



DFL Duluth Exposed  
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## Ranked Choice Voting Exposed DFL Duluth Style

Why did the DFL Duluth City CLOWNcil use Ranked Choice Voting to make an appointment to the vacant District 2 CLOWNcil seat? The results have been embarrassing at best.

Prior to Minneapolis' recent Ranked Choice Voting Election, Charter Commission Member Devin Rice wrote an opinion piece entitled "Ranked-Choice voting hurts Minneapolis Minorities". Based upon his thorough analysis of the 2009 ballots, he showed minority and lower socioeconomic precincts had a much higher "spoiled ballot" and error rate than the white/affluent voting precincts.

The Ranked Choice Voting lobby vilified him and accused him of saying the minority community is not "smart enough" to vote properly.

The most recent 2013 Ranked Choice Voting election for mayor (ballot attached) was deemed a confusing failure by local and national press. The after several days of counting, the "winner" did not receive majority support. More people voted against the winner than for the winner.

Now, two noted political scientists have shown a disturbing disparity in participation and voting errors with low income neighborhoods and communities of color vs. the affluent, politically connected white neighborhoods.

Lawrence R. Jacobs, director of the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School and Joanne M. Miller, an associate professor in the university's Department of Political Science, passion run hot in the RCV lobby in Minneapolis and point out their research is not an "interpretation" or "opinion", but "rather a sober, objective analysis of voting results from the Minneapolis city clerk's data."



St. Paul suffered from the same problems, and a typical “spoiled ballot” is attached.

Just days after Professors from the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota find that communities of color and the poor had problems using Ranked Choice Voting, the City Attorney, Clerk, and Council of DFL Duluth and representatives of the major lobby group, admit to not understanding it.

DFL Duluth, long considered the next Minnesota town to fall for Ranked Choice Voting, may have just put a nail in that coffin.

To seat a new CLOWNcilor, the City Council used ranked choice voting. After six rounds of voting, there was a question about the counting. The city clerk and attorney reportedly consulted with staff of FairVote, the group that promotes the use of RCV and gets paid to educate people on its use. After some consultation, they declared a winner, and the council unanimously appointed the winner.

Turns out, they counted the Ranked Choice Voting ballots incorrectly. One person at Fairvote now says it was done incorrectly.

Local paper opines "Perhaps this is why ranked-choice voting hasn't been able to catch on, even after years of being touted as the modern, fairer alternative to — to what, counting? Bottom line, it's more confusing than a David Lynch movie, and — in at least one instance now — can produce questionable results."

<http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/event/article/id/291404/>

<http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/event/article/id/291458/>

## Ranked-choice voting: By the data, still flawed

Article by: Lawrence R. Jacobs and Joanne M. Miller  
February 12, 2014 - 6:09 PM

Ranked-choice voting — the grand experiment in elections that Minneapolis tried out again last fall — may salve some of what ails our democracy. But, for now, it leaves open the well-documented voting gap that favors white voters and the affluent. That populist conclusion arises from [careful statistical analyses of votes in the Minneapolis election](#) and the evidence it yields of differences in participation between communities of color and the poor vs. their white and affluent counterparts.



Brian Peterson • Star Tribune,

We take our hats off to the enthusiasts of ranked-choice voting (or RCV) for sizing up problems in our democracy and then rolling up their sleeves to do the hard work of actually reforming elections in Minneapolis. We also salute another accomplishment: The RCV process — in which voters rank up to three preferred candidates, and then the weakest vote-getters are dropped until one of those remaining achieves a majority — accomplished something that truly astounds us. Negative campaigning became bad politics.

Slamming an opponent risked alienating his or her supporters and losing any chance of securing their second- or third-place rankings. Here's something we've never seen: The media and voters struggled to detect candidate criticisms of one another during the Minneapolis mayor's election. Did anyone following the 2012 presidential election struggle to identify Barack Obama's and Mitt Romney's differences?

But fans of RCV promised more. FairVote Minnesota, its champion, announced in its 2013 press kit that the reform ensures that a "larger, more diverse swath of the electorate gets to participate in the political process." Important promise — equal voice for each citizen is a fundamental democratic principle. What does the evidence show?

We carefully examined voting in the 13 wards in Minneapolis to see if RCV contributed to broader participation based on actual vote returns obtained from the Minneapolis city clerk. Unfortunately, the evidence shows a clear pattern. Voters who were more affluent and white turned out at a higher rate, completed their ballots more accurately and were more likely to use all three opportunities to rank their most preferred candidates compared with voters living in low-income neighborhoods and in communities of color.

Specifically, we compared the three wards that stood out as the most affluent (11, 12 and 13) with those that were least affluent (2, 3, and 5), as well as those that had the highest percentage of white voters (10, 11, 12 and 13) with those with greatest proportion of people from communities of color (4, 5 and 9). We did not include the Sixth Ward, because its voting participation was an outlier; the disparities we describe below are stronger when the Sixth Ward is included.

RCV did not close the well-documented turnout gap that favors affluent and white voters. Among registered voters in the most affluent wards, 42 percent turned out in the Minneapolis election, compared with 28 percent in the poorest areas. In wards with the greatest concentration of whites, 39 percent of voters turned out, compared with 26 percent in wards with the most people of color. These differences are statistically significant, justifying a high level of confidence in them.

The complicated RCV ballot — including its new rules and rows of candidates — raised another obstacle. In economically better off sections of town, 3.36 percent of the ballots were "spoiled" — the legal term for voter stumbles in selecting

candidates according to strict guidelines — compared with 4.92 percent in the poorer parts. The comparable proportions for communities with smaller and larger proportions of racial minorities were 3.37 percent and 5.77 percent, respectively. These differences are highly significant in statistical terms.

Advocates for RCV also champion its pioneering process for recording a fuller range of voter preferences by allowing citizens to rank up to three candidates. Unfortunately, the better-off were advantaged here, too. In affluent wards, 21 percent of voters failed to fill out all three preferences, compared with 24 percent in poorer neighborhoods. The comparable proportions for white and minority wards were 22 percent and 26 percent, respectively. Although these differences may appear small, they are highly significant in statistical terms, indicating a robust and important pattern.

How important are these results? Racial and income disparities in Minneapolis triggered public alarm when they produced one of the largest “education gaps” in the country. What we are pointing to represents another disparity — a “democracy gap.”

Passions run hot on RCV. Our research is not an “interpretation” or “opinion.” It is a sober, objective analysis of voting results from the Minneapolis city clerk’s data.

Let’s turn down the passion around RCV and put on our thinking caps. RCV contributes to improving our democracy in certain respects but still falls short of its promise to improve participation by all parts of our community.

What can be done? Plans to decrease the number of candidates and possibly revise the ballot to reduce its complexity might help. We also would recommend new thought about how the city and media can improve the quality of information that is distributed to all communities.

Candidates have a role, too. Playing hide-and-seek on differences to avoid alienating opponents’ supporters deliberately trips up voters who are trying to accurately sort the campaigns. We need to set expectations and scrutinize candidates to come clean on where they stand and how they differ from their rivals.

*Lawrence R. Jacobs is director of the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School. Joanne M. Miller is an associate professor in the university’s Department of Political Science.*

## **Rank Choice Voting and the 2013 Minneapolis Elections**

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Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Minnesota

February 2014

Our article in the Star Tribune on February 13, 2014 presents evidence from the 2013 elections in Minneapolis that Rank Choice Voting leaves open voting gap that favors white voters and the affluent. In particular, our statistical analyses of voting results reveals a clear pattern: voters who were more affluent and white turned out at a higher rate, completed their ballots more accurately, and were more likely to use all three opportunities to rank their most preferred candidates compared to voters living in low-income neighborhoods and in communities of color.

Below we describe our data, measures, and findings in more detail.

To estimate the percentage of people living under the poverty line and the percentage of people of color in each of the wards, we used census information on Minneapolis neighborhoods. Neighborhood-level race data is available at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/census/2010/index.htm>, and neighborhood-level income data is available at <http://www.mncompass.org/twincities/neighborhoods.php>. We assigned each neighborhood to the ward it was in, or split neighborhoods between wards if they fell across ward boundaries. We then ranked the wards to determine the wards with most/least residents of color and which had the most/least poverty residents living below the poverty line. Table 1 shows these data for all 13 wards. Specifically, we compared the three wards that stood out as the most affluent (11, 12, and 13) with those that were least (2, 3, and 5), as well as those that had the highest percent of white voters (10, 11, 12, and 13) with those with greatest proportion of people from communities of color (4, 5, and 9). (We did not include Ward 6 because its voting participation was an outlier; the disparities we describe below are stronger when Ward 6 is included.)

To examine undervoting, we used the actual vote data provided by the City Clerk (available at <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/results/2013/index.htm> under 'Mayor Data File .xlsx'). We coded whether each voter had ranked all three possible mayor choices, or whether s/he had only used one or two of the available choices (undervoted). We then compared the percentage of people who undervoted in the wards with the highest percentage of residents of color to the wards with the lowest percentage of residents of color, for the wards with the most/least residents living below the poverty line. Figure 1 presents the results of our analyses of undervotes. The green bars compare the average percentage of undervotes among the most and least affluent wards and the blue bars compare the average percentage of undervotes among the wards with the lowest and highest percentage of residents of color.

To examine spoiled ballots, we used the summary data provided by the City Clerk (available at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/canvassing/WCMS1P-116625> under 'Municipal Canvas Report'). To find the percentage of spoiled ballots in each ward (or subset of wards), we took the number of spoiled ballots and divided it by the total number of the ballots (spoiled or unspoiled) cast in that ward. We then compared the percentages as above. Figure 2 presents the results of our analyses of spoiled ballots. The green bars compare the average percentage of spoiled ballots among the most and least affluent wards and the blue bars compare the average percentage of spoiled ballots among the wards with the lowest and highest percentage of residents of color.

Finally, to examine turnout, we used the same basic approach as for the analysis of spoiled ballots (available at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/canvassing/WCMS1P-116625> under 'Municipal Canvas Report'). To find the turnout for each ward, we followed the City Clerk by dividing the number of voters by the number of registered voters (including same-day registrations). We then compared the percentages as above. Figure 3 presents the results of our analyses of turnout. The green bars compare the average turnout percentage among the most and least affluent wards and the blue bars compare the average turnout percentage among the wards with the lowest and highest percentage of residents of color.

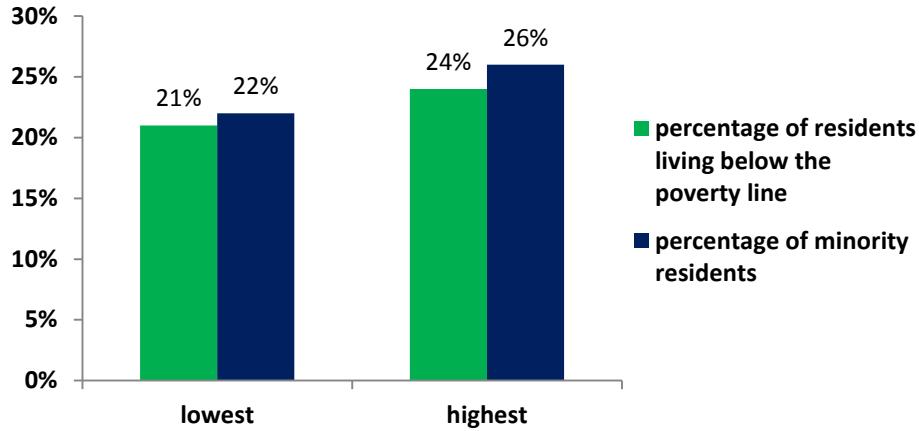
Table 1. Racial composition and income by Minneapolis ward

Ward	% white residents	% living over poverty line
1	71%	76%
2	72%	62%
3	57%	65%
4	39%	77%
5	18%	63%
6*	39%	68%
7	64%	82%
8	51%	81%
9	50%	79%
10	75%	81%
11	75%	90%
12	78%	91%
13	88%	97%

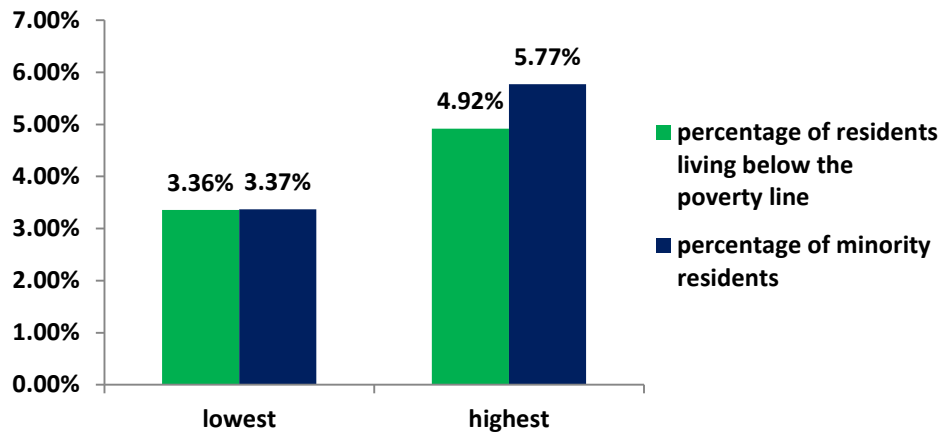
Note: ward demographics were estimated using data from the neighborhoods in each ward. Neighborhood race data from [minneapolismn.gov/census](http://minneapolismn.gov/census). Neighborhood poverty data from [mncompass.org](http://mncompass.org).

\*Ward 6 excluded from analysis as an outlier.

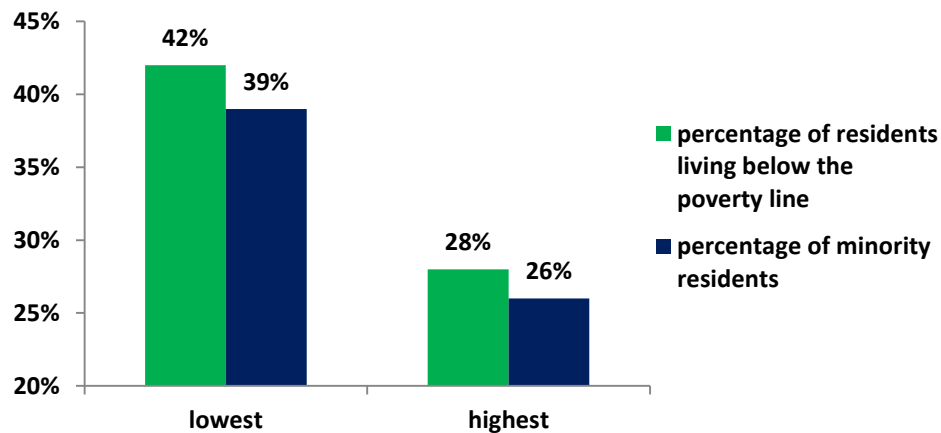
**Figure 1. Percent Undervotes,  
2013 Minneapolis Mayoral Election**



**Figure 2. Percent Spoiled Ballots,  
2013 Minneapolis Mayoral Election**



**Figure 3. Turnout Percentage,  
2013 Minneapolis Election**



MINNEAPOLIS W-6 P-01

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

NOVEMBER 5, 2013

# OFFICIAL BALLOT CITY GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT

Judge

Judge

## RANKED CHOICE VOTING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VOTERS

Rank up to 3 different candidates for each office.  
Vote from left to right in each office in order of your preference.  
Completely fill in the oval next to your choice, like this: ● CANDIDATE NAME

## CITY OFFICES

### MAYOR

Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1	2nd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st choice. Select One	3
<input type="radio"/> EDMUND BERNARD BRUYERE Legacy-Next Generation <input type="radio"/> CAPTAIN JACK SPARROW Count All Rankings <input type="radio"/> JACKIE CHERRYHOMES Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER ROBIN ZIMMERMAN Libertarian <input type="radio"/> CYD GORMAN Police Reform <input type="radio"/> JOSHUA REA End Homelessness Now <input type="radio"/> MERRILL ANDERSON Jobs & Justice <input type="radio"/> DOUG MANN Green Party <input type="radio"/> JAMES "JIMMY" L. STROUD, JR. The People's Choice <input type="radio"/> TONY LANE Socialist Workers Party <input type="radio"/> JEFFREY ALAN WAGNER Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER CLARK Libertarian Party <input type="radio"/> MARK ANDREW Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> CAM WINTON independent responsible inclusive <input type="radio"/> JOHN CHARLES WILSON Lauraist Communist <input type="radio"/> NEAL BAXTER Independent <input type="radio"/> JAYMIE KELLY Stop Foreclosures Now <input type="radio"/> ALICIA K. BENNETT Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> MIKE GOULD Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> TROY BENJEGERDES Local Energy/Food <input type="radio"/> OLE SAVIOR Republican <input type="radio"/> KURTIS W. HANNA Pirate Party <input type="radio"/> ABDUL M RAHAMAN "THE ROCK" We the people... <input type="radio"/> BILL KAHN Last Minneapolis Mayor <input type="radio"/> STEPHANIE WOODRUFF Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> JOHN LESLIE HARTWIG Independent <input type="radio"/> DAN COHEN Jobs Downtown Casino <input type="radio"/> BOB "AGAIN" CARNEY JR Demand Transit Revolution <input type="radio"/> JAMES EVERETT Green Party <input type="radio"/> DON SAMUELS Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> BETSY HODGES Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> RAHN V. WORKCUFF Independence Party <input type="radio"/> BOB FINE Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> MARK V ANDERSON Simplify Government <input type="radio"/> GREGG A. IVERSON Democratic-Farmer-Labor  <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> EDMUND BERNARD BRUYERE Legacy-Next Generation <input type="radio"/> CAPTAIN JACK SPARROW Count All Rankings <input type="radio"/> JACKIE CHERRYHOMES Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> CHRISTOPHER ROBIN ZIMMERMAN Libertarian <input type="radio"/> CYD GORMAN Police Reform <input type="radio"/> JOSHUA REA End Homelessness Now <input type="radio"/> MERRILL ANDERSON Jobs & Justice <input type="radio"/> DOUG MANN Green Party <input type="radio"/> JAMES "JIMMY" L. STROUD, JR. 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### COUNCIL MEMBER WARD SIX

Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1	2	3
<input type="radio"/> ROBERT LILLIGREN Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI WARSAME Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI ADDOW Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABUKAR ABDI Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> SHEIKH ABDUL Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> MAHAMED A CALI Democratic-Farmer-Labor  <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> ROBERT LILLIGREN Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI WARSAME Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI ADDOW Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABUKAR ABDI Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> SHEIKH ABDUL Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> MAHAMED A CALI Democratic-Farmer-Labor  <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> ROBERT LILLIGREN Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI WARSAME Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABDI ADDOW Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> ABUKAR ABDI Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> SHEIKH ABDUL Democratic-Farmer-Labor <input type="radio"/> MAHAMED A CALI Democratic-Farmer-Labor  <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any

VOTE FRONT AND BACK OF BALLOT

MINNEAPOLIS W-6 P-01



MINNEAPOLIS W-6 P-01	HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN	NOVEMBER 5, 2013
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**ATTENTION VOTERS:** See other side of ballot for voting instructions

**BOARD OF ESTIMATE AND TAXATION**

Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. Two to be elected.

1	2	3
1st Choice Select One	2nd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st choice. Select One	3rd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st and 2nd choices. Select One
<input type="radio"/> DAVID PASCOE	<input type="radio"/> DAVID PASCOE	<input type="radio"/> DAVID PASCOE
<input type="radio"/> CAROL J. BECKER	<input type="radio"/> CAROL J. BECKER	<input type="radio"/> CAROL J. BECKER
<input type="radio"/> DOUGLAS SEMBLA	<input type="radio"/> DOUGLAS SEMBLA	<input type="radio"/> DOUGLAS SEMBLA
<input type="radio"/> DAVID B WHEELER	<input type="radio"/> DAVID B WHEELER	<input type="radio"/> DAVID B WHEELER
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-in, if any	Write-in, if any	Write-in, if any

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER AT LARGE**

Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. Three to be elected.

1	2	3
1st Choice Select One	2nd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st choice. Select One	3rd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st and 2nd choices. Select One
<input type="radio"/> CASPER HILL	<input type="radio"/> CASPER HILL	<input type="radio"/> CASPER HILL
<input type="radio"/> MEG FORNEY	<input type="radio"/> MEG FORNEY	<input type="radio"/> MEG FORNEY
<input type="radio"/> JOHN ERWIN	<input type="radio"/> JOHN ERWIN	<input type="radio"/> JOHN ERWIN
<input type="radio"/> MARY LYNN MCPHERSON	<input type="radio"/> MARY LYNN MCPHERSON	<input type="radio"/> MARY LYNN MCPHERSON
<input type="radio"/> HASHIM YONIS	<input type="radio"/> HASHIM YONIS	<input type="radio"/> HASHIM YONIS
<input type="radio"/> ANNIE YOUNG	<input type="radio"/> ANNIE YOUNG	<input type="radio"/> ANNIE YOUNG
<input type="radio"/> JASON STONE	<input type="radio"/> JASON STONE	<input type="radio"/> JASON STONE
<input type="radio"/> TOM NORDYKE	<input type="radio"/> TOM NORDYKE	<input type="radio"/> TOM NORDYKE
<input type="radio"/> STEVE BARLAND	<input type="radio"/> STEVE BARLAND	<input type="radio"/> STEVE BARLAND
<input type="radio"/> ISHMAEL ISRAEL	<input type="radio"/> ISHMAEL ISRAEL	<input type="radio"/> ISHMAEL ISRAEL
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
write-in, if any	write-in, if any	write-in, if any

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER DISTRICT THREE**

Rank your first, second and third choice candidates in the columns below. One to be elected.

1	2	3
1st Choice Select One	2nd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st choice. Select One	3rd Choice, if any Must be DIFFERENT from your 1st and 2nd choices. Select One
<input type="radio"/> SCOTT VREELAND	<input type="radio"/> SCOTT VREELAND	<input type="radio"/> SCOTT VREELAND
<input type="radio"/> SAID MAYE	<input type="radio"/> SAID MAYE	<input type="radio"/> SAID MAYE
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-in, if any	Write-in, if any	Write-in, if any

**CITY QUESTIONS**

To vote for a question, fill in the oval next to the word "YES" on that question. To vote against a question, fill in the oval next to the word "NO" on that question.

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MINNEAPOLIS CITY CHARTER**

Shall the Minneapolis City Charter be amended in the form of a complete revision which (1) modernizes the Charter; (2) redrafts its provisions for brevity and in plain language; (3) reorganizes the Charter into nine articles, and groups related provisions together; (4) removes from the Charter certain provisions for possible enactment into ordinance; and (5) retains the current role and relationships of City boards and commissions?

- YES
- NO

To vote for a question, fill in the oval next to the word "YES" on that question. To vote against a question, fill in the oval next to the word "NO" on that question.

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE MINNEAPOLIS CITY CHARTER LIQUOR-LICENSING PROVISIONS**

Shall the Minneapolis City Charter provisions relating to the sale of liquor and wine be amended by reorganizing and rewriting in plain modern language?

- YES
- NO

**VOTE FRONT AND BACK OF BALLOT**

# CITY ELECTION BALLOT

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA  
NOVEMBER 5, 2013

## Follow these Ranked Voting instructions carefully:

- Select only one candidate for each of your choices
- You are not required to choose more than one candidate
- Do not select the same candidate for more than one choice
- To vote, completely fill in the oval next to the candidate of your choice, like this:

### CITY OFFICES

#### MAYOR VOTE FOR ONE

1st choice Select one	2nd choice (if any) Select one	3rd choice (if any) Select one
<input checked="" type="radio"/> TIM HOLDEN <input type="radio"/> KURT (DIRTY KURTY) DORNFELD <input type="radio"/> SHARON ANDERSON <input checked="" type="radio"/> CHRIS COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input checked="" type="radio"/> TIM HOLDEN <input type="radio"/> KURT (DIRTY KURTY) DORNFELD <input checked="" type="radio"/> SHARON ANDERSON <input checked="" type="radio"/> CHRIS COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input checked="" type="radio"/> TIM HOLDEN <input type="radio"/> KURT (DIRTY KURTY) DORNFELD <input type="radio"/> SHARON ANDERSON <input checked="" type="radio"/> CHRIS COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any
4th choice (if any) Select one	5th choice (if any) Select one	
<input type="radio"/> TIM HOLDEN <input type="radio"/> KURT (DIRTY KURTY) DORNFELD <input type="radio"/> SHARON ANDERSON <input type="radio"/> CHRIS COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	<input type="radio"/> TIM HOLDEN <input type="radio"/> KURT (DIRTY KURTY) DORNFELD <input type="radio"/> SHARON ANDERSON <input type="radio"/> CHRIS COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> Write-in, if any	

Turn over ballot to vote on school board offices

VOTE FRONT AND BACK OF BALLOT