

**Hopkins Charter Commission
Annual Report
2014**

The Hopkins Charter Commission met on May 13, 2014.

Commission members included:

Dorothy Boen
David Day
Roger Gross
Fran Hesch
Karen Jensen
Roger Johnson
Steve Lewis
Jerre Miller
Emily Wallace-Jackson

Mr. Genellie reported on two questions that the Commission raised at its 2013 meeting.

Commissioners wanted to know the number of cities in Minnesota which have multiple candidates running for multiple offices. Approximately 680 cities have At-Large positions where more than one candidate is elected.

Commissioners also had a question as to which level of government determines the method used to elect the President and Congress. The State Legislature determines the method.

Mr. Genellie then reported on the Minneapolis experience with Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) in 2013. Minneapolis still needed to hand count votes due to limitations in how the voting machines tabulate the results.

In Minnesota, voting systems must be certified by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and by the Minnesota Secretary of State, the State's chief election official. The new voting system and equipment purchased by Hennepin County in 2013 is certified for use in Minnesota. However, neither the EAC nor the State of Minnesota have standards for, nor test for, the vote transfers and tabulation processes unique to Ranked-Choice Voting, and no vendor of voting equipment systems has submitted RCV tabulation software for certification at federal or state levels.

The Commission then discussed raising the fee for filing for office.

One of the recommendations coming out of the 2013 Minneapolis election was that the filing fee be increased. This recommendation came as a result of 35 people filing for mayor in Minneapolis.

The City of Hopkins has not faced anywhere near that number of candidates for any office. However the City has had several candidates in the last few years who filed but did not campaign. (For example, they did not put signs up, respond to newspaper requests for information, or attend League of Women Voters events.) The Hopkins' filing fee has been \$5.00 since 1947. This is the equivalent of \$53.00 in current dollars.

Even if the filing fee was raised, state law allows the filing of a petition instead of the fee. The petition has to be signed by the lesser of 500 signatures or five percent of the total number of votes cast at the preceding general election at which the office was on the ballot. For Hopkins, 5% of the total number of votes cast in the 2013 municipal election would equal 84 voters.

The commission looked at the Minneapolis experience, the current value of the 1947 fee and what are other filing fees for other offices in state law. For example the fee set for a county office is \$50 while the filing fee for the office of soil and water conservation district supervisor is \$20.

The Commission unanimously approved a motion to direct staff to prepare an ordinance to raise the fee to \$25.00.