


CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

A COAST GUARD CITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Eisenbeisz and Assembly Members

Thru: John Leach, Municipal Administrator 

From: Sara Peterson, Municipal Clerk

Date: March 14, 2022

Subject: Approve amendments to Sitka General Code 2.40 Elections

Background

This ordinance has been drafted by the Municipal Clerk's Office with consultation from the Legal Department to address two areas needing improvement and/or clarification in Sitka General Code (SGC) Chapter 2.40, Elections.

The first topic addressed by this ordinance is SGC 2.40.095 which requires candidates running for elected office to provide the Municipal Clerk with biographical information, a recent photo, and advocacy statement for publication on the municipal website. Currently, this information is due no later than ten working days after submittal of a completed candidate packet.

The second topic this ordinance addresses is SGC 2.40.250 which outlines the process and qualifications for those wishing to serve as election officials for CBS. Alaska law (AS 15.10.108) allows qualified high school students who are at least 16 years old to serve as an election official through the Youth Vote Ambassador Program (YVAP). The YVAP is designed to capture young people's interest in the political process and in their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

To serve as a Youth Vote Ambassador, an individual must:

- Be a high school student at least 16 years of age or older enrolled in a public or private high school program in Alaska, or be educated in the student's home by a parent or legal guardian.
- Have written permission from a parent or legal guardian
- Agree to attend training as determined by the Municipal Clerk

Currently, SGC 2.40.250(D) does not allow those under the age of 18 to serve as election officials. Election officials serving at a precinct polling place must be a qualified voter.

Analysis

Regarding candidate information, it is most efficient for the Municipal Clerk's Office to have a concrete deadline date for all submittals as opposed to tracking ten working days for each candidate. The proposed code language aligns with the deadline for the withdrawal of a candidate nomination – no later than 5:00 p.m. on the forty-sixth day before the election.

Regarding election officials, the Municipal Clerk's Office has experienced some difficulties in recruiting election officials in recent years. During that time, we were approached by a high school student who had served as an election official for the State of Alaska through the YVAP. The Municipal Clerk's Office would like to extend this opportunity to interested students who meet the criteria. Students would be required to complete an application and attending training. Our office anticipates one or two students being appointed who will work under the supervision of the Municipal Clerk or the precinct chairperson.

Fiscal Note

No fiscal impacts are expected as a result of aligning the deadline for candidate biographical information with the withdrawal of a candidate nomination deadline.

A Youth Vote Ambassador would be compensated at the same rate as our regular election officials (which is currently \$12 per hour) unless they choose to volunteer their time as allowed under AS.15.10.108. The necessary funds are budgeted; this code change allows CBS to expand the pool of election officials to include YVAP eligible applicants.

Recommendation

Approve this ordinance 1) amending the deadline for submittal of candidate biographical information and 2) allowing the election supervisor to appoint one or more students to serve as election officials if they meet the requirements of the Youth Vote Ambassador Program outlined in AS.15.10.108.

Encl: AS 15.10.108
Sample application
Ord. 2022-06

Sec. 15.10.108. Youth vote ambassador program.

(a) The youth vote ambassador program is established in the division of elections.

(b) In order to serve as a member of the youth vote ambassador program, an individual must

(1) be a student age 16 or older

(A) enrolled in a public or private high school program in this state; or

(B) being educated in the student's home by a parent or legal guardian in this state under AS 14.30.010(b)(12);

(2) volunteer to serve in the youth vote ambassador program and be appointed to the youth vote ambassador program by the director of elections; and

(3) if appointed, agree to complete a program of training as determined by the director of elections.

(c) An election supervisor may appoint a member of the youth vote ambassador program to serve on a precinct election board appointed under AS 15.10.120. A program member who is appointed to serve on an election board under this subsection serves under the supervision of the chairperson for that board.

(d) A member of the program who is appointed under (c) of this section is compensated as provided in AS 15.15.380 only for service on the election board of the precinct.

(e) A member of the program may provide unpaid volunteer services related to education and outreach on state elections as directed by, and under the supervision of, the director of elections.

(f) In this section, "program" means the youth vote ambassador program.

State of Alaska
Division of Elections
YOUTH VOTE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM
Application



sample application - to be
modified for City and
Borough of Sitka

I am interested in serving in the Youth Vote Ambassador Program. I understand that serving in this program will enable me to be appointed to a precinct election board during elections. If appointed to a precinct election board, I agree to attend training as determined by the Division of Elections.

Printed Name: _____
Residence Address: _____
Mailing Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Are you at least 16 years old? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you enrolled in public or private high school, or being
educated in your home by a parent or legal guardian? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you are enrolled in a public or private high school, please indicate the name of
the school here: _____

I attest to the fact that the information provided above is accurate and true to the
best of my knowledge.

Youth Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Complete this application and send it to the
Regional Elections Office nearest you.

The Division of Elections will contact you if you are selected
to participate in the Youth Vote Ambassador Program.

Region I Elections Office
PO Box 110018
Juneau, AK 99811-0018
(907) 465-3021 Voice
(907) 465-2289 Fax

Region II Elections Office
Anchorage Office
2525 Gambell Street, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99503-2838
(907) 522-8683 Voice
(907) 522-2341 Fax
Matanuska-Susitna Satellite Office
North Fork Professional Building
1700 E. Bogard Road, Suite B102
Wasilla, AK 99654-6565
(907) 373-8952 Voice
(907) 373-8953 Fax

Region III Elections Office
675 7th Avenue, H3
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4594
(907) 451-2835 Voice
(907) 451-2832 FAX

Region IV Elections Office
PO Box 577
Nome, AK 99762-0577
(907) 443-5285 Voice
(907) 443-2973 FAX

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

ORDINANCE NO. 2022-06

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA AMENDING TITLE 2
“ADMINISTRATION” OF THE SITKA GENERAL CODE BY UPDATING CHAPTER 2.40
“ELECTIONS”**

1. CLASSIFICATION. This ordinance is of a permanent nature and is intended to become a part of the Sitka General Code (SGC).

2. SEVERABILITY. If any provision of this ordinance or any application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and application to any person or circumstance shall not be affected.

3. PURPOSE. The purpose of this ordinance is to align the deadline for submittal of candidate biographical information with the withdrawal of candidate nomination deadline. In addition, this ordinance would allow the election supervisor to appoint one or more students to serve as election officials if they meet the requirements of the Youth Vote Ambassador Program outlined in AS.15.10.108.

4. ENACTMENT. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka that the Sitka General Code Title 2, entitled “Administration”, Chapter 2.40, entitled “Elections”, at Section 2.04.095, entitled “Candidate biographical information” and Section 2.04.250, entitled “Election officials”, be amended to read as follows (deleted language stricken, new language underlined):

**Title 2
ADMINISTRATION**

Chapters:

2.40 Elections

* * *

* * *

**Chapter 2.40
ELECTIONS**

Sections:

* * *

2.04.095 Candidate biographical information.

* * *

2.04.250 Election officials.

* * *

2.40.095 Candidate biographical information.

A candidate for elected office shall provide the municipal clerk with biographical information of not more than one hundred fifty words, a recent photo of the candidate, and a candidate’s

advocacy statement of not more than two hundred fifty words for publication on the municipal website. All information must be received by the municipal clerk no later than five p.m. on the forty-sixth day before the election. ~~no later than ten working days after submittal of a completed candidate packet.~~ A candidate may not make a change to the candidate's biographical information or advocacy statement after the deadline. A candidate's biographical information and advocacy statement must be submitted typewritten or, preferably, transmitted electronically. An article (i.e., a, and, the) will be counted as one word. Any words included in the candidate's biographical information or advocacy statement beyond the allowed word counts will not be published. The municipal clerk can provide the candidate with acceptable topics for the biographical information and advocacy statement. The municipal clerk may reject any portion of a candidate's biographical information or advocacy statement containing obscene, libelous, profane, slanderous or defamatory material.

* * *

2.40.250 Election officials.

A. Election Supervisor. The municipal clerk shall be the election supervisor. The election supervisor shall conduct the election and have authority to take such actions as are necessary to carry out the intent of this chapter.

B. Judges. Prior to each election, the election supervisor shall appoint three judges for each polling place and at least three judges for the receiving board and data processing board. Up to three alternate judges may be designated for each polling place or board. One judge shall be designated chairman and shall be primarily responsible for administering the election in that precinct. If a judge is not able or refuses to serve on election day, an alternate shall serve in their place. Should additional need arise, the election supervisor may appoint a replacement. The assembly reserves the right to reject or disapprove election judges.

C. Clerks. The election supervisor may appoint up to three election clerks and up to three alternate clerks at any polling place where they are needed to conduct an orderly election and to relieve the election judges. Alternates may be appointed to the receiving and data processing boards.

D. Qualifications. Each election official serving at a precinct polling place must be a qualified voter and where practicable should reside within the precinct for which appointed. The election supervisor may appoint one or more students age 16 or older as additional election officials if they substantially meet the requirements to serve in the Youth Vote Ambassador Program under AS.15.10.108. Any person so appointed shall be supervised by the election supervisor or the precinct chairperson.

E. Oath. The election officials shall take or subscribe to the following oath:

I "State your name" will honestly, faithfully, and promptly perform the duties of election board member according to law; and I will make every effort to prevent the violation of any provision of law in conducting the election.

F. Training Session. All election judges and clerks and alternates must attend a training session unless excused therefrom by the election supervisor. Any appointed official who fails to attend a training session without being excused will be subject to dismissal by the election supervisor, who shall notify the municipal administrator of the dismissal. The election supervisor

is authorized to make an appointment to fill the vacancy caused by such dismissal from the alternate judges or clerks.

G. Compensation. Judges and clerks of election shall be paid such compensation for their services as is approved by the assembly,.

H. No candidate for that election may serve as an election official.

I. Certain familial relationships should not exist between candidates and election officials in any municipal election. Those familial relationships are:

1. Mother, mother-in-law, stepmother;
2. Father, father-in-law, stepfather;
3. Sister, sister-in-law, stepsister;
4. Brother, brother-in-law, stepbrother;
5. Spouse; or
6. Person sharing the same living quarters.

If the election supervisor knows or learns that any of these relationships exist, the election official shall be notified and replaced.

* * *

5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective the date after the day of its passage.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, this 12th day of April, 2022.

Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st reading: 3/22/2022

2nd and final reading: 4/12/2022

Sponsor: Administrator