

**2010**

Local Election  
Supervisor

Staci Gorden

**[FINAL ELECTION REPORT-  
WPFW]**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report details my experience as the Local Election Supervisor (LES) at WPFW. I begin with a brief introduction which contextualizes my report by providing a little background information about myself. Then I delve into a description and analysis of each phase in the elections process: nomination phase, campaign phase, ballot issuing and receipt phase, and ballot counting phase.

I have had a very uniquely challenging, yet rewarding experience working with WPFW as the Local Election Supervisor. I am grateful for the collaborative effort put forth by station management, staff and volunteers at the station during the elections process. I was able to build positive relationships with candidates, staff, and community members during the election. My experience working at the station has made me a true admirer of WPFW. I have been inspired by the people I've worked with and I will continue to support the station in any way possible.

My recommendations for improving things in the next election cycle are the following:

1. One of the requirements of completing the nomination package, should be that any person wishing to run for the board has to raise (or contribute) a minimum of \$500 to WPFW. If this was a requirement, it would increase the reputation of the LSB. The candidates would be taken seriously and the election would have stronger support from the staff at the station and listener members. In addition, it would encourage candidates to begin working on their nomination packages months in advance, and they would have plenty of time to make sure that their nomination package is complete.
2. Candidate PSAs should only be voiced (either in-person or by phone) by the candidates themselves. If a candidate chooses not to or can not record a candidate PSA, then they should not have a PSA on the air.
3. All candidates should be required to participate in at least 1 on-air candidate forum and 1 in-person candidate forum. If they do not participate (either in-person or by phone) in the required number of forums, then they should automatically be disqualified from the election.
4. The voting phase should be a minimum of 8 weeks. This will help increase voter participation, especially if paper ballots are the only method of voting. If the voting period was 8 weeks, it would help buffer the low voter participation that results when there are problems or delays in the mailing of ballots and booklets. This would increase the likelihood of meeting quorum.
5. Ballots should be electronic and voting should be done securely online. This too will increase voter participation and will allow for the easy dissemination of election materials. There were so many problems stemming from delays in the mailing of ballots and booklets this year. If someone does not have access to the Internet, they should have the option of requesting that a paper ballot be mailed to them.

6. All listener and staff members should receive 3 reminder postcards in the mail. One postcard should come at the beginning when we are recruiting candidates. One should come during the campaign phase so that members know when and where the candidate forums occur, and the last postcard should come during the voting phase in order to let members know about the election deadlines, how they can vote, and the importance of meeting quorum.

## **Introduction**

I am a freelance communications consultant. My work combines media production, outreach, and activism. I have implemented communications, marketing and outreach strategies for media outlets and non-profit organizations for the past 4 years. I have collaborated with producers and distributors to create, promote and distribute media products and host engaging community events.

This report details the outcomes of each phase of the election. The phase descriptions summarize my experiences including: the successes and challenges I faced; my interactions with staff, volunteers, candidates, and community members; the outcomes of each phase; and my recommendations for what can be improved. In addition, I will describe my efforts involving community outreach, on-air promotion, and administration.

## **Nomination Phase (June 1, 2010 - July 19, 2010)**

### Description of my role and responsibilities

My roles and responsibilities during the nomination phase revolved around overseeing the nomination of candidates to the Local Station Board by:

- raising general awareness about the election;
- informing both listener and staff members about how to become a candidate for the LSB;
- reminding listener members to renew their membership before June 30th in order to participate as a voter or a candidate;
- monitoring the nomination process by following up with each potential candidate, encouraging them to complete their packages before the deadline;
- posting all prospective candidate statements and questionnaires quickly on the website;
- verifying that all candidate were eligible to run and that their nomination package materials were complete;
- and at the end of the Candidate Nomination phase, I finalized the list of candidates with the supervision of the National Election Supervisor (NES).

During the Nomination Phase, my responsibilities included community outreach efforts. My outreach efforts included the following:

- producing election-specific public service announcements (PSAs) that aired regularly;
- creating and distributing an election flyer (*see Appendix A and B*);
- creating and distributing a press release to the local media (in press, blogs etc.) (*see Appendix C*);
- posting on various websites, expanding virtual social networks;
- organizing three in-person community forums (*see Appendix D*). The forum were held on Thursday, June 17th at the Anacostia Library, Saturday, June 19th at WPFW, and Saturday, June 19th at the Northeast Library; and
- organizing a signature-gathering event for potential candidates to gather signatures for their petitions.

Initially all nomination packages were due by midnight June 30, 2010, but in an effort to recruit more candidates, the deadline was extended until 6pm on July 19, 2010. The objective of extending the deadline was to allow more time to continue outreach so that we could get as many candidates to run as possible.

Because so many of the candidates waited until the last day (before the deadline was extended) to submit their nomination packages, the signature-gathering event on June 30th turned out to be a huge success. Ten of the eleven candidates attended and brought friends and family to help sign petitions. I made sure refreshments were available for attendees and that there was plenty of food for everyone to eat. It was a good opportunity for the candidates to meet one another and talk about the LSB and the station.

As the local election supervisor, I was also charged with verifying the membership lists. Though the NES received preliminary listener-membership lists in the first week of June, it was necessary that I:

- discussed with the membership department (Sataria Joyner, Tiffany Jordan, and Rachel Pope) and the administrative staff person (Gerrie Mahdie) the status of listener and staff membership lists;
- posted a staff list (paid and unpaid) at the beginning of June together with a feedback form for the removal or addition of staff; and
- ensured that accurate staff and listener member lists got to the National Election Supervisor as these represent the actual voting body.

### The Outcome

The outcome of the community outreach efforts yielded a small number of candidates for both the listener and staff LSB elections. There were 11 listener candidates and 4 staff candidates. The quality of the candidates ranged from high (i.e., enthusiastic individuals who were familiar with WPFW and attended the outreach events) to low (i.e. individuals who didn't attend any outreach events and submitted incomplete nomination packages just minutes before the deadline). (See *Appendix E*)

There were a total of nine election PSAs in rotation during the nomination phase (see *Appendix F*). Election PSAs aired approximately 10-14 times per day.

### What worked and didn't work

I learned while working with the station that 1 minute PSAs are ideal for WPFW's programming schedule. I ran into resistance from the programming department when I requested the 2 minute and 5 minute tutorials be put into the rotation. The programming department didn't like to run PSAs that were this long because they believed people would stop listening and turn the dial. While the information is good, the election needs to find a happy medium and a better way to balance the need to provide election information without seeming too heavy-handed or contributing to information overload.

There was one tutorial that was in rotation briefly. It was the one titled "Idealist vs. Skeptic". Overall, most staff at the station seemed to like it. They thought it was clever and found the sentiments expressed to be an honest representation of what people in the WPFW community think. However, it was pulled from rotation because of numerous complaints from some LSB members. These LSB members were offended by it and felt there was a negative tone in the PSA. The basis of their complaints revolved around a phrase used in the PSA which described the LSB as "a bunch of whiners". They felt as if this was an insult towards them. In reality, the "Idealist vs. Skeptic" PSA was a generic tutorial written by the NES and distributed to each of the 5 Pacifica stations.

### My relationship with the NES, the staff, and the community

Most of the people at the station (programmers, volunteers, and paid staff) are quite ambivalent about the election. In speaking with many individuals, I've listened to many of them say that they feel like there is an election every year and they are tired of the election process. In addition, many of them don't feel like the LSB is helping the station in the crucial area of raising money.

Nonetheless the staff at WPFW has been supportive of my work in recruiting candidates, ensuring that the election PSAs are in the rotation schedule, providing adequate studio time for recording PSAs, and providing engineers to help with the recording of PSAs. They've also been helpful in ensuring that the funds required to run the election (including my paycheck) are distributed to me on time.

I attended the LSB's Community Townhall meeting at All Souls Church in the beginning of June. I had nomination packages on hand and was available to answer questions from community members. While attendance was sparse, it was a good opportunity for me to meet some LSB

members and WPFW supporters and talk about the election. This was my first time speaking about the election publicly, so I was a little unsure of myself, but I think it was good practice.

I distributed election flyers and postcards at public libraries, recreation centers, senior centers, and music venues in all 4 quadrants of the city. I felt it was important to distribute these in a variety of neighborhoods in order to make sure that people all over the city were informed about the election.

I distributed the press release and posted election information on blogs and on the WPFW Facebook page. I thought it was important to distribute the flyer electronically as well as to spend time engaging WPFW supporters online. WPFW has over one thousand followers on Facebook and I felt that providing updates about the election in this way was useful.

### My challenges and my recommendations for improvement

The problem with the three community outreach events that I organized was that because attendance was very low, it ended up being a waste of time. I attempted to secure commitments from LSB members and candidates to be present to sign petitions to ensure that there were enough people on hand to make the event productive. I even attempted to have a raffle as a "thank you" gesture to attendees. I purchased three \$50 Best Buy gift certificates to give away as prizes. The goal was that 5 or 10 candidates and/or non-candidates would attend each event, however this did not occur. Three people attended the event on Thur. June 17th, 4 people attended the first event on Sat. June 19th and zero people attended the last event on Sat. June 17th. I ended up just giving the raffle prizes to the first 3 people (out of the 4) who attended the event at WPFW on Sat. July 19th. Except for receiving a free gift card, I'm sure it was a frustrating experience for the few who made the effort to attend.

The election process is a little difficult and cumbersome, especially for candidates. For instance, the requirement of petitions to be completed in a relatively short period of time deters many people from running who are truly interested in helping the station.

The nomination process as currently scheduled does not allow adequate time for recruiting candidates and allowing candidates enough time to attend enough events to gather the necessary signatures for their petition. In an ideal setting, the nomination process would last 6-12 months and allow candidates to attend 3-4 of WPFW's events where they could gather signatures from other listener members.

One unexpected occurrence that I encountered when going through the staff and listener member lists, were the duplicate entries (people that were on both the staff and listener membership lists). I should have foreseen this as a problem, but I didn't. It wasn't until the ballots were shipped that I realized that some staff members who had contributed money to the station were on both the staff and listener member lists. In the future, I recommend the LES ask the membership department to make an exclusion list of staff members and use it when running the report for the listener membership list.

Another hindrance I encountered during the nomination process had to do with the reputation of the LSB at WPFW. I met many paid staff, programmers and community members who were actively involved and passionate about the station, but didn't want anything to do with the local station board. Some of these individuals attended LSB meetings in the recent past and witnessed yelling and bickering and were turned off. Others had served on the LSB in the past, and were so frustrated with not being able to accomplish much. In either case, the result was that many highly qualified individuals wanted no part of the LSB. Instead, they chose to serve in other ways such as being on the WPFW Community Advisory Board or volunteering in other capacities.

Another obstacle I faced was trying to get the programmers interested in the LSB election. During the nomination phase, I attended two mandatory programmers meetings in early June and explained the importance of the LSB election and how this year's programming guidelines were for incorporating the election into each of the shows. I was met with some overt resistance to these guidelines during this meeting. Programmers voiced their opinions about how they were dissatisfied with the LSB and the election process. The majority of the resistance I encountered from programmers wasn't overt, rather they simply ignored the guidelines and my requests altogether. During the final week of the nomination phase, when I was making a final push for candidates, I called attempted to schedule on-air interviews with some of the programmers. A few allowed me to come on their programs with no coercion. However, the majority of the programmers either declined my request for an on-air interview or didn't return my phone calls/ emails. The Interim Program Director ended up having to get involved and strongly urge these programmers to grant me the on-air interviews.

I received adequate support from the NES and the staff at WPFW. Whatever I needed, the NES and the station did their best to supply it, whether it was office supplies (i.e, paper, stapler, tape, photocopy machine) or on-air time for the PSAs or pre-produced PSAs or technical assistance in the studio.

While the station was very willing to get the PSAs into the schedule, we had a little difficulty when it came time to add new PSAs and remove old ones from the schedule. I'm not quite sure what how the problems occurred, but on several occasions, the wrong the PSAs ended up in the schedule. It took me a couple of weeks to figure out the best way to communicate with the

staff in regards to the PSAs. Sending emails wasn't always an effective method of communication because often they didn't get read by staff in a timely fashion. And just speaking with them didn't work because information was forgotten and/or misinterpreted. So I what I began doing was sending emails to the interim program director, the traffic coordinator (who is no longer at the station), and the engineers. After sending an email, I'd follow up by either calling or speaking with the interim program director in-person.

Working with the LSB proved to be a major challenge for me. There were about two LSB members that offered helpful guidance and aided my efforts in promoting the election by attending the community outreach events and posting the information on listservs. However, I'd like to emphasize that the majority of the LSB were neither helpful nor a hindrance to me during the election process. I met most of them during my time working with the station, either during an LSB meeting or at the WPFW townhall meeting, and most seemed pleasant. But because of the combativeness that was exhibited by a small number of LSB members, I had to severely limit my communication with the entire LSB. Its unfortunate but I felt that every time I attempted to work with them on getting feedback on PSAs, etc., it turned into a heated (and very unproductive) debate among a few individuals, which circulated in numerous emails that were copied and distributed to the entire LSB listserv.

Several LSB members disrupted the election process by complaining about things to the point where they became a burden to me and the staff at the station. While I appreciated the feedback on what worked and didn't work during the nomination phase, several of the LSB members' complaints seemed unfounded. The individuals that complained appeared to be ignorant in terms of how the election is administered by the NES and how the station operates in terms of the PSA schedule, the log that the programmers use and scheduling time to use the studio. One LSB member in particular called me and the interim programming director numerous times requesting to meet and sent repeated emails to me, the LSB listserv, the interim programming director, the interim general manager and the NES to voice her grievances. The majority of her complaints revolved around the PSAs that were being aired. Her attempts to involve herself in the process by seeking editorial control over the content of the PSAs was ultimately ignored..

**“The WPFW Staff” (Paid Staff)**

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Engineer	

## Campaign Phase (July 19, 2010 - September 30, 2010)

### Description of my role and responsibilities

During this phase, I was responsible for promoting and organizing the campaign for all candidates. This involved:

- Monitoring fair campaign practices; handle complaints and conflicts, in consultation with National Election Supervisor
- ensuring that all listener-member candidates prepare oral statements to be rotated on air (candidate PSAs) and
- ensuring that candidate statements are aired both regularly and fairly by radio station staff. All candidates are to receive the same amount of air time during the campaign period
- producing live radio forums/debates for listener-member candidates. All candidates are to receive the same amount of air time during the campaign period.
- For the listener-member election, I organized in-person forums/community meetings in partnership with local community based organizations to give listener-member voters opportunities to meet the candidates.

I also provided the NES with accurate staff-member and listener member lists by July 15th for the mailing of the candidate booklets and ballots.

### The Outcome

I organized 3 on-air forums and 2 in-person forums for the candidates. The format of the on-air forums was varied, but they were all a version of a Q&A format. (*See on-air forum scripts APPENDIX G, H, I*). For the in-person forums, each candidate spoke to the audience for 1-2 minutes and took questions from the audience.

Here are descriptions of each of the on-air forums that aired on WPFW:

#### Forum #1 and #2 (aired Aug. 18th and again Aug. 20th)

- pre-recorded on Aug. 10th and 11th
- 30 minutes each / 1 hour combined
- 8 candidates participated (Luzette King, Marcus Jetter, Nzingha Tingling-Clemmons, Marcel Reid, Mark Baker, Bruce Wolf, Michael Harris, Alan Barysh)
- Format: Staci (moderator) asked each of the candidates a series of 5 questions. There was a unique series of questions for each candidate. The questions represented some of the

issues and concerns of station members. The candidates had 2 minutes to respond to the question at hand. No call-in portion from listeners.

#### Forum #3 (aired Aug. 23rd)

- live forum
- 1 hour
- 5 candidates participated (Michael Harris, Marcus Jetter, Alan Barysh, Mark Baker, Bruce Wolf)
- Format: Each candidate made 30 second opening remarks. Then Marquita (moderator) asked each candidate a unique question and they were allowed up to 2 minutes to respond. Following the candidate's answer, each of the remaining candidates had 1 minute to comment on the initial candidate's response or ask a follow-up question. The candidate could pass if they had nothing to say. Then the original candidate had 1 minute to respond to the other candidates' comments. After the questions, each candidate made a 30 second closing statement. There was a call-in portion for listeners during the last 7 minutes of the program.

#### Forum #4 (aired Sept. 20th)

- live forum
- 1 hour
- 4 candidates participated (Marcel Reid, Marcus Jetter, Alan Barysh, Bruce Wolf)
- Format: Staci (moderator) conducted 10-minute interviews with each of the candidates. The questions asked touched on the personal experience of each candidate, their knowledge of and commitment to WPFW, and their opinions on station matters. There was a call-in portion for listeners during the last 10 minutes of the program.

Here are descriptions of each of the in-person forums:

The first in-person event was held on Friday, Aug. 20th (6pm-9pm) during the Friday night Jazz night at Westminster Presbyterian Church (400 I Street SW Washington DC). During the intermissions, each WPFW candidate introduced themselves and spoke to the audience for 2 minutes each. Three candidates attended this forum: Michael Harris, Alan Barysh, and Mark Baker.

The second in-person event was held on Sept. 12, 2010 (7-9pm) @ Bankok Blues Restaurant (926 West broad Street, Falls Church, Va). The format of this event was supposed to be similar to the event at Westminster Church. Each candidate was to make a 2 minutes statement during the intermission of the jam session that was taking place. Unfortunately, candidate participation in this event was extremely low. Only 1 candidate, Alan Barysh, attended this event. Alan spoke to the audience for about 1 minute and then I spoke to the audience for about 2 minutes about the election and encouraged people to vote.

Each of the 11 candidates had a statement that was recorded and put into the schedule. (see *Appendix G*). Each candidate's statement aired once a day according to the schedule provided.

There were also 7 election PSAs in the rotation. (see Appendix F). In addition to the candidate statements, approximately 5-7 of these election PSAs aired each day.

There were also 3 versions of a live read that were in the studio during the Campaign Phase. The live reads were read by programmers to encourage listeners to vote in the election.

### What worked and didn't work

WPFW went through some significant personnel changes during the Campaign Phase of the election. The interim general manager and the interim program director were both terminated, although, the interim program director was hired back a few days later. Several weeks after this, the person responsible for doing the PSA scheduling left the station as well. The departures of these key people caused a bit of a delay with getting new PSAs into the schedule and lowered the morale of some of the staff.

In addition, WPFW has been undergoing some extreme financial challenges. This too has affected morale, but it also made doing my job a little more challenging. For instance, the printer/ photo copier at the station jammed somewhat frequently. Instead of calling a service technician to come and repair it, one or two people from the WPFW staff routinely spent a large chunk of time tinkering with it to get it to work again. Sometimes the printer was out of commission for hours at a time. Also, I regularly had to borrow office supplies (i.e. tape, stapler, scissors) from other co-workers because the station could not purchase any extra supplies for me.

The programmers at the station (programmers, volunteers, paid staff) were pretty good about playing the election PSAs as scheduled. However, there were a couple of instances where they neglected to play the appropriate PSA as indicated in the schedule. When the programmer didn't play the candidate statement as scheduled, the candidate who was listening would call the station and politely remind the programmer to play it. Usually the programmer would do so.

During the Campaign Phase, the staff at WPFW has been supportive of my work in ensuring that the election PSAs are in the rotation schedule, providing adequate studio time for recording PSAs, and providing engineers to help with the recording of PSAs. They were also helpful in ensuring that the funds required to run the election (including my paycheck) are distributed to me on time.

In an ideal world, I would have liked to have seen the on-air candidate forums re-aired more, as I requested. I think if the on-air candidate forums had aired and re-aired at least 3 or 4 times each, we may have gotten more participation from voters. I was told by the station that they didn't want to bump any of the regularly scheduled shows from the schedule in order to air election forums, so it was difficult to get the on-air election forums in the schedule.

The in-person forums that I organized were well attended by a diverse group of community members. Many of them were WPFW listeners and supporters. I don't think community members would have made an effort to attend a forum that wasn't combined with a music event of some sort. This is why I organized the in-person forums during the intermission of music events. It really helped reach the community members that support live music venues and like WPFW. Unfortunately, the attendees didn't have the opportunity to interact with many of the candidates because of the lack of candidate participation.

I had difficulty getting all of the candidates to record their PSAs. Seven of the candidates recorded PSAs either in-person or by phone. The other four did not record their candidate PSAs and did not respond to my phone calls and emails which encouraged them to record them by Fri. Aug. 6th. (*see Appendix E*) Because the NES wanted all the candidates to have statements in rotation, we had to record statements for the candidates (in the 3rd person) by reading the candidate statement in their nomination package.

I think that recording statements for the candidates was the wrong thing to do. The candidates who did not record their own PSAs were totally uncommunicative. They simply chose not to respond to my phone calls and emails. They never expressed any desire to participate, so I can only assume that their lack of participation was not due to scheduling or other circumstances beyond their control. By recording the statements for these candidates that didn't do it on their own, we were simply making it easier for them to be included in the election without them having to lift a finger.

Candidate participation was very low for the on-air and in-person forums as well. We had several on-air candidate forums and I attempted to organize several in-person events for candidates. And it was surprising to see that there was zero participation (for both on-air and in-person events) for 3 of the candidates. (*see Appendix H*). I'm not entirely sure why. Perhaps because there were so few candidates running in the election, they assumed they would be elected no matter what. Perhaps they didn't care enough to show up. Whatever the reason for it, it affected the quality of the events and we lost an important opportunity to showcase the LSB and promote the election.

I communicated with the candidates via phone calls and email and let them know that although it was not required, it was important that candidates participate in the election events for several different reasons. First, participating in these events allowed listeners to find out more about the candidates and learn about why they were each qualified to be on the board. Unfortunately, the listeners never heard anything from half of the candidates who chose not to record their candidate statements and didn't attend any of the on-air or in-person forums. Secondly, I expressed to them that it was important that we meet quorum in this election. The on-air and in-person forums were prime opportunities to promote the LSB and the election. If listener members heard and saw a variety of candidates, they may be more enthusiastic about voting in the election.

I also had some difficulty from 3 candidates and 1 programmer who violated the Fair Campaign Provisions. (see *Appendix K*) . It was brought to my attention that several of the candidates called into WPFW shows during the campaign phase of this LSB election. It's a little ironic because many of the candidates who chose not to participate in the election sponsored events, were the same people who took the time to participate in WPFW shows, which is a violation of the campaign provisions. I contacted each of the candidates who were at fault and informed them that candidates should not have been calling in or participating as guests on WPFW shows during this election process. The Fair Campaign Provisions mandate that all candidates receive equal on-air time. The Fair Campaign Provisions were part of the nomination package which they completed, so they should have already read and agreed to abide by these rules. I recommend stricter penalties, such as disqualification for candidates that do not abide by the rules. One of the candidates even informed me that she called in and violated the rules because she knew that she wouldn't face a penalty until the 3rd offense.

#### My relationship with the NES, the staff, and the community

I received adequate support from the NES and the staff at WPFW. Whatever I needed, the NES and the station did their best to supply it, whether it was office supplies (i.e, paper, stapler, tape, photocopy machine) or on-air time for the PSAs or pre-produced PSAs or technical assistance in the studio.

During this phase, I continued to have difficulty with adding and removing PSAs from the schedule, although things had significantly improved from the nomination phase mistakes. In effort to better communicate with the staff regarding the PSAs, I sent 2 or 3 email reminders regarding which PSAs should be in the schedule. I would then follow up in-person with both the Interim Program Director and the person that was creating the PSA schedule.

See “The WPFW Staff” chart above for key contacts.

## **Ballot Distribution Phase: August 15th to September 30th**

### Description of my role and responsibilities

During this phase, I was in charge of making sure everyone who was eligible to vote received a ballot. This required managing a large database (listener ballot information), keeping accurate records of additional requests in order to prevent duplicate voters, and holding office hours during the day and night in order to give out and accept last minute ballots.

The following tasks were required of me:

- In the beginning of July I secured a PO Box at the Post Office on 18th Street in Columbia Heights. This is the PO Box to which incoming ballots were mailed.
- I made regular visits to the PO Box together with witnesses and secured incoming ballots in packages of 50 envelopes. (see Appendix I)
- The LES will keep track of the amount of incoming envelopes in order to estimate how many people have voted and make every effort to meet the quorum (10% of the voting body). (see Appendix J)

Initially, all ballots were to be returned by midnight on September 30th, 2010. But the deadline was extended until 6pm on October 13, 2010 for both the listener and staff elections in order to allow more time for voters to participate and help us reach quorum.

### The Outcome

By the October 13th deadline, a total of 607 listener ballots and 36 staff ballots had been returned. (see Appendix J and K). I re-issued over 100 ballots to station members who either didn't receive their first ballot or threw it away.

Each of the 11 candidates had a statement that was recorded and put into the schedule. (see Appendix G). Each candidate's statement aired once a day according to the schedule provided.

There were also 8 election PSAs in the rotation. (see Appendix F). In addition to the candidate statements, approximately 5-7 of these election PSAs aired each day.

There were also 2 versions of a live read that were in the studio during the Campaign Phase. The live reads were read by programmers to encourage listeners to vote in the election.

### What worked and didn't work

WPFW began its fall pledge drive on Oct. 3 and because of this the election PSAs no longer aired after October 3. Outreach efforts during this extended voting period included phone calls to listener and staff members. We also encouraged renewing members who pledged during the fund drive to vote in this year's LSB election. If the member needed a ballot, the phone volunteer wrote down the name and all of the names were handed over to me. The Interim Programming Director also incorporated the promotion of the election into his pitches for pledges. One of the benefits of station membership is being able to vote in the LSB election and so he urged listeners to do so.

It was during the Ballot Distribution Phase that I realized that we'd totally missed the mark with the distribution of ballots and booklets. Given the unpredictability of delivering mail via a bulk mail rate, it was very ineffective to send the election materials this way because so many members received either the ballot and/or the booklet after the September 30th deadline.

During the ballot distribution phase, I re-issued over 100 ballots. But the assumption can be made that at least 40-50% of the individuals that were requesting ballots, actually received their original ballot after September 30th.

When I think about how much money it costs Pacifica to do this mailing, I feel that it's a shame that so many of the election materials were thrown directly into the trash by station members because they were either received after the election deadline or because the ballot was mailed separately from the booklet, which led to some apathy and confusion among the voters.

I worked with the National Election Supervisor and the Pacifica Executive Director to evaluate the effectiveness of the extending the voting deadline from September 30th to October 13th. While the deadline allowed us to reach out to station members for another 13 days, it was ineffective because election PSAs were not allowed to play. It was also ineffective because all of the election materials had the September 30th deadline printed on them, so many members automatically threw away any materials they received after this date. A few station members happened to catch an election announcement on the air, and they requested a ballot be re-issued to them because they had already thrown theirs away. But I fear the majority of them didn't make the same effort.

Outreach efforts during this extended voting period included announcements made by programmers on the air while they were pitching for funding, phone calls to listener and staff members (although I and a small group of volunteers in Berkeley could not make it through the

entire 10,000+ membership list), and we also encouraged renewing members who pledged during the fund drive to vote in this year's LSB election.

The NES and I brainstormed other ideas that would help us reach quorum such as hiring a firm to make calls to the entire membership list in order to inform them of the importance of voting. We also considered whether or not obtaining gift cards for programmers would encourage them to talk about the election more on the air. At the end of the discussion, it was determined that Pacifica could not afford this expense, so no further action was taken.

To put it bluntly, we had some pretty devastating problems with the mailing of the election ballots and booklets to WPFW members. The mailing of the election materials for all 5 Pacifica stations was coordinated by the NES (Renee Asteria). I had nothing to do with the mailing unfortunately. Initially, Renee Asteria made a pretty drastic decision to not mail the ballot booklets at all. I think her goal was to reduce the amount of material that was printed and mailed...as a cost saving measure. But then after the PNB demanded that booklets be mailed to all voting members, she had to quickly organize the printing and mailing of the booklets to members at all 5 stations. Rather than delay the mailing of the ballots, which were already ready to go, she decided to mail the ballots and then mail the booklets separately.

I received numerous questions and complaints from listener members regarding the late arrival of the ballots and booklets in the mail. As for why ballots and booklets arrived so close to (and sometimes after) the Sept. 30th deadline, it's incomprehensible to me since Renee told me all ballots and booklets had been shipped out from a warehouse on the West Coast by Aug. 17th. Renee says it because everything was mailed bulk mail and delivery is unpredictable at best. Unfortunately, I can provide no insight on the matter because as I stated earlier I had nothing to do with the mailing of the election materials. And yes, I think the delay had a terrible impact on voter participation.

#### My relationship with the NES, the staff, and the community

Despite the problems with the mailing, I received wonderful support from the NES, the programmers, the volunteers and the staff at WPFW, especially during the voting extension period. The volunteers that answered phones during the fund drive did a wonderful job of finding out which renewing members needed ballots re-issued to them. The membership department was excellent at providing the names and addresses to me so that I could re-issue ballots in a timely fashion. And the programmers and staff were very helpful in including the election in their pitches for funding.

We also encouraged renewing members who pledged during the fund drive to vote in this year's LSB election. If the member needed a ballot, the phone volunteer wrote down the name and all of the names were handed over to me. This was one way to take advantage of the hundreds of calls from listener members that the station was receiving every day. It worked to some extent because we obtained an additional 50 votes from this type of outreach. However, we fell far short of reaching quorum.

See "WPFW Staff List" above for key contacts.

## **Ballot counting phase: October 1st to October 15th**

### Description of my role and responsibilities

During the ballot counting phase, I was responsible for:

- organizing a secure but public location to ensure that all who wanted could observe the ballot counting.

### The Outcome

Here are the election results:

#### **WPFW 2010 LSB Listener Election**

##### **October 21, 2010**

CANDIDATE	THIS ROUND	TOTAL	STATUS
Nia Turner	0	61	ELECTED -- 1st round
Bruce Wolf	0	61	ELECTED -- 1st round
Nzingha Tingling-Clemm.	0	61	ELECTED -- 1st round
Marcus Jetter	0	61	ELECTED -- 1st round
Veronica Chin Ingram	0	61	ELECTED -- 5th round
Michael Harris	0	61	ELECTED -- 7th round
Gregory Isaac Sr.	0	61	ELECTED -- 8th round
Marcel Reid	+31.16636	91.19287	ELECTED -- 10th round
Mark Baker	+13.72018	71.22623	ELECTED -- 10th round
Luzette King	-51.43462	0	DEFEATED -- 9th round
Alan Barysh	0	0	DEFEATED -- 6th round
Write-In 2	0	0	DEFEATED -- 6th round
Write-In 1	0	0	DEFEATED -- 6th round
EXHAUSTED PILE:	+6.54809	16.58089	

TOTALS:	+0	606	
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## WPFW 2010 LSB Staff Election

**October 21, 2010**

CANDIDATE	THIS ROUND	TOTAL	STATUS
Michelle L. Smith-Maid.	0	11	ELECTED -- 1st round
Pete Tucker	0	11	ELECTED -- 1st round
Jean Yves Point du Jour	0	11.60766	ELECTED -- 3rd round
Kimory Orendoff	-4.27469	0	DEFEATED -- 3rd round
Write-In 1	-2.56863	0	DEFEATED -- 3rd round
Write-In 2	0	0	DEFEATED -- 3rd round
EXHAUSTED PILE:	+6.84332	7.39234	
TOTALS:	0	41	

There were 614 listener ballots and 41 staff ballots returned. 6 listener ballots were rejected. Quorum was not met in the listener election, nor in the staff election. (Listener quorum = 1040, Staff quorum = 46)

The ballot count was conducted on Thursday, Oct. 21 from about 10am to 5pm. In addition to the NES, myself and Bing (who was the technical support person), we had a group of four volunteers: Richard Wright, Debbie Wagner, Bill Witherspoon, and Keith Greene.

Here is the procedure we followed for counting ballots:

STEP 1: Preliminary Check that all Ballots Pick-ups and Packages are present by reading Staci's Pick-Up Log

- At 10 am (or when enough witnesses are present) we did a group check of all un-processed ballots which were organized by pick-up.

-We s by compared pick-up by pick-up to Staci's Pick-Up Log.

- Ballots were packaged in bundles of 50 (or less) with tape and marked with the date, pick-up number and signed by ballot- pick-up volunteers.

#### STEP 2: Ballot Sorting Table

- Volunteers opened up envelopes and sorted contents into the appropriate box (boxes: listener or staff ballot box, problem ballot (no barcode) box, donations box, junk mail & empty envelope box). We collected over \$800 dollars in station donations that were sent in by voting members with ballots. The checks and cash were handed over to the membership department.
- The empty envelope box and junk mail box was reprocessed to ensure that no ballots or donations had been missed. A \$50 donation check was located in this box and turned over to the membership department.
- A simple log (tally) was kept to track the number of packages processed.
- Each ballot was inspected to make sure it is anonymous. This required the removal of any identifiable information (i.e. names or addresses).

#### STEP 3: Barcode Ballot Screening & Sorting

- All ballot barcodes were scanned and screened for eligibility at 2 stations.
- Ballots were either rejected or accepted and sorted into respective boxes.
- Each barcode was associated to a unique vote. This was done in order to remove the possibility of duplicate votes.
- The ballots that were rejected were kept for follow-up.

#### STEP 4: Ballot Scanning, Sorting & Trouble-shooting, Computer Software Processing

- Ballots were scanned into the computer one by one.
- Every scanned ballot was marked with a number by order of processing.
- The computer software then translated the images into numbers corresponding to the ranking on each ballot.
- The rankings were used to compute the results based on the single transferable vote calculation.
- Problematic ballots were kept aside for trouble shooting. Processing of problematic ballots sometimes required the transfer to a new ballot in order to process the vote.

- When this occurred, the interpretation of ranking on the problematic ballot were done based on the judgment of multiple parties who were not candidates.

All raw scanned data will be available to any participant after everything has been processed.

#### What worked and didn't work

There were know obstacles during this phase. I do not have any recommendations for improvement.

#### My relationship with the NES, the staff, and the community

I received tremendous support from the NES, the technical support person and the volutneers who came to assist with the ballot counting. Rachel Pope, who is the volunteer coordinator at WPFW did a wonderful job of recruiting 5 individuals to volunteer. We had volunteers scheduled to assist on Friday, Oct. 22nd as well, but we didn't end up needing their assistance because we finished the ballot counting on Thursday, October 21.

The National Election Supervisor, the Pacifica Technical Support Consultant, and Rachel Pope who is the Volunteer Coordinator at WPFW were all integral to the success of the ballot counting. Rachel's contact info is: (202) 588-0999 ext 360, pope\_rachel@wpfw.org.

## **Conclusion**

I understand that certifying the election is of critical importance, and I am deeply disappointed that we didn't make quorum in either the listener or the staff elections. Nonetheless we counted the ballots and have election results, which will be verified by the NES and posted online by November 15th.

As for whether or not the election can be certified without meeting quorum, I think it's in the best interest of WPFW for the PNB to allow the election to be certified given the effort and expense incurred during the election process. I also think it's important that the results are certified given the desperate need for a functioning governing body at WFW.

I would do this job again in the future if at least 4 of the 6 recommendations I made in the Executive Summary above are instituted.

## **Appendix List**

**APPENDIX A (election flyer - LISTENER)**

**APPENDIX B (election flyer - STAFF)**

**APPENDIX C (press release)**

**APPENDIX D (info meeting agenda)**

**APPENDIX E (candidate status for election - Nomination Phase)**

**APPENDIX F (election PSAs - scheduling summary)**

**APPENDIX G (weekly candidate PSA schedules - Aug. and Sept)**

**APPENDIX H (candidate status for election - Campaign Phase)**

**APPENDIX I (ballot pick up protocol)**

**APPENDIX J (ballot pick up log)**

**APPENDIX K (fair campaign provisions - list of violations)**

**APPENDIX L (ballot issuing table)**

**These documents were attached to my report that was submitted electronically on October 28, 2010.**