Article 1, Sections 10-3 to 10-16 to provide the rules of conduct for municipal elections.

Article I. Rules of conduct for municipal elections.

10-3. Applicability.
This article applies to all municipal elections. All provisions of the St. Louis Park Home Rule Charter and Minnesota Statutes pertaining to elections also apply, to the extent they are not inconsistent with this chapter.

The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in this section:

Batch elimination means a simultaneous defeat of multiple continuing candidates for whom it is mathematically impossible to be elected.

Chief election official means the city clerk and includes the city clerk’s designee(s).

Continuing candidate means a candidate who has been neither elected nor defeated.

Declared write-in candidate(s) means a candidate(s) who has filed a written request to have write-in votes for the candidate(s) counted with the chief election official no later than seven (7) days before the general or special election.

Exhausted ballot means a ballot that cannot be advanced under any rule.

Highest continuing ranking means the ranking on a voter’s ballot with the lowest numerical value for a continuing candidate.
Mathematically eliminated means either:

1. The candidate could never win because his or her current vote total plus all votes that could possibly be transferred to him or her in future rounds (from candidates with fewer votes, tied candidates, surplus votes, and from undeclared write-in candidates) would not be enough to equal or surpass the candidate with the next higher current vote total; or

2. The candidate has a lower current vote total than a candidate who is described by (1).

Mathematically impossible to be elected means mathematically eliminated by the next higher current vote total comparison.

Maximum possible threshold means the number of votes sufficient for a candidate to be elected under a first ranked choice tabulation. In any given election, the maximum possible threshold equals the total ballots cast that include votes, undervotes, skipped rankings, and overvotes for the office, divided by the sum of one (1) plus the number of offices to be filled, then adding one (1).

Maximum Possible Threshold = \(\frac{(\text{Total ballots cast that include votes, undervotes, skipped rankings, and overvotes for the office})}{(\text{Seats to be elected} + 1)} + 1\)

An overvote occurs when a voter ranks more than one (1) candidate at the same ranking.

Partially defective ballot means a ballot that is defective to the extent that the election judges are unable to determine the voter’s intent with respect to the office being counted.

Ranked-choice voting means an election method in which voters rank candidates for an office in order of their preference and ballots are counted in rounds where votes are distributed to candidates according to the preferences marked on each ballot until one (1) candidate meets the threshold, or until two (2) candidates remain and the candidate with the greater number of votes is declared elected.

Ranked-choice voting tabulation center means the location selected by the chief election official for the tabulation of votes.

Ranking means the number assigned by a voter to a candidate to express the voter’s preference for that candidate. Ranking number one (1) is the highest ranking. A ranking of lower numerical value indicates a greater preference for a candidate than a ranking of higher numerical value.

Repeat candidate ranking occurs when a voter ranks the same candidate at multiple rankings for the office being counted.

Round means an instance of the sequences of voting tabulation steps.

Skipped ranking occurs when a voter leaves a ranking blank and ranks a candidate at a subsequent ranking.

Sum of all ranked-choice votes means the sum of all votes for a candidate at every ranking for an office, including all repeat candidate rankings.
Surplus means the total number of votes cast for an elected candidate in excess of the threshold.

Threshold means the number of votes sufficient for a candidate to be elected. In any given election, the threshold equals the total votes counted in the first round after removing partially defective ballots, divided by the sum of one (1) plus the number of offices to be filled, then adding one (1).

Threshold = ((Total votes cast)/(Seats to be elected + 1)) + 1

Transferable vote means a vote for a candidate who has been defeated.

Totally defective ballot means a ballot that is defective to the extent that the election judges are unable to determine the voter’s intent for any office on the ballot.

Undeclared write-in candidate means a write-in candidate who is not a declared write-in candidate.

Undervote means an instance when a voter does not rank any candidates for an office.

10-5. Ballots.

(a) Ballot format.

1. When there are three (3) or more candidates for a single office, a ballot must allow a voter to rank at least three (3), but not more than six (6), candidates for each office in order of preference and must also allow the voter to add write-in candidates.
2. A ballot must include instructions to voters that clearly indicate how to mark the ballot so as to be read by the election judges conducting the count, or if voting equipment is to be used, so as to be read by the voting equipment used to tabulate results.
3. A ballot must include instructions to voters that clearly indicate how to rank candidates in order of the voter’s preference.
4. A ballot must indicate the number of seats to be elected for each office.

(b) Mixed-election method ballots. If elections are held in which ranked-choice voting is used in addition to other methods of voting, the ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting elections must be on the same ballot if possible, with ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting portions clearly separated on the ballot. If placement of all offices to be elected cannot be placed on a single ballot, a separate ballot may be used for those offices to be elected using ranked-choice voting. The city may deviate from the standard ballot order of offices to allow separation of ranked-choice voting and non-ranked-choice voting elections.

(c) Ballot format rules. The chief election official shall establish administrative rules for ballot format for each voting mechanism that is selected. All rules shall be adopted in accordance with this section.

10-6. Ranked-choice voting tabulation center.

The chief election official shall designate at least one (1) location to serve as the ranked-choice voting tabulation center. Tabulation of votes must be conducted as described in this chapter.

10-7. Write-in votes.

A candidate for municipal office who wants write-in votes for the candidate to be counted as votes must file a written request with the chief election official no later than seven (7) days
before the general or special election. The chief election official shall provide copies of the form to make the request.

10-8. Tabulation of votes; in general.
(a) Precinct tabulation. When the hours for voting have ended and all voting has concluded, the election judges in each precinct shall record and post the number of votes at each ranking on the ballot. The election judges must then securely transfer all election night materials and ballots from the precinct to the location designated by the chief election official. Upon receipt, election night materials and ballot shall be secured.

(b) Notice of recess in count. At any time following receipt of materials, the chief election official may declare a recess. Notice shall be posted of such recess, which must include the date, time and location at which the process of recording and tabulating votes will resume and the reason for the recess.

(c) Recording write-in votes. At a time set by the chief election official, the judges of the election shall convene at a ranked-choice voting tabulation center to record the names and number of votes received by each declared write-in candidate. The number of votes received by undeclared write-in candidates will be recorded as a group, by office.

(a) Applicability. This section applies to a ranked-choice voting election in which one (1) seat in an office is to be filled from a single set of candidates on the ballot. The method of tabulating ranked-choice votes for single-seat elections as described in this section must be known as the “single-seat transferable vote” method of tabulation.

(b) First ranked choice tabulation. A first ranked choice tabulation shall be done under this clause before a tabulation as described in clause (c). A first ranked choice tabulation will consist of a first round only. Under the first ranked choice tabulation, the vote total will be the sum of number one (1) ranked votes. The maximum possible threshold must be determined. If the vote total for a candidate, other than an undeclared or a declared write-in candidate, is equal to or greater than the maximum possible threshold, that candidate is declared elected and the tabulation is complete. If no candidate,
other than an undeclared write-in candidate, has a vote total that is equal to or greater than the threshold, a new round begins and the tabulation must continue.

b. At the beginning of the second round only, all undeclared write-in candidates and all candidates for whom it is mathematically impossible to be elected must be defeated simultaneously. For rounds subsequent to the second round, all candidates for whom it is mathematically impossible to be elected must be defeated simultaneously. Votes for the defeated candidates must be transferred to each ballot’s next-ranked continuing candidate, except votes for candidates defeated in the final round are not transferred if, by their defeat, the number of continuing candidates is reduced to one (1). If no candidate can be defeated under this clause, the tabulation must continue.

c. The candidate with the fewest votes is defeated. Votes for the defeated candidate must be transferred to each ballot’s next-ranked continuing candidate, except votes for candidates defeated in the final round are not transferred if, by their defeat, the number of continuing candidates is reduced to one (1). Ties between candidates with the fewest votes must be resolved by lot by the chief election official. The candidate chosen by lot must be defeated. The result of the tie resolution must be recorded and reused in the event of a recount.

d. The procedures in clauses a. to c. must be repeated until one (1) candidate reaches the threshold, or until only one (1) continuing candidate remains. If only one continuing candidate remains, that continuing candidate must be elected. In the case of a tie between two (2) or more continuing candidates, the tie must be resolved by lot by the chief election official. The result of the tie resolution must be recorded and reused in the event of a recount. A tied candidate chosen by lot must be defeated. When only one (1) continuing candidate remains after a tie has been resolved by lot by the chief election official, that continuing candidate must be elected and the votes of the tied candidate chosen by lot will be retained.

2. When a skipped ranking, overvote or repeat candidate ranking is encountered on a ballot, that ballot shall count towards the highest continuing ranking that is not a skipped ranking, an overvote or repeat candidate ranking. If any ballot cannot be advanced because no further continuing candidates are ranked on that ballot, or because the only votes for further continuing candidates ranked on that ballot are either overvotes or repeat candidate rankings, the ballot shall not count towards any candidate in that round or in subsequent rounds for the office being counted.

10-10. Ties resolved by lot.
(a) Who resolves a tie by lot. The chief election official must resolve a tie by lot.

(b) Notice to candidates with tied votes. The chief election official must notify all candidates with tied votes that the tie will be resolved by lot. This notice must be sent at least one (1) hour prior to resolving the tie by lot. The notice must be sent through a medium that would generally be capable of reaching a person within the one-hour period, such as face-to-face, a fax, an email, an instant message, a text, a video chat, a telephone call, or a voicemail. The chief election official is not required to confirm that the notice is received by a candidate before resolving a tie by lot. A tie may be resolved by lot even though some or all of the candidates who have tied votes are not present.
(c) **Witnesses.** The resolving of the tie by lot must be witnessed by two (2) election judges who are members of different major political parties.

(d) **Video.** The resolving of a tie by lot may be recorded through any audio and visual recording technology.

(e) **Media.** The chief election official may allow the media to view the resolution of a tie by lot.

(f) **Procedures.** The chief election official may establish written procedures for implementing this section.

### 10-11. Reporting results.

(a) **Precinct summary statement.** Each precinct must print a precinct summary statement, which must minimally include the number of votes in the first ranking for each candidate.

(b) **Ranked-choice voting tabulation center summary statement.** The ranked-choice voting tabulation center must print a summary statement, which must include the following information: total votes cast, number of undervotes, number of totally defective and spoiled ballots, threshold calculation, total first choice rankings for all candidates, round-by-round tabulation results, including simultaneous batch eliminations and defeated candidate transfers, and exhausted ballots at each round.

(c) **Election abstract.** The election abstract must include the information required in the ranked-choice voting tabulation center summary statement, with the addition of the number of registered voters by precinct, the number of Election Day voter registrations, the number of absentee voters, and all other information required by the St. Louis Park Home Rule Charter.

### 10-12. Recounts.

(a) **Required recounts.** A candidate defeated in the final round of tabulation may request a recount of the votes cast for the nomination or election to that office if the difference between the final round vote total for that candidate and for a winning candidate is less than the percentage threshold as provided by Minnesota Statutes, Section 204C.36.

1. Candidates shall file a written request for the recount with the city clerk. All requests shall be filed during the time for notice of contest of election for which a recount is sought.

2. Upon receipt of a request made pursuant to this section, the city shall recount the votes for a municipal office at the expense of the city.

(b) **Discretionary candidate recounts.** Candidates defeated in the final round of tabulation when the vote difference is greater than the difference required by clause (a) above, and candidates defeated in an earlier round of counting, may request a recount in the manner provided in this section at the candidate’s own expense.

1. The votes shall be recounted as provided in this section if the requesting candidate files with the city clerk a bond, cash, or surety in an amount set by the city for payment of the recount expenses.

(c) **Notice of contest.** Time for notice of contest of election to a municipal office which is recounted pursuant to this section shall begin to run upon certification of the results by the governing body of the municipality.
(d) **Scope of recount.** A recount conducted as provided in this section is limited in scope to the determination of the number of votes validly cast for the office to be recounted. Only the ballots cast in the election and summary statements certified by the election judges may be considered in the recount process.

### 10-13. Count procedures.
The chief election official shall establish administrative procedures for the tabulation of votes in accordance with rules for counting the votes contained in sections of this chapter.

### 10-14. Electronic voting systems.
All provisions of Minnesota Statutes pertaining to electronic voting equipment systems apply, to the extent they are not inconsistent with this chapter. Any voting equipment system used to conduct an election under this section must be authorized by the county auditor pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 206.58.

### 10-15. Testing of voting systems.
The chief election official shall have the voting system tested to verify that the system will correctly mark ballots using all methods supported by the system, and count the votes cast for all candidates and on all questions per Minnesota Statute Section 206.83. In addition to all requirements of Minnesota Statute Section 206.83, the equipment must be tested to ensure that each ranking for each candidate is recorded properly, and must be tested to ensure the accuracy of software used to perform vote transfers and produce results.

### 10-16. Post-election review of voting system and tabulation of results.
(a) **Selection of test date; notice.** At canvass, the chief election official must select by lot the offices and precincts to be reviewed and set the date, time and place for the post-election review. Post-election review is not required for a hand count election.

(b) **Scope and conduct of test.** The post-election review must be conducted, in public, of a sample of ballots cast for at least one (1) single-seat ranked-choice voting election for city council.

(c) **Single seat test.** At canvass, the chief election official shall select, by lot, a total of two (2) precincts. Using the actual ballots cast in the two (2) precincts selected, the judges of the election shall conduct a hand count of ballots cast for the one (1) or two (2) offices of council member. Using procedures called for in this chapter and accompanying rules, the judges shall count and record the ballots cast.

(d) **Standard of acceptable performance by voting system.** A comparison of the results compiled by the voting system with the results compiled by the judges of election performing the hand count must show that the results of the electronic voting system differed by no more than the applicable percentage threshold, as provided by Minnesota Statutes, section 204C.36, from the hand count of the sample tested. Valid votes that have been marked by the voter outside the vote targets or using a manual marking device that cannot be read by the voting system must not be included in making the determination whether the voting system has met the standard of acceptable performance.

(e) **Additional review if needed.** Additional review(s) may be required as follows:

   (1) **Additional precinct review.** If a test under clause (c) reveals a difference greater than the applicable percentage threshold, as provide by Minnesota Statutes, Section...
204C.36, in at least one (1) precinct of an office, the chief election official must immediately publicly select by lot two (2) additional precincts of the same office for review. The additional precinct review must be completed within two (2) days after the precincts are selected and the results immediately reported to the county auditor.

(2) Additional office review. If the additional precinct review also indicates a difference in the vote totals that is greater than the applicable percentage threshold, as provided by Minnesota Statutes, section 204C.36, in at least one (1) precinct of an office, the chief election official must conduct a review of the ballots from all the remaining precincts in the office being reviewed. This review must be completed no later than two (2) weeks after the canvass.

(f) Report of results. Upon completion of the post-election review, the chief election official must immediately report the results to the county auditor and make those results public.

(g) Update of vote totals. If the post-election review under this section results in a change in the number of votes counted for any candidate, the revised vote totals must be incorporated in the official result from those precincts.

(h) Effect on voting systems. If a voting system is found to have failed to record votes accurately and in the manner provided by this chapter, the voting system may not be used at another election until it has been approved for use by the county auditor, pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 206.58. In addition, the county auditor may order the city to conduct a hand recount of all ballots cast in the election.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect fifteen days after passage and publication according to law.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Reading</th>
<th>November 19, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Reading</td>
<td>December 3, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Publication</td>
<td>December 13, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Ordinance takes effect</td>
<td>December 28, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reviewed for administration: Adopted by the City Council December 3, 2018

Thomas K. Harmening, City Manager Jake Spano, Mayor

Attest: Approved as to form and execution:

Melissa Kennedy, City Clerk Soren Mattick, City Attorney
The St. Louis Park Charter Commission is active and met two times in 2018. The Commission approved one amendment to the Charter as outlined below.

Charter Amendments

On March 13, 2018 the Charter Commission approved a recommendation to amend Chapter 4, of the St. Louis Park Home Rule Charter by adding Section 4.08 to provide for the voting method to be used at municipal elections. The amendment provides that voters elect the city’s elected officers by single transferable voting, also known as ranked-choice voting or instant-runoff voting. On May 7, 2018 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2535-18 approving the recommended amendment. The amendment became effective on August 15, 2018.

Charter Review

The Charter Commission held elections for officers at its annual meeting on March 13, 2018. Commissioner Sara Maaske was elected to the position of Chair, Commissioner David Dyer, was elected to the position of Vice Chair, and Commissioner Terry Dwyer was elected to the position of Secretary.

New members appointed in 2018:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date Appointed</th>
<th>Term Expiration</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Ault</td>
<td>April 12, 2018</td>
<td>July 1, 2021</td>
<td>Appointed to fill Vacancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respectfully Submitted: Sara Maaske, Chair
5911 Oxford St., Apt. 9
St. Louis Park MN  55416
612-747-1599

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