



Legislation Text

File #: 2014-0441, **Version:** 1

Clerk 02/12/2015

AN ORDINANCE related to elections; establishing the position of deputy director of the department of elections and designating the position as a key subordinate unit requiring council confirmation of appointments to the position; amending Ordinance 11955, Section 12, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.16.100 and adding a new section to K.C.C. chapter 2.16.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. The proper administration of elections is an essential function of county government in Washington state. Public confidence in the prompt and accurate counting of ballots is of the utmost importance to our democratic society. Conducting elections also requires numerous other important administrative matters including voter registration, processing of filings for candidates and measures, and the publication of voters' pamphlets.
2. Public confidence in the persons who provide and protect our elections requires a selection process offering the greatest possible public scrutiny. Delegation of these vital duties by the elected director to an appointed official requires a process for careful consideration of the professional qualifications of the official.
3. On February 4, 2003, the King County council approved Ordinance 14570, which required council confirmation of the manager of the records, election and licensing division and the superintendent of elections, the two key positions then responsible for administering elections in King County. On November 19, 2007, the council approved Ordinance 15971 which established

the elections division and designated the manager of the division as a key subordinate unit subject to council confirmation.

4. On November 4, 2008, the voters of King County approved Initiative 25, which established the office of an elected county director of elections to replace the position of the appointed manager of the elections division.

5. On November 18, 2008, the King County council approved Ordinance 16302, which established qualifications for the office of county director of elections, including the requirement that no later than thirty months after having been elected or appointed to the office of county director of elections, the director shall have earned the certification of elections administrator from the Washington state Office of the Secretary of State, and shall meet all requirements required of an elections administrator by the Secretary of State.

6. On June 16, 2009, the King County council approved Ordinance 16557, related to conducting elections entirely by mail, and affirmed the continued importance of the superintendent of elections in conducting elections in King County.

7. On September 4, 2014, the county director of elections transmitted to the King County council notification of the director's intent to reorganize the department of elections, to abolish the position of superintendent of elections and to create a new position of deputy director.

8. Because of the continued importance of ensuring fair and accurate elections, it is vital that the new position of deputy director of the department of elections be held to the same level of scrutiny as the previous position of superintendent of elections and that appointees to this position possess the necessary professional qualifications to assist the county director of elections in managing elections in King County.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

NEW SECTION. SECTION 1. There is hereby added to K.C.C. chapter 2.16 a new section to read as

follows:

A. The department of elections, as identified in Section 350.20.50 of the King County Charter, shall be managed by the county director of elections who shall perform the duties specified by general law.

B. The department of elections is responsible for:

1. Coordinating and recording the registration of voters in the county;
2. Conducting all special and general elections held in the county;
3. Creating and printing the King County voter's pamphlet;
4. Maintaining and being the official repository of political boundary maps, geographic information systems data and of the King County copies of campaign financial disclosure forms; and
5. Administering other public and nonpublic elections, as required by state law and county code and administrative rules.

C. The director may delegate powers and duties in performing the functions in subsection B of this section to a deputy director.

D. The deputy director of the department of elections must be a certified elections administrator and continue to meet all certification requirements of the Washington state Office of the Secretary of State.

SECTION 2. Ordinance 11955, Section 12, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.16.100 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

A. Exemptions from the requirements of the career service personnel system shall be consistent with the provisions of Sections 550, 350.10 and 350.20 of the King County Charter. Key subordinate units, as determined by the county council, and departmental divisions shall be considered to be executive departments. Divisions of administrative offices shall be considered to be administrative offices for the purpose of determining the applicability of the charter provisions.

B. The county administrative officer, directors, chief officers and supervisors of departments, administrative offices, divisions, key subordinate units and other units of county government as required by law

shall be exempt from the requirements and provisions of the career service personnel system.

C.1. The following are determined by the council to be key subordinate units due to the nature of the programs involved and their public policy implications and appointments to these positions shall be subject to confirmation by the council:

- a. the chief information officer of the administrative office of information resource management;
- b. ~~((the manager of the elections division;~~
- e. ~~the superintendent of elections in the elections division))~~ the deputy director of the department of elections; and

~~((d.))~~ c. the manager of the records and licensing services division.

2. When an ordinance is enacted designating a position as a key subordinate unit, no person then serving in the position shall continue to serve for more than ninety days after such enactment, unless reappointed by the executive and confirmed by the council.

D. If an administrative assistant or a confidential secretary, or both, for each director, chief officer of an administrative office and supervisor of a key subordinate unit are authorized, those positions are exempt from the requirements and provisions of the career service personnel system.