

December 18, 2025

ELECTION CODE COMMITTEE MEETING

4:00 PM

COMMITTEEMEMBERS PRESENT

Chair/Councilmember Tricia Canonico
Mayor Jeni Arndt
Councilmember Julie Pignataro (remote)

STAFF PRESENT

Delynn Coldiron
Carrie Daggett

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Robbie Moreland congratulated the City Clerk's Office on a successful ranked choice voting election and commended the public outreach efforts. She questioned why so much information was provided on ballot measures but so little on candidates. She also expressed concern with navigating Web Link where the campaign finance reports were posted and suggested improvements could be made in the future. Additionally, she noted this Committee spent a great deal of time discussing the difference between independent expenditures and political committees. She stated two political committees were formed which did not intend to raise money and questioned why they were not told to do independent expenditures instead of forming political committees. She stated there are issues with those committees spending money after the September 30th filing deadline which should be discussed by the ECC.

Moreland also expressed concern about coordination between two candidates and one of the non-profit political committees she just mentioned. She stated coordination should be better outlined and defined and the City should more closely align with the State on the issue. Additionally, she suggested the ECC should discuss the findings of the independent auditor that was hired, continue discussing the dollar for dollar or small donor matching program for candidate elections, and establish an independent election oversight commission as part of its 2026 agenda.

Eric Fried discussed Fort Collins exit polling that was done by Fair Vote which indicated 69% of voters found ballots to be easy to complete and 16.7% found them hard to complete, with 72% being satisfied with their voting experience. Additionally, 62.1% of respondents supported using ranked choice voting in the future.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOLLOW-UP

Mayor Arndt thanked the speakers for their information and noted she also received some information from the City Clerk's Office regarding the election.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 3, 2025

1. Approval of Minutes

The purpose of this item is to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025, Election Code Committee meeting.

Mayor Arndt moved, seconded by Councilmember Pignataro, to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2025 meeting. Minutes were approved unanimously.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

F. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

2. Debrief from the 2025 Election.

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the 2025 election, collect feedback from the Election Code Committee related to the 2025 election, and to collect suggested items to move forward to the 2026 ECC Work Plan.

Tina Harris, Larimer County Clerk and Recorder, and Michelle Mihulka, Larimer County Director of Elections, introduced themselves.

City Clerk Coldiron provided general information about the November 2025 election and included items. She noted it was the first time the City provided a voter information guide. She discussed the finance reports and complaints that were filed, noting all complaints have been closed. She stated the final cost of the election was approximately \$176,300. She discussed the public outreach conducted regarding ranked choice voting and commended the various partners that provided assistance throughout the election.

Michelle Mihulka Larimer County Director of Elections, stated this was a milestone election due to the ranked voting element and noted there are many similarities between ranked voting and plurality voting. She discussed the close collaboration between the City and County regarding public outreach and the election. She further discussed the election testing and mock elections as well as the tabulation and adjudication process. She also discussed the results posting process and website and the two risk-limiting audits, one of which was done for the ranked choice voting Mayoral election. She noted both audits were completed with no discrepancies. Ms. Mihulka discussed the election costs and noted the two-card ballot was the main cost driver.

Mayor Arndt commended the team and collaborative work. She commented on providing a presentation on ranked choice voting and thanked staff for completing the audits.

Councilmember Pignataro commended the visual that was provided regarding ranked choice voting.

City Clerk Coldiron outlined the Code and Charter changes that were made prior to the election and discussed the campaign finance reporting requirements and common issues found with the submitted reports. She also outlined what changes were made regarding the reports during the election process. Additionally, she reported on the election complaints received.

Councilmember Pignataro asked if it was considered a complaint if the person who did the report oversight found an issue. City Clerk Coldiron replied those items were not considered complaints, though many of the issues she was working on were based on complaints from others.

City Clerk Coldiron outlined possible changes needed moving forward, including further Code refinements related to when the City files a complaint, guidelines around when complaints can be submitted, and refinements to the campaign finance spreadsheet.

Councilmember Canonico stated the reporting requirements need to be consistent throughout the election cycle and it could be beneficial if the reporting could be done on software that is more equally available. City Clerk Coldiron concurred.

Councilmember Pignataro asked if candidates are given brief summaries of their responsibilities to submit campaign finance reports when they opt to run, noting that would be particularly important if fines are going to be implemented. City Clerk Coldiron noted responsibilities are outlined on the website and in the candidate guidelines, and that information is part of the candidate orientation; however, she concurred a one-page document could be developed that may be helpful.

Ms. Mihulka stated there were 3,483 hits on the electronic voter guide and the number of voters was around 57,000.

Mayor Arndt noted she received feedback that the increases in campaign donation limits were reasonable but not excessive and also received feedback from Shirley Peel, who has run in both a ranked voting and plurality election, in support of the ranked voting process.

Councilmember Pignataro stated it will be interesting to see the new Councilmember perspectives on next year's ECC.

Councilmember Canonico concurred with Ms. Moreland that the Web Link portal was difficult to navigate. City Clerk Coldiron stated they have just been given more access to be able to make some repairs. She commended the work of the ECC over the last four and a half years.

Mayor Arndt also commended the work of the ECC.

G. REVIEW OF UPCOMING CALENDAR

None.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.