

3. Preparation and Setup for Election Tallies

Conducting a small STV election involves more than just carrying out a tally without mishap, even though the tally is a core technical operation to any election. All the myriad tasks which must go into the preparation for the tally are vital, and may prove to be more challenging than the tally itself. Personal qualities necessary for successful preparation would have to include the possession of a fair degree of common sense, as well as the ability to adapt to unique circumstances unlikely as this might seem within an organization made up primarily of anarchists and visionaries.

If the election team has control over the design of the ballots, then you will do well to make sure that they are easy to read and understand, and also easy to mark unambiguously. *Grid format ballots* have the advantage of reducing the need for interpretation of the voter's penmanship, but time and circumstances do not always permit the creation of grid ballots. You will see there are various sample ballots provided throughout this handbook. Feel free to use them as templates for designing ballots according to your own particular needs.

Ballot instructions are a good idea, provided they are clear and concise. Probably they need to consist of no more than a sentence or so, as a cluttered ballot may serve only to confuse voters

Local Station Board to PNB Committees				
Committee of Inclusion				
Fill in no more than one square per rank				
<i>KPFK PNB Reps:</i>	R A N K I N G			
	1	2	3	4
Dave Adelson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lydia Brazon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alan Minsky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don White	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GRID BALLOT

who may already be partially confused over grids, STV etc. They can be read aloud to the electorate, if the election is done entirely at one gathering or meeting. However, be forewarned that reading ballot instructions to an LSB can prove to be the converse of a rewarding experience. Some board members will view your efforts to address them as an opportunity for sidetalk and commotion. You may even sense the collective attention drifting away to non electoral diversions. In spite of this seeming uphill climb, the complexity of STV demands that time be set aside for the election operators to address the electorate and answer any questions that may arise. If nothing else, you may seize such an occasion to urge board members not to use duplicate rankings and to avoid creating gaps on their ballots.

Probably no preparation is so important as being sure to have appropriate tally forms at hand. These may be custom designed and printed for a particular election, or could be copies of the sample forms included in Chapter 7. These include a vote count form and a round by round result form, with spaces to perform a *checksum* see Chapter 5 .

Assuming you have a designated venue and volunteers scheduled in advance to assist with the election, you are well on your way to holding a successful small election. You must have enough table space, a few chairs, and enough room to move around. It is very important to keep sound levels at an acceptable level, so that information transmitted orally will be clearly audible. If for any reason you intend to use a computer or other electronic equipment, obviously additional table space and an electrical outlet with power strip will be required.

STV tallies are performed by placing ballots into piles, each associated with a candidate, plus the *exhausted tally*. The EWG recommends using shallow trays of some sort to keep piles of ballots nicely separated. Another reason for using ballot trays is that they can easily be labeled and covered as necessary.

An assortment of office supplies such as index cards, varieties of tape, markers in several colors and line widths, ball point pens, clipboards, notepads, cardboard for spur of the moment signs, scissors, paper clips, a pocket calculator, a good stapler, all are liable to come in handy. At the conclusion of the event you may want to seal the ballots in an over sized envelope, so be sure to have some of those on hand as well.

Any explanatory material about STV voting which you may have in your possession is likely a good thing to make available. Also, a copy of the Pacifica Bylaws, specifically Article Fifteen, Section I, *Voting Methods* which you may have heard about will likely be useful for answering questions from observers.

Most small elections in Pacifica will be held as part of a Local Station Board meeting, so it is important to correlate the election time and procedures with the chair of the LSB, or facilitator if it is some other type of meeting . Election operators need to have a reasonably assured time to begin, plus a chance to address (briefly but uninterrupted) the gathering at the beginning of the election process, to describe the procedures and issue any needed specific instructions. Such instructions should without fail be issued verbally before any ballots are distributed. Prior arrangements should be made for the distribution, collection, and tally of the ballots, and some sort of separate space designated for the tally, which should always be carried out in full view of observers.

Depending on anticipated duration of the tally process, you may consider obtaining distract

tion and comfort items, such as snacks, soft drinks, coffee, the day's newspapers etc., all of which tend to have a soothing effect on observers.

Importantly, preparing in advance to have results posted on the station website in a timely manner should help contribute to a sense of transparency. Possibly an officer of the LSB or a volunteer is involved in getting notice of meetings posted on the website and could facilitate making this happen. Otherwise election results could be incorporated into meeting minutes and posted wherever those are made available.

Local Station Board to PNB Committees

_____ **Committee**

Fill in no more than one square per rank

KPFK non-PNB Delegates:

	RANKING						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GENERIC GRID BALLOT