

THE ABC'S OF CAMPAIGNS

A primer for novices



Presented by the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City

March 29, 2008

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City, a nonpartisan organization dedicated to engaging the public in informed and active participation in their government, presents this workshop on the ABC's of Campaigns. With a constant need for good people to step forward to run for public office, the workshop is designed for the novice. The workshop will attempt to demystify the political process. Whether your desire is to serve on a city council, school board, special district board or another office, this is your opportunity to learn what is involved from fellow community members of your community.

The three panels will address How to Decide to Run, How to Organize a Campaign and How to Run a Campaign.

The first panel will discuss issues such as the impacts on a candidate's personal and professional life, impacts on a candidate's family, and other questions to ask of oneself when considering running for office.

The second panel will deal with the period of time between when you decide to run for office and the beginning of the actual campaign

effort. It will deal with the mechanics of organizing a campaign, the legal requirements, and the practical elements.

The third panel will examine the details of how to actually run a campaign. For this we turn to an expert at running a campaign and a former school board member who first ran for office at the tender age of 19.

Finally, as you consider whether to run for office or not, remember that there are many ways to serve your community. You can be a volunteer who serves on a committee or commission, or you can run for office. Examine your own goals and see if you are someone who wants to *do* something or someone who wants to *be* something. That will help you determine which role is the one for you.

How to Decide to Run

Questions for the potential candidate to ask herself/himself.

Why am I running? (answer this in 25 words or less)

What will be the impact on my family?

What are the extra demands on time of an elected official?

What does my spouse/partner think of this idea?

What does my boss think of this idea?

Can my work schedule adjust to meet the demands of this office?

Am I ready for the lack of privacy in my life?

Do my talents/interests fit the job description for this office?

Do I really know what this job entails?

Can I work with colleagues with different opinions?

Can I take criticism both fair and unfair?

Can I listen to constituents who are both reasonable and unreasonable?

Can I hold up under the stress of a campaign? Meet the public? Deal with the media?

Is my desire to contribute to the community strong enough to answer all of the above in the affirmative?

What have I done in my personal/private life to prepare myself for this job? i.e. my public service credentials

Can I balance my idealist tendencies with pragmatic tendencies?

Why should the voters 'hire' me?

How to Prepare to Run

How do I fulfill the legal requirements of candidacy for the state and for the jurisdiction?

What about dealing with the financial requirements of a campaign?

Who should be my treasurer? What burdens am I laying on that person?

Who should chair my campaign? Who should be on my steering committee?

How do I announce my candidacy?

What extra burden have I laid on myself once I announced?

Do I need a consultant?

How do I find out what works in a campaign for my jurisdiction?

When do I actually start to run for office, as opposed to getting ready?

What are the critical issues associated with this office?

How to Run a Campaign

What type of fundraising methods will the campaign use?

How many volunteers will be needed to run the campaign?

What are the bulk mail and post office requirements for sending out campaign material?

What are the reporting requirements? Deadlines for filing reports.

What is the best method for me to deal with the media?

What is our timeline from announcement to election?

What issues do I need to address with position papers?

Which leader in the community can I trust for advice and opinions?

What is our budget? Yikes! That much!!!

Who handles publicity? How much? What type? Letters, signs, media ads, internet, etc. Remember the difference between on and off the record.

When I announce, how do I do it?

What will be our get-out-the-vote strategy?

Telephone blitz? Check off at the polls? Internet?

AFTER THE ELECTION

Have a victory party win or lose.

Thank workers in person or by letter.

Analyze what went well, win or lose.

Congratulate yourself for winning or trying.

File campaign finance reports

Here is a series of questions that voters might be asking of candidates for school board and for city council.

School Board Candidates

Will the candidate be an advocate for all ethnic groups, all economic groups, the gifted and the disabled?

What are the candidate's issues?

School budget, class size, staff development, safe campuses, curriculum materials, career preparation, classroom computers, health issues.

Is this a one-issue candidate?

How long has the candidate lived in the school district?

If the candidate has children, where do they attend school?

Does the candidate's background relate to public education?

What has the candidate done recently that shows an interest in public education?

Has the candidate served on school district committees?

Does the candidate engage in personal attacks?

Where does the financial support come from for this candidate?

Is there a delay in reporting contributions?

Does the candidate respond to questionnaires?

Does the candidate attend candidate forums?

Does the candidate agree to press interviews?

Does the candidate accept speaking engagements from a variety of groups?

Did the candidate sign up for Smart Voter?

Who endorses the candidate?

Are they local?

What issues do they represent?

Who is Funding the Campaign?

Does it show broad based support?

Are there a lot of out-of-area contributors?

How might contributions affect the candidate's conduct on office?

City Council Candidates

Does the candidate understand and consider the needs of the various neighborhoods and areas of the city?

What points of view does the candidate represent?

What are the candidate's issues?

Public safety, maintaining neighborhoods, supporting business, land use, parks and recreation, libraries, budget and taxes, redevelopment, affordable housing, transportation, environmental protection, large developments.

Is the candidate a one-issue candidate?

What are the candidate's experience and background?

How long has the candidate lived in the city?

Is the candidate knowledgeable about the city?

Does the candidate have a history of community involvement?

Has the candidate served on council appointed committees?

What are the candidate's qualifications?

Is the candidate respectful and fair?

Does the candidate care about the people of the city?

Is the candidate responsible, trustworthy and a good citizen?

Does the candidate exhibit leadership qualities?

Does the candidate have the ability to analyze complex issues such as land use and budget?

How Does the Candidate Communicate with the Voters?

Does s/he respond to questionnaires?

Does s/he attend candidate forums?

Agree to press interviews?

Accept speaking engagements from a variety of groups?

Answer the questions that are asked?

Send mailers that are accurate and that reflect the city's issues?

Sign up for Smart Voter?

Who Funds and Endorses the Candidate?

Where does the money come from?

What issues do the endorsers represent?

Do financial reports show the candidate has broad-based support?

Do financial reports indicate that the candidate is funded by out-of-the-area contributors?

How might contributions affect the candidate's conduct in office?

Local Agency Survey Data

| Agency | Meets | Time | Pays | Benefits? | Election in | Of | Nominate at | Statement cost | Words? | Term Limits |
|------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------|--------|-----------------|
| ACWD | 2nd Thursday | 6:00 PM | \$175/day, max 6 days/month | Same as employees | November | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| Fremont | First 4 Tuesdays | 7:00 PM | \$1407 CM, \$2211 Mayor/month | \$450/mo toward | November | Even years | Fremont | | 200 | 2 conseq. terms |
| FUSD | 2nd & 4th Wed. | 6:30 PM | \$787.50/month | Single Med & Dental | November | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| Newark | 2nd & 4th Thurs. | 7:30 PM | \$1134 CM, \$2479 Mayor/month | \$540/mo toward | November | Even years | Newark | | 200 | No |
| NHUSD | 1st & 3rd Tues. | 7:30 PM | \$400/month | Same as employees | November | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| NUSD | 1st & 3rd Tues. | 7:30 PM | | | November | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| Ohlone | 2nd & 4th Wed. | 7:00 PM | \$277.83/month | Same as employees | November | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| Union City | 2nd & 4th Tues. | 7:00 PM | \$1424 CM, \$2211 Mayor/month | \$500 Med + \$200 Car/mo | November | Even years | Union City | | 200 | 3 conseq. terms |
| USD | 2nd & 4th Mon. | 7:00 PM | \$212.10/mtg., max 6/month | | June | Even years | ROV | | 200 | No |
| WHHS | 2nd & 4th Wed. | 6:00 PM | | | November | Even years | ROV/WHHS | | 300 | No |

Notes

Newark Unified and Washington Hospital did not respond to our e-mail request for information.

Statement costs are determined by Registrar of voters and are based on a per voter fee, which is not know until costs are computed. Candidates post a deposit and are refunded or billed for more. 2006 deposit for Fremont was \$2000.

Newark benefit amount is paid to councilmembers who may purchase benefits or retain the amount as income.

ROV is Registrar of Voters in Oakland at the Rene Davidson Court House.

ACWD requires boardmembers to serve on two committees which normally meet monthly.



www.lwvfnc.org www.smartvoter.org