

Election Code Committee Meeting

Election Debrief

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Debrief from the 2025
Election

Feedback from ECC

2026 Work Plan –
Suggestions for Items to be
Considered by next ECC



Debrief from 2025 Election

2025 Election – We Did It!!



Amazing Partnerships



Ranked Voting Election Administration

The broad strokes of a ranked voting election are the same as any other November election. We:

1. Sign an intergovernmental agreement.
2. Program the election.
3. Test the election.
4. Verify, tabulate, and adjudicate ballots.
5. Post election results.
6. Audit the election.

The difference is in the details.

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Intergovernmental Agreement

Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins entered into an intergovernmental agreement in April, 2025. This agreement, in addition to the usual details of election coordination, also:

- Outlined shared responsibilities of conducting a ranked voting election, including voter education and outreach.
- Provided an estimate of costs unique to ranked voting.

But collaboration between the County and City actually began much earlier:

- The County and City officially met to “kick off” the ranked voting election in January, 2025.
- City and County continued to meet monthly to share key updates, educational materials, and public communications.

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Election Programming

The County programmed the 2025 Coordinated Election, including ranked voting contests for the City of Fort Collins Mayor and Council Districts 1 and 3. This was only possible after:

- Exhaustive review of Rule and Law.
- Communication with the voting system provider and Secretary of State staff.
- Testing, testing, testing!
- Conducting mock elections.

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Tabulation and Adjudication

The process of verifying, extracting, prepping, and tabulating ballots does not differ between standard and ranked contests. Ranked voting does, however, result in additional adjudication.

When a voter makes a mistake on their ballot, election judges must examine that ballot for “voter intent” and make any necessary corrections. What this looks like:

- A voter crosses out a mark in Round 6.
- Election judges interpret the correction.
- Election judges tell the system which mark to count.

In general, more bubbles = more adjudication.

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Results Posting

The County's results posting schedule was the same for all measures and races in the 2025 Coordinated Election.

The process for posting ranked voting results required:

- Updates to the Larimer County results posting website.
- Integration of visualization software.
- Additional results reports (for each ranked contest).

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Risk-Limiting Audit

The County audited each ranked voting race before the canvass board certified the election.

In practice, the County conducted two audits:

1. The official 2025 Coordinated Election Risk-Limiting Audit.
Target Contests = State/County.
2. The pilot 2025 Coordinated Election Risk-Limiting Audit.
Target Contest = City of Fort Collins Mayor.

These milestone audits were the first time a ranked voting contest was tested in a risk-limiting audit using the Colorado Risk-Limiting Audit (CORLA) tool.

Ranked Voting Election Administration – Costs

Unique costs associated with ranked voting:

- Voting System License: \$10,000.00
- Instructional Insert: \$12,212.97
- Election Judge Staffing Increase – Adjudication: \$1,894.46
- **TOTAL: \$24,107.43**

Unique costs associated with 2-card ballot:

- Printing and Insertion: \$52,372.84
- Election Judge Staffing Increase – Extraction: \$14,066.66
- **TOTAL: \$66,439.50**

Code Changes Made Prior to Election



July 2024: Charter Amendments for Articles VIII (General), IX (Recall) and X (Initiative and Referendum)

- Modernized language on all
- Modified time computations on all
 - ✓ Move to business days in increments of 7
 - ✓ Clarified if process was going to remain calendar days
- Reorganization of materials for clarity
- Updated processes
 - ✓ Review periods
 - ✓ Simplification (easier review process and elimination of cure provisions)
 - ✓ Petitions – City Clerk prepares general statement, simplified review process, tightened timeframe protests, requires initiative measures to be voted on at next timely November election

February 2025: Code Changes

- Revisions to enforcement process
- Revisions to campaign contributions including adding additional reports
- Removal of write-in candidates
- Revision of requirements for petition circulators (not having to read entire petition and attachments unless asked, timing, etc.)
- Revisions to various sections to align with the City's Charter

April 2025: Proposed Charter Changes

- Resulted in 6 Charter amendments moving forward to the 2025 Ballot

✓ All but one was approved

2025 Election – Campaign Finance Reports



2025 Election:

- ✓ 141 Reports Received
- ✓ 5 late reports were received
- ✓ 75 amendments were requested and received

- 6 reports were required prior to changes. We now require 7 reports (more if committee is registered prior to July)

- ✓ **2 weeks** after filing committee registration (then on 1st day of quarter until September) - NEW
- ✓ **July 1, 2025** - (1st day of quarter until Sept. 2, 2025 report) - NEW
- ✓ **Sept. 2, 2025** (63 days before election) - NEW
- ✓ **Sept. 30, 2025** (35 days before election)
- ✓ **Oct. 14, 2025** (21 days before election)
- ✓ **Oct. 21, 2025** (14 days before election)
- ✓ **Oct. 31, 2025** (by noon - Friday before election)
- ✓ **Dec. 2, 2025** (28 days after election) - AMENDED
- ✓ **Jan. 13, 2026** (70 days after election)

216 Reports Processed

2 Candidates
Unresponsive to Filing
Deadlines

Common Issues Found:

- ✓ People neglected to sign or date the report
- ✓ Not showing the correct report period
- ✓ Report signed by the wrong person
- ✓ Not submitting the report to all parties (City and 3rd Party)
- ✓ Not understanding that the ending balance of the prior report needed to match the beginning balance of current report
- ✓ Not completing or making errors with cumulative totals
- ✓ Changing or eliminating the formula in the spreadsheet resulting in calculation errors
- ✓ Incomplete names/addresses for contributors and expenditures
- ✓ Not completing the column designating whether something was a loan

Changes made:

- ✓ Spreadsheet was slightly modified to help make it clear what field entries were required
- ✓ Criteria checklists developed to assist with review reports
- ✓ Providing third party with filed spreadsheets to assist in cross-checking and calculations

Very helpful related to Campaign Finance!

- ✓ Especially with the extra efforts required for Ranked Voting

Budgeted for \$40K; actual - \$15,640

Improvements needed:

- ✓ More training on Code provisions related to campaign finance and enforcement
- ✓ Shared file locations that can be accessed by third party
- ✓ More timely uploads and sharing of initial committee information
- ✓ Better tracking of amendments
- ✓ Training on complaint process so they can assist

36 Complaints Received:

- ✓ 21 complaints received by one complainant
- ✓ 11 complaints received by another
- ✓ 4 complaints by separate individuals

Complaint Types:

- 1 – No reported contributions/expenditures yet activity was occurring (i.e., website)
- 1 – Funds on hand with no identification of where they were from
- 1 – LLC reporting
- 1 – LLC revised report did not include dates
- 1 – Paypal processing fees not itemized
- 2 – Date listed at the top of form was incorrect, registered agent did not date the form, registered agent did not include title.
- 2 – No separate bank account
- 2 – Question about where donations were actually going (committee or another)
- 2 – Committee making expenditures with no contributions
- 2 – Cumulative totals section not completed or incorrect totals in form
- 3 – Contributions in excess of limits
- 4 – No paid for by listed
- 6 – No committee registered but participating in election
- 8 – Committee coordinating with another committee

2025 Election – Lessons Learned and Possible Changes Needed



- Further Code refinements and/or administrative procedures need to be developed around enforcement process
 - ✓ When does City file complaints
 - ✓ Should there be some standard steps that if a report is late, after XX days there is an automatic fine (may be other items where this should apply) – would be good to have this set out in Code
- Further refinements to Campaign Finance Spreadsheet or different way to file
 - ✓ Could research systems that do this; however, we know they are costly
 - ✓ Would be helpful in filing, tracking, etc.
- Changes to allow someone to get started with some things such as creating a bank account prior to filing a registration since funds are required to do this, but we require proof of a bank account at time of registration
- Changes around 3rd Party Assistance:
 - ✓ More training on Code provisions related to campaign finance and enforcement
 - ✓ Shared file locations that can be accessed by third party
 - ✓ More timely uploads and sharing of initial committee information
 - ✓ Better tracking of amendments
 - ✓ Training on complaint process so they can assist



Feedback from ECC



2026 Work Plan – Suggested Items for the Next ECC Committee



Questions?