

2010 Pacifica Foundation Election Report for Pacifica National Board Meeting July 17th, 2010,
by Renée Asteria, National Election Supervisor

Outline

1. National Progress Report
2. Station by Station Progress Report
3. Materials and Methods Developed to Improve the Election Process Nationwide
4. Improving the Sustainability of the Election Process
 - a. Cutting Cost of Printing and Mailing & b. Preliminary Results of Green Survey
5. Electronic Ballot Proposal

1. NATIONAL PROGRESS REPORT

- a. Nomination Phase Extended to 6 pm, Monday July 19th, 2010
 - i. Based on the following criteria
 - Minimum of 18 listener candidates and 6 staff candidates
 - 1/6 of the election material airtime requirement (2009 resolution)
 - ii. Need the PNB to address the issue of deadline extension criteria
- b. Membership date of record kept at June 30th except at KPFK where the date of record was extended to July 2nd to match the KPFK fund drive extension
 - i. Logistical complexity of extending the date of record caused by getting the membership lists together and as accurate as possible
 - ii. No budget to keep the election mechanism on through November
- c. Status of Membership Lists
 - i. Staff Lists are posted online in order to vet in the most transparent way possible
 - KPFA 197, KPFK 244, KPFT 173, WBAI 208, WPFW 183
 - ii. All stations have provided donor lists and volunteer lists are still being compiled
 - KPFA 21 882 (No Volunteer List or LSB Committee List), KPFK 17 561 (No LSB Committee List), KPFT 7 530 (Lists included, a few mailing addresses missing), WBAI 16 875 (Volunteer List Included, No LSB Committee List), WPFW 10 468 (All Lists Included, a few mailing addresses missing)
 - Total \approx 75 321
- d. Election Budget
 - i. Total - \$ 141, 000 to \$ 166, 000 – good when compared to last year (\$ 196, 000)
 - ii. Reduction depends on which mailing option we go with this year (options discussed point 4 and 5)
- e. On schedule for the mailing to go out August 16th, 2010

2. STATION BY STATION PROGRESS REPORT

Station Local Election Supervisor	Candidates Confirmed vs. (/) Prospective	Quantity of Election Material CART & Tutorials	Outreach Efforts Election Committee Petition Signing	Some Issues
KPFA LES Oriana Saportas les_kpfa@ pacifica.org	13/9 Listener 3/3 Staff	Started June 8 th CARTS ≈ 170 m 50% Nomination, 27% Green 23% Spanish Started June 21 st Tutorials ≈ 130 m live coverage & 1, 3, 4, 5 m preproductions 25 programs - 5 minutes	Weekly Election Committee Meeting, Thursdays 7pm 3 Petition Signing Events Outreach: various nonprofits in person & by email, 4 KPFA promoted events, SF Bay View publication of election info, facebook and twitter pages, Indy bay, East Bay Express publication, talk show at BCM	Relatively Low Support Low CART rotation Low tutorial coverage Lots of Syndicated programs Staff List incomplete Volunteer lists incomplete (missing time & date info) LSB Committee Roster?
KPFFK LES Marc Herbst les_kpffk@ pacifica.org	10/25 Listener 2/2 Staff	Started June 9 th CARTS ≈ 350 m Started July 2 nd , 2010 Tutorials ≈ 275 m live coverage (8 to 10 m live tutorials) & 3, 4, 5 minute preproductions have been integrated into the traffic log preempting a few minutes of each program	KPFFK Screening San Pedro, emails, outreach at several art openings 4 petition signing events Artists for Mailing	Fund drive during the month of June Politics around LES selection Staff List incomplete Volunteer lists incomplete (LSB Committee Roster?)
KPFT LES Kathy Kidd les_kpft @pacifica.org	24/2 Listener 5/2 Staff	Promo Started March, 2010 Estimates Since June 1st CARTS ≈ 780 m Tutorials ≈ 500 m 56 unique shows (≥1 hr) covered 10-15 min live or preproduced interview	Monthly Board Meeting 4 Petition Signing Events Community Town Hall Forum, KPFT Thursday Night Music, Frequent contact with personnel and volunteers at the station	None
WBAI LES Nichole J Hylton les_wbai@ pacifica.org	20/2 Listener 7 Staff	Started June 4 th CARTS ≈ 270 m Tutorials ≈ 250 m 5 to 15 minute tutorial requirement began to take effect June 21st	Daily outreach (subway, public, stores etc.) LSB meeting, Union Square Farmers Market Outreach, Seaside Park, African American Family Day in Mt. Vernon, PeaceSmiths in Amityville Facebook & other social networking sites 5 Petition Signing events	Fund drive during the month of June Lack of Traffic logs Lack of organizational infrastructure and basic materials State of MEMSYS records as no database person
WPFW LES Staci Gorden les_wpfw@ pacifica.org	6/10 Listener 3/1 Staff	Started June 4 th CARTS ≈ 675 m High Cart rotation (14 to 16 per day) Tutorials ≈ 25 m Live Interviews w LES	Press releases, blogs, facebook, email listservs Flyer distribution Community Meetings 4 petition signing events	Too few candidates

3. Materials and Methods developed to improve the Election Progress Nationwide

- Use of the internet
 - Comprehensive and dynamic website with FAQ section and Cross-linking all official Pacifica & sister station sites so as to better integrate the process
 - Social networking profiles (Facebook , Twitter)
 - Audio file sharing to increase quantity and quality of election carts & tutorials (audioport)
 - Green Election Survey
 - Soon history of elections will be centralized & images of all 2009 ballots will be accessible
- Protocols, Guidelines & Content
 - Programming Guidelines 2010 to facilitate covering targeted election material (for Programmers) (40 pp)
 - Basic Carts & Tutorials produced for every station (100 plus audio files)
 - Improved LES Job description, Draft of LES Technical Manual (KPFA LES Report 2009)
 - Fair Campaign Provisions Updated, Fair Campaign Violation Report Form (online)
 - Increase outreach capacity by encouraging development of Election Committees
 - Updated Nomination Package includes Election Committee Referral request to enhance community outreach capacity of Local Election Supervisors
 - Election Committee membership Form to ensure neutrality of these Election Committees
 - Nomination Extension Criteria (with goal to develop meaningful and objective fashion to decide to extend or not
 - 18 Listener and 6 Staff candidates minimum, 1/6 of the 2009 resolution = approximately 6 hours of the 36 hours during the nomination phase as mandated by the PNB
 - Staff List Vetting Procedure complete with Online staff list and Staff Modification Forms to track all changes (additions or removals)
 - Candidate Package Checklist (developed by Kathy Kidd)
 - Spanish Nomination Package (translated by Oriana Saportas, Revised & approved R. Asteria)
 - Fully bilingual webpage in the works
 - Development of an integrated paper & electronic ballot system to decrease cost

4. Improving the Sustainability of the Election Process

- Cutting Cost of Printing and Mailing
 - Focused on the most economical package & mailing option possible
 - slim jim candidate package, double sided legal size paper for letter and ballot
 - mailing and print house integrated (KP Graphics rather than InkWorks & Direct Mail)
 - reduced printing and mailing cost from approximately \$83 000 to \$53 000 (30 000, or by about 36% when comparing 2009 and 2010 cost IF NOTHING IS CHANGED (everyone sent a full package, costing based on printing 80 000 units)
- Preliminary Results of Green Survey
 - 200 unique entries of registered members
 - 87.5 % opted out of the candidate package,
 - 86.5% open to using electronic ballots
 - Removing Candidate Packages will reduce the printing cost by about \$15 000

5. Paper & Electronic Ballot Combination Proposal

- Reduction of printing cost by another \$26 000 from \$53 000 to \$28 700
- 2009 voters would get full paper ballot package by default (approximately 15 000) as this is the group to more likely require a paper ballot, those who did not participate would get a letter with electronic ballot instructions and an 800 number to call to request a paper ballot
- Any individual would have the choice to cast an electronic ballot or a paper ballot
- All ballots (paper and electronic) would be tracked using a unique pin
- Verification: anyone would be able to independently verify that their ballot was cast as all ballots cast will be made public as jpeg files
- Setting a precedent with respect to transparency and ability for anyone to verify. No such system in place for any elections at any level to the best of my knowledge
- Approached Rob Ritchie of Fair Vote, and representatives from Alameda Voter Registrar and the League of Women's voters, E Gov Consulting to get feedback and make the proposed system as robust as possible
- There are electronic ballot systems in place for major elections all over the world and it could help us to engage the 85% of Pacificans who abstain from voting
- Also may be able to reduce labor costs as a more integrated system would require fewer Supervisor hours

LESs' observations & experiences working with this election

KPFA LES Oriana Saportas:

"time allowed for recruitment of candidates is too short (...), the membership deadline is June 30th making it more difficult for other listeners, who are not members, to get involved (...), people who apply to run for the board are the 'usual suspects' (...)

"more priority needs to be given to community grassroots recruitment rather than CART production and station election coverage. (...) time and energy is spent on struggling with management and programmers to comply with the election CART and tutorial requirements. Though station election coverage is important and should be an essential element of the election process, it should not be the priority, but rather it should compensate the outreach work that needs to be done in the community. I think it should be part of the LES job description to help increase the stations' profile in the community and to help conduct outreach to social justice nonprofit organizations. This, I think, will help bring younger progressive candidates to the board, people from the nonprofit world with sensitivity towards governance and a passion for activism."

"membership deadline for voting should be extended past the nomination deadline. As we work with candidates who are running for the board we can help them organize fundraising events for example to get people who are part of their networks to become members so that they can vote for the candidate. So maybe extending the membership deadline for voting, after the nomination deadline has been reached, will be good for this purpose and fundraising could be part of the candidate's tasks to be able to run for the board."

KPFK LES Marc Herbst:

Challenges - "Institutional memory and the transference of process ideas from one year to the next"

"Institutional infighting leading to stress"

KPFT LES Kathy Kidd

"We seemed to have great success with covering elections on air. Candidates frequently told me they wanted to run because of something they heard on the air. I followed up with candidates immediately upon downloading a packet or showing interest."

"Need 2 weeks before Jun 1 to get ready for Jun 1 start date."

"Need 24 hours after candidate deadline to review everything and give people a chance to complete things that were unforeseen. Have deadline no later than 8PM, midnight is not necessary. "

"I had one of my petition parties the night of the deadline...I don't think I would do that again...I would make it clear that people cannot wait until the last minute and put structures in place to support that. I would have my final petition party the night before the deadline and people could spend the next day finishing up any last needed items.

"I would put a checklist in place and begin contacting all programmers the week of Jun 1 and review the following information: Ask them to review Volunteer Staff List Posting, FCP signed (send by email and ask them to put in my inbox or accept electronically), Update address, phone, email & verify everyone on the show, Discuss 15 minute air-time rule & confirm a date and time, Discuss running as a staff candidate"

Meet with Membership Department the week of Jun 1 and explain in detail everything they are going to need to give to us. Follow-up with everything in writing for them, including date due.

Meet with Volunteer Coordinator the week of Jun 1 and explain in detail everything needed for Listener Member volunteer list. Remind them that they need to contact Board Chair and get a copy of everyone on committees to include in their list. Explain the guideline for counting someone as a volunteer. Let them know the date we need this by....check in a week before deadline and see how they are doing.

WBAI LES Nichole Justice Hylton

I was told (...) "we are busy right now see us on the 12th" (...) The Elections Supervisor should be hired in advance (...) not in the midst of a fund drive or they should be prepared and staffed in advance to deal with both. (...)

Lack of office space, equipment and organization. (...) Lack of response to repeated requests in person and by email from station management (...) Example - just received keys to my office space on 7/12. (...) Lack of security for sensitive information like staff list, printed documents etc. (...)

Interim Manager hired being there at limited (...) times since his hire.

The requirement, so it seems, to respond to every email, phone call or notation by anyone who send one whether based in reality or not requires an excessive amount of manpower that is not realistic or feasible.

This payment does not provide the contractor with enough money to hire the team that is needed to address all the tasks at hand and still make it feasible.

The day does not provide the Elections Supervisors with the time to carry out all of these duties without severe lack of sleep, stress and the likelihood of burning out.

Candidates should be able to log in their own statements into data base so that it does not require the Elections Supervisors to get emails and transfer individual emails, sentences and paragraphs one by one. System would be designed to kick back certain words or phrases so that no Fair Campaign rules are violated within the statements.

Staff list, Membership list and Volunteer list should be maintained at all times so that it is not a last minute scramble left to the Elections Supervisors to ascertain in less than one month who has been there all year and fulfilled the requirements.

WPFW LES Staci Gorden

Environment at WPFW

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 arena 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 be on time.

The Election Process

The election process is a little difficult and cumbersome, especially for candidates. For instance, the requirement of petitions and email/internet access in order to submit candidate statements causes undue hardship for people and deters many people from running who are truly interested in helping the station.

Finding Suitable Candidates

The nomination process as currently scheduled does not allow adequate time for recruiting a candidates and allowing candidates enough time to attend events to gather signatures for petition. In an ideal setting, the nomination process would last about 2-3 months and allow candidates to attend 3-4 of WPFW's events where they could gather signatures from other listener members.

Carts and Tutorials

1 minute carts and PSAs are ideal. I've run into trouble at WPFW when approaching the station and asking to get 2 minute and 5 minute tutorials into the rotation. The programming department doesn't like to run PSAs that are this long because they believe listeners 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.

Proposal: An Integrated Paper Ballot & Electronic Ballot System for Pacifica's 2010 Election

Image 1: Integrated Paper Ballot & Electronic Ballot System Model

