

Survey Comments

RE: Your question on workload. NOW the workload is more of a "normal" workload. DURING THE PRIMARY and GENERAL elections, I regularly worked 70 and 80+ hour weeks. So there is a real distinction between "then" and "now." RE: Training/Equipment. When the switch was made to DIMS, I felt that the initial VENDOR training was not frequent or thorough enough and the program also had some problems--which were later solved. Before and during the Primary election, detailed instructions on computer task procedures were not in place. They were in place for the General election. RE: Knowledge of election laws. My experience early on was that election law wasn't or shouldn't be a concern - I was only supposed to be concerned with a very narrow task of data entry for one procedure. I asked what tasks were performed before or after my tasks and how they all worked together. I was told that I didn't need to know that information. Very little interest was shown in any ideas or suggestions I made. I have since been assigned to work in another part of elections and the atmosphere is MUCH, MUCH more positive. Suggestions are valued and a much better level of communications -- up and down -- are evident. RE: Morale. Evaluators should understand that most of us talk with members of the public - daily - and that many of these conversations display intense anger regarding elections and the mistakes that were made. Other conversations accuse us personally of fraud or "stealing" the election. Despite this form of stress, I feel that my own morale is high and I am confident in my manager and in our senior leadership.

There is no communication in my section of the elections office. My supervisor does not pass information to me, nor does he respond to my inquiries for information. I have brought this to the superintendents attention on more than one occasion but he does nothing. The root of most of the problems is and has always been communication. I think it is fairly obvious that I rose concerns for many months about issues we were having and these concerns fell on deaf ears. And now I am the one being held responsible for it. The problems in the KC Elections office will not go away until EVERYONE is held accountable for their actions, not just the end of the line people. Everyone in the office should be treated the same way, favoritism has no place in elections yet it is a huge problem. Until everyone is accountable for the entire operation these problems will continue. I am on leave, and my staff are on leave, because we are held to a higher

standard than the rest of the office. We are not responsible for the system issues. We are not responsible for signature images. But we are held responsible for those issues, so no one else in the office ever worries about having to do a stand up job. Management has decided that they did nothing wrong, even though myself and those that work for me all brought these issues to them and they ignored us, they said we are the problem. Well, when they set the example why should anyone else change? I hope that eventually someone will find a way to make that office work well, I think if someone listens more to what the workers say and less to what sounds good on paper the real issues may get resolved. Thank you for listening, Nicole Way.

I would like to say that I think the Director and the Superintendent are very intelligent regarding election law and very naive about elections in King County. King County has an atmosphere in the public and the media to sensationalize every error. This is what I don't think they understood. While I am not saying that I am sloppy about my work and the work in my section things do happen and they are pounced on by the parties and the media. The superintendent said to me when he was first introducing himself to me that "there's a new sheriff in town". I thought that was quite cocky for someone who has never supervised a staff this large and who came from a small town where people all know each other and when they have problems they actually talk them out like reasonable people. Here it seems everyone calls the media first and gets on the news without even calling us. Another major problem this past election season was the communication. I am one of the assistant superintendents and I got all of my information from the media first. The only people in the know were the Director, Superintendent, Garth Fell (an assistant superintendent), and the media person on staff. I have more things that bother me about last year but I am finished writing here.

I do not understand how certain people can be given the positions they're currently in. It can't be because of their experience or expertise. Bill Huennekens has the personality of a blank wall and has no people skills whatsoever. When bringing someone through the office to meet the staff, he looked around and said " There's no one here, only temps". He's done that twice. I'd like to see him run an election without the temps. During his testimony when asked if you ran a ballot through the accuvote twice, would it count it twice, he answered "yes". And he's Superintendent of Elections. He should be fired. And Nicole Way, she didn't know the job when she applied for it, she obviously still doesn't, and she doesn't work. She didn't when she was in the Admin Bldg, and from what I've been told, she didn't at

MBOS either. The only reason she's in that position is due to her friendship with a HR employee who she's referred to as "my mentor". Actually, she did work, just not County work. She ran her husband's construction business from her desk. We've all heard her phone conversations, they had nothing to do with County election business. During her testimony when asked if we register people without their signatures, she said yes. And she's in charge of mail ballots. That's pretty scary. In all my years here I've never seen anything run like the way King County runs things. We need more permanent staff. I believe Mr. Sims said whatever we needed, just tell him and he'd get it. Well they finally posted several positions, people applied for them, and then it closed. Why does it take months and months to fill a couple of vacancies? Why can't they ever do anything in a timely manner? This whole election snafu is a total embarrassment. Whenever anyone asks where I work I'm humiliated before I even say anything. I'm tired of dealing with psychotic republicans who have huge persecution complexes. I'm tired of voters who call in and end up yelling at us, convinced we're tampering with their voting records. The morale here is at an all time low, and something needs to be done.

If the leadership of our department is not replaced, there is no hope that our performance will get any better. The most important person to get rid of is Sean Beauffiu. His sole function is to act as a "hatchet man" to enforce unreasonable work rules and lie to the workers while stealing their money through administrative decisions that have no basis in fact. Garth Fell is the next most important person to replace. He is a control freak who will not tolerate disagreement with his mind set. He also lays down work rules he refuses to follow. Get rid of Bill Hennkins and Dean Logan next. They are small town boys with no experience in running a large elections operation. They can not manage people and do not have the ability to turn our department around. Carlos is responsible for heading Snohomish County's department when they adopted a paperless system. He should be replaced ASAP. Keep Harry and Julie Moore. They at least try to put in a day's work and are committed to obeying the law. Clean house or morale among us worker bees who do all of the actual work in this department will never improve. I am so disgusted at the conduct of our supposed leadership, I want to puke. They are life-time bureouctats who are lazy, incompetent, and rule-bound. Don't let them get away with avoiding the consequences of their actions. I can talk this way because I was placed on Administrative Leave well before the General Election because I would not shut up about our lack of preparation. I was not brought back until after the final certification of the hand recount in January. Dean Logan had me sitting at home

drawing full pay and doing nothing for it because I told my supervisor to tell Garth, Bill, and Dean that I would go public if we went into the General as ill-prepared as we were at the end of September, 2004. I watched the whole fiasco as an outsider who was ordered to have no contact with anyone in the department whatsoever. Thus, I can say thankfully that I share NO responsibility for our total melt-down during the General and afterward. We well deserve the appellation of the "worst election department in the United States."

I am concerned there may be hurt feelings as a result of this survey. Employees are taken advantage of as far as work schedule and being expected to put their personal lives on hold for the sake of elections. We rely way too much on temporary employees for detailed and highly important work, and then these employees are not treated with consideration. Training is far less than sufficient and employee concerns are hardly ever resolved if they are even acknowledged. Basic communication from management is almost nonexistent. We often hear about what is going on in our own office from tv, radio, and newspapers before we are made aware of it by management. This leads to a sense of uncertainty and a feeling that we are not being treated with courtesy and respect. I am, however, proud of the service we provide in spite of the fact that we are treated by the rest of our community as incompetent criminals.

Communication and "following-up" on issues is basically non-existent. Higher supervisory staff members need to follow rules, laws, and instruction whether they agree with the rules, laws and instructions or not instead of choosing what they want. Making co-workers actually work instead of sleeping all day would help too. Have higher expectations on completing work in a correct and timely matter instead of saying that a co-worker can't answer phones because they don't know our rules. They should be taught the rules and how to appropriately answer the phones.

In answering the questions, I found that I had conflicting sentiments. I am proud of the work we do at elections, but I feel that it is difficult for me to keep doing it in light of the external criticism that will surely continue through the upcoming elections. I know that most of the people that I work with are doing the very best they can in a very difficult situation and I respect them for it. But I also feel that there are past loyalties that come into play and there is sometimes a "circe the wagons" mentality in some of the sections when problems arise. I would like to add that I have a tremendous respect for Dean Logan and I think that it would prove to be a grave mistake if he were forced

out. In my opinion, he is by far the most qualified director that we have had. Our office has undergone incredible changes in a short time. Most of the changes, have made our office more professional and better equipped. However, I must express my reservations regarding the DIMS system and training. I think as a staff we need a lot more training and the system needs to be better adapted to suit our needs and to provide the reports and applications that we need to make our jobs easier not harder. We should not have to do so many workarounds. Lack of communication continues to be a big problem in the office.

I think lack of communication and of ability to function as a working team with responsive, respectful, and effective leadership are blocks to success in our department. I have always believed and still do believe that we do an excellent job administering elections. I believe in our quality of work and our work ethic. Unfortunately, I think we lack in flexibility of work scheduling and employment styles as well as plain numbers of employees to do our job. We need some innovative thinking. I believe Dean is the right person for the job but I think the creation of such a large division dilutes the attention needed to each of its departments. There have been many superficial changes in equipment and environment but few substantive changes that address real needs and concerns of the employees. While I know that I am valued, I don't generally feel appreciated and feel that due given to us as employees feels obligatory and not always sincere. Most of all I think that what we have to say as employees is not generally taken seriously and that input is not welcome unless it echoes management thinking. We want to be a part of building our future.

This organization is headed for more disaster if policies, procedures and some of its higher management do not improve soon.

As an employee of King County for the last 10 years working in the Elections Section, I've seen a disconcerting downward trend with regard to this agency's efficiency not mention its ability to serve the general public with a sense of pride and dignity in conducting our day to day affairs! I have witnessed a rapid decline in the work place atmosphere/environment, integrity, morality, honesty, diplomacy, just to mention a few aspects and this trend shows no signs of improvement. As a matter of fact the trend seems to continue in a downward spiral!!! I've seen Managers and Superintendents come and go. Co-workers exiting this office for more suitable jobs that treat their employees with respect and dignity. Some were left no other recourse but to transfer or quit due to an unhealthy work place environment. I

am one of these individuals. Unfortunately I'm only in a different section of the Elections Department! I left the Elections Section while under Julie Anne Kempf. Although she was quite knowledgeable and capable of her position, she was abusive with authority and her position as Superintendent of Elections. I know that this has nothing to do with the present and I apologize for that, however it was the impetus for bigger and far more controversial matters to follow in the Elections Office. I believe that the Manager and Superintendent of Elections in my opinion are either one of two things: Inexperienced in the field and do NOT possess the necessary job requirements and or people skills to satisfactorily function in their respective positions or are mis-typecast into their positions. For example the last 2-3 Managers and Superintendents were selected by the Executive Branch. Neither one subsequently survived as Managers/Superintendents. Thus we enter a new era and the county council decides to confirm the next Manager and Superintendent. They do in the attempts of avoiding the pitfalls fo the past, but to no avail, we are once again faced with scandal and discrepancies in our office environment with another elections controversy for reasons I need not mention! If we the people, the King County Council continue to function and operate on the "buddy system" selection process, our troubles with the Election's office will continue in this downward trend until martial law with be it's only available recourse! If you want a Department/Office to run efficiently, provide an equitable selection process and hiring the best candidate for the position and resist the temptation of hiring your best friends sister's brother's uncle!!!

We have been given similar surveys in the past and I know that many of us who have been here for several years have brought up the issue of poor communication and low morale in this office over and over again. Instead of improving, it has only gotten worse. It seems like the last couple of management teams who have come in here, instead of investigating the real problems in the office and asking for input from employees who have been here for a long time, have focused on superficial issues to try to make us "look" better on the surface, such as the implementation of a dress code, purchasing new desks for the office, hiring a communications specialist etc. I hope that this survey and all of the investigations that are occurring right now will bring about a real positive change in this office.

It was not clear if the questions pertained to now point of view or for the Nov 2004 elections. Upper management has been trying to make postives changes but staff sees it as a reaction to a negative situation that they are trying to gain staff support for.

It was not clear if the questions pertained to now point of view or for the Nov 2004 elections. Upper management has been trying to make postives changes but staff sees it as a reaction to a negative situation that they are trying to gain staff support for.

Mr. Logan says that he has an open door policy, it is just hard to find the door open. We had very high hopes that he would be a personal, hands on manager much in the style of Jim Buck. We were very disappointed in him. Mr. Huennekens should never have been hired, he shows a lack of knowledge especially in personnel matters. Mr. Huennekens can't conduct any kind of a meeting. We can all tell when he either is bored or doesn't comprehend something by his constant playing with his Blackberry.