



The Municipal League of King County  
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### 2009 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE KING COUNTY ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

The Municipal League of King County requests every candidate who participates in the candidate evaluation process to **submit background information prior to his/her interview with a candidate evaluation committee**. The questionnaire is the basis of the League's research and interview process. The League's ratings are non-partisan; they are based on standards of Involvement, Effectiveness, Character, and Knowledge, all of which have been developed and refined over the past 100 years.

A printed version of the questionnaire is available for candidates who prefer to use the traditional format. To obtain a hard copy, please contact the League office. A copy of this questionnaire will be provided to Candidate Evaluation Committee members to help them prepare for your interview. Candidate responses, except the confidential section, will be available to the general public at the League website.

The Municipal League requests the following materials from candidates. Please check to make certain you have sent in your:

- Candidate Questionnaire**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Resume (education, employment, and professional activities)**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending  
 Check here if you DO NOT want your resume posted on the League's website
- Campaign Materials**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Constituent Newsletters and other publications**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Photograph**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending

**Note: Electronically submitted questionnaires are strongly preferred. All materials can be emailed to [cec@munileague.org](mailto:cec@munileague.org). They can be processed and made available on-line far more rapidly than handwritten or typed submissions.**

For non-electronic submissions, please print clearly and legibly and return the application **as soon as possible in order to allow the committee the greatest amount of time to prepare a complete report on your skills and experience.**

If you have not yet been contacted to schedule an interview, or if you have questions about the candidate evaluation program, please contact the League office at 206-264-1070.

If you have a disability and require accommodation to participate in the candidate evaluation process, please contact the CEC Coordinator at the League office.

**A League Volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return the questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.**

**Please have the questionnaire to us no later than Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

If you have any question about completing the questionnaire, please feel free to contact us at 206-264-1070

# 2009 Candidate Questionnaire

King County Election Director

## SECTION I

### BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Sherril		Huff

2. How long have you resided in King County?

Dec.9, 2008

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### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Committee to Elect Sherril Huff

Address: P.O. Box 2423

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98111

Campaign Phone: 206-619-0356

Campaign Fax: n/a

Campaign E-mail: [info@electsherrilhuff.com](mailto:info@electsherrilhuff.com)

Campaign Website: <http://www.electsherrilhuff.com>

### POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
King County Elections	Appointed by Executive and confirmed by County Council	April 2007 – present	Director
King County Elections	Appointed	Feb 2005 – April 2007	Assistant Director
Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council	Appointed	1997-1999	Executive Director. Led KRCC reform through community outreach program to expand role of the Council from land use and transportation planning functions to become a coordinating body for a broader range of issues critical to Kitsap County governments.
Bremerton City Council	Elected	1993-1997	City Council President two

			years, serving four years as a representative to Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council including President of Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council. Represented Bremerton on Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) four years.
<b>Assistant Director Washington State Lottery</b>	Appointed	1989-1992	Administrator for Contract Services, Purchasing and Facilities, Information Technology Services, Graphic Arts and Design, serving as well as Agency Legislative Liaison.
<b>Kitsap County Auditor</b>	Elected	1979 – 1986	Administrator of Elections, Records, Licensing, Accounting and Fiscal Management; developed and implemented an internal audit program for Kitsap County government that became the model for the Internal Audit program for the City of Bremerton; elected to leadership positions within the Washington State Auditor's Association and with a select committee of other County Auditors led successful efforts in election reform. Re-elected with over 70% of the vote.

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

<b>Office Title</b>	<b>Year of Run</b>
<b>Washington State Senate</b>	<b>1984</b>

## SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
  - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
  - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
  - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

King County Elections has undergone a significant transformation since the 2004 election and my interest in running for office is to continue the momentum achieved to date. Since 2005, the division has implemented more than 300 reforms and there is still work that remains such as transitioning the county to all-mail voting and implantation of new tabulation equipment needed to replace 16-year old technology designed for poll site voting. In addition, the division is on the path toward ISO 9000 certification. While still in the beginning stages of implanting this quality program, we have a long way to go in achieving this international standard. When the county achieves this, King County will be among the only in the country to take private sector best practices and apply them to elections.

The reforms we've achieved since 2004 are phenomenal and I'm interested in sustaining this momentum we've achieved through hard work. The past election marks a record of 21 successful elections since 2004 and I'm running to continue implementing important reforms.

King County needs a true non-partisan to run the office of Elections director and that is the role I've served in since taking a key management position in the agency in 2005. I have the skills and knowledge of elections to hit the ground running. As the only person in the race who served as both an elected county auditor and an appointed elections director, I know exactly what it takes to run a high performing elections office.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

When I started working for King County Elections in early 2005 in the post-2004 gubernatorial aftermath, division morale was at an all time low. With hundreds of negative headlines in the paper, staff were demoralized after months of intense scrutiny. With this said, King County Elections has come a long way since 2004. While I take credit for helping lead the organization to greatness, I'm most proud of the professional development supervisors and managers have achieved to accomplish so many reforms. With that said, I believe my greatest person strength is in providing leadership to the division and investing in people to help them gain the skills that help the county continue with the success the office has achieved.

Since becoming director of the division, I have developed a mentorship program that pushes people to become leaders and to hold one another accountable. One of my top initiatives since becoming director more than one year ago has been the investment and commitment I've made to build a high performing team. Key to this effort has been benchmarking key processes, identifying overlaps and work group hand-offs, and documentation of critical legal and process procedures. The result of this effort has been consistent improvement in the administration of elections that have put King County on the map of being one of the most well run elections offices in the nation. Our office is repeatedly invited by the Election Assistance Commission to establish best practices in the administration of elections which I believe is a commentary on the organization we have become today.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

King County Elections has undergone a significant transformation under my leadership and through the hard work of the dedicated people who have worked so hard to transform the division in to an office that is nationally respected.

Under my leadership, King County has pushed for the implementation of a quality program using the same standards Fortune 500 companies use. These Six Sigma standards benchmark against inventory discrepancies of all mail ballots received and ballots counted. The program was heralded by the National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials and Clerks as a best practice in election administration. In addition, the division is among the first election offices in the nation on the path toward [ISO 9000](#) management standards to improve customer service, vendor accountability and management practices.

In addition, King County is now on the leading edge of establishing industry security standards and audits. With more audits and tests being done on vote counting equipment before, during and after every election, King County is a leader in the nation in creating checks and balance that ensure vote counting equipment performs accurately and that systems are in place to detect any attempts of equipment tampering.

The Elections division has undergone a cultural paradigm shift since 2005. As director of elections I have implemented a management and organizational effectiveness training academy for supervisors and management to teach skills and foster an environment for becoming a high performing organization. The results of this have resulted in continued success in conducting elections.

The Elections Division succeeds when an environment is created for people to experience individual success. To do this, I believe it is critical to invest in individuals and help people become take ownership of their professional growth. This is what fosters meaningful characteristics of leaders. These are the priorities that have helped create a culture of accountability, innovation and professional development.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

My entire professional career has been to give back to my community as a dedicated public servant and active participant in charitable giving that has improved Kitsap County. As a King County public servant for the past four years, I'm looking forward to giving back to the community where I've spent most of my time.

In giving back to my community in the last two decades, I've acquired meaningful skills that translate to skills relevant to the work as Elections Director.

- I served as a mentor at Clearcreek Elementary School and assisted students at school. These children were either at risk youth with troubled home experiences, or had behavior and/or physical disabilities. The skills I developed taught me the value of investing in individuals to help them become meaningful members of their community. The lessons learned here are ones that I bring to my work at King County Elections in fostering leaders that give back to their community through their work.
- I've served as Chair and Team leader of YMCA Partners with Youth Campaign that benefited young mothers and created programs for building stronger families in the community. It recognized the important role every person has in the community to build a strong life and contribute to their neighborhoods in a meaningful and significant way.
- I was membership co-chair and helped create the Naval Museum of Undersea Technology. The Kitsap area has a long history with the naval industry. Our chief goal was to develop a museum where generations could visit and acknowledge the important contributions the military community has in the region. This was legacy building and established roots that would last a lifetime.
- I was honored with the Chief Hvas Thunderbird award for Outstanding Community Service by the Bremerton Chamber of Commerce for giving exceptional service and business support to the community. At the time, I was one of just a few number of women to have received this prestigious community award.
- As the mother of four and grandmother of two one of my most significant contributions is raising children who are part of a community and have a commitment to giving back in meaningful ways to develop a whole community.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

King County Elections oversees one third of the state's registered voters, is responsible for verifying petitions and initiatives, conducting elections for more than 100 jurisdictions and managing up to 600 employees. As the largest county in the state, King County is a leader in pushing for important legislative priorities among the elections community and thus the person who takes this office should have a track record for setting and implementing reforms. In addition, it is incumbent upon the right person have the credentials to gain the respect within the elections community and among law makers to ensure elections is appropriately funded and key initiatives help safeguard elections. Likewise, as King County Elections is often tapped to weigh in on security reforms, recounts and a host of other issues among our peers within the elections community nationally, it will benefit the division if the director had a thorough understanding of national election climate and seek to set the tone both at the federal and state level in setting critical election reforms.

I believe the three most important qualities of the elected elections director are: 1) a dedicated and trustworthy public servant 2) proven and successful manager; and 3) leadership skills.

Overseeing elections for a third of the voters in King County is more than a full-time job and can be thankless at times. In doing this, it is critical the elections director be a trusted public servant with a record and history of giving back to his or her community. The day-to-day work involves more than just running for office or giving community speeches; it requires a person with a track record of working with stakeholders and the political parties while balancing the non-partisan responsibilities laid out by law in the best interest of the voters.

The second most important duty of this position is to manage more than 600 people in up to six elections a year. A proven manager will have project management experience and have a background of successfully managing people for success. 2009 will be a year of significant change with the closing of poll sites and change to vote by mail as well as the implementation of new tabulation equipment. It is critical the elections director have a track record for being able to manage a large organization through change.

Lastly, the third most important duty of the office is to continue to push the division toward excellence both in terms of implementing quality standards and encouraging meaningful reforms in election laws. To accomplish this, the most successful candidate will have proven leadership skills to help usher in change and advocate for stable reforms that serve to safeguard elections. The election director sets the standard for what the direction and priorities of the office will be both internally and within the county government, state and local and national elections community. As the largest county in the state, King County is looked to as a leader in implementing election reforms and ensuring accessible voting options for all voters. The first elected director of the Elections Division should have the qualities and skills to continue to push for state and local election reforms that keep the division on the path for excellence and continued success.

**EDUCATION BACKGROUND SUMMARY  
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report is distributed to voters in print and on our website. It includes a summary of the candidate's education. Please summarize your education in 120 characters (letters, punctuation, and space all combined). The League will delete material that exceeds the space limit by beginning with the last entry. Suggested order is (degree) (subject) (school) (year, if desired).

**Note:** *If this question is left blank the League will not include education information in your candidate profile.*

***Education***

Attended the following institutions:

- **University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California**
- **Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington**
- **University of Washington, Seattle, Washington**

**CIVIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY  
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report includes a summary of each candidate's civic involvement. Please summarize your civic involvement in the space below. We will make every attempt to include the information in the Candidate Evaluation Report as submitted. Due to space restrictions in the Report, your response is limited to 500 characters (letters, punctuation, and spaces all combined). It is important that you list your involvement beginning with the most important and ending with the least important. If you exceed the length of response permitted, or if the League should find it necessary to shorten responses for publication purposes, deletions will be made beginning with the last item listed.

**Note:** *This information will appear verbatim on the League's Candidate Evaluation Report. If this question is left blank, the Municipal League will not include information on your civic involvement in the Report.*

Check here if you would like the Municipal League to copy the first 500 characters from Question 4 to paste into this section.

**Community Service & Awards**

Chair and Team leader, YMCA Partners with Youth Campaign

Membership Co-Chair, Naval Museum of Undersea Technology

Board member, Bremerton Symphony Association

Mentor, Clearcreek Elementary School

Board member, Admiral Foundation

Awarded the Chief Hvas Thunderbird Award for Outstanding Community Service by the Bremerton Chamber of Commerce.

Recognized by the Washington State Auditor's Association for leadership on legislative issues

Recognized by National Association of County Officials with awards for "Excellence in County Programs", for the Internal Audit program and the County's Annual Financial Report

## Finished!

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If at all possible, send your response to the Municipal League electronically as an email attachment, or insert it into an e-mail message ([cec@munileague.org](mailto:cec@munileague.org)). Mail and fax numbers are listed below. If the League has not contacted you to schedule an interview, please call the League office at your earliest convenience.

Don't forget to send the following to the Municipal League: a resume, a photo, campaign literature, and, if you are an incumbent, constituent newsletters and other materials. Please use the check-off list on the cover sheet of this packet to indicate which items you have sent.

**A League Volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return the questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.**

**Please have the questionnaire to us no later than Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND GOOD LUCK IN YOUR CAMPAIGN!

### THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OF KING COUNTY

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