VoteWA Governance   Effective 12/09/2020

Purpose

VoteWA Governance is intended to ensure delivery of ongoing operational value to county auditors, election administrators, the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS), and the voting public through proactive, engaged governance and support of decisions that impact system usage for voter registration and election management systems and processes. This plan will be implemented on December 9, 2020.

Scope

For purposes of VoteWA operational governance, VoteWA stakeholders include county auditors, election administrators, and OSOS.

Areas subject to VoteWA governance include decisions or activities impacting the ability of responsible stakeholders to implement, manage, and monitor the VoteWA system ahead of emerging changes, and communicating with all stakeholders within the following areas:

- Voter registration and election management technologies
- Evolving business requirements
- Fostering and maintaining a sustainable VoteWA user community
- Improving process and quality of election systems within counties and collectively as a state

Key Operational Accountabilities

Primary responsibilities for VoteWA Governance include:

- Set Strategic Direction – Executive Steering Committee will define and implement emerging strategic functional capabilities that will be needed to meet county and state elections and IT infrastructure.
- Prioritize Enhancement/Support Requests – VoteWA Advisory Board, OSOS VoteWA Product Owner, OSOS Information Technology Group (ITG) – Applications team, OSOS Security Operations Center team, and OSOS ITG Infrastructure and Network team will assess, approve, and prioritize requests to enhance/improve existing functionality and develop requested new capabilities to serve current county and state elections and IT infrastructure requirements.
- Resolve Conflicts – Executive Steering Committee members will assess and determine decisions unable to be resolved at lower levels.
- Maintenance – Review past maintenance activities ensuring current release VoteWA system capabilities are available to users, ensure routine maintenance is scheduled and communicated to user group (with preference for outside of normal business hours and election cycles).
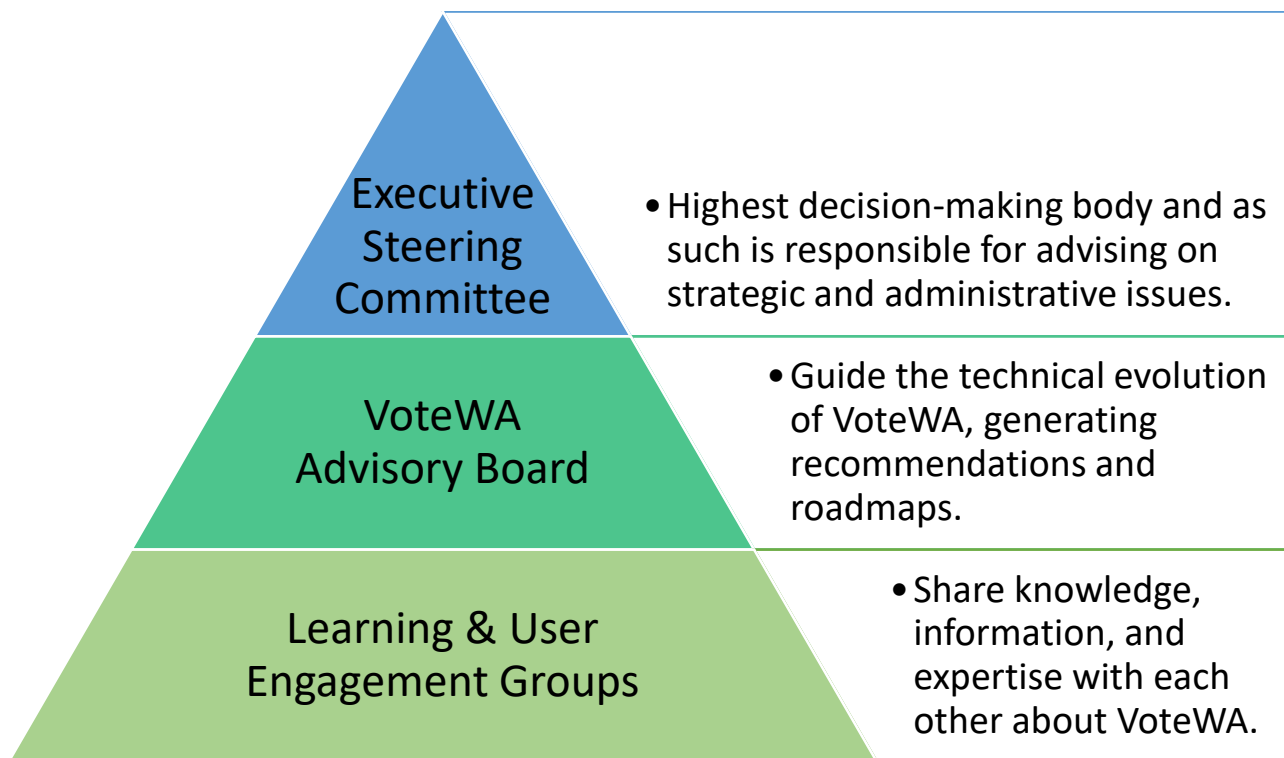
Guiding Principles

Participants at every level of VoteWA Governance agree to conduct decision-making and activities using the following guiding principles:

1. **Safeguard Public Trust** – We protect the confidence of the voting public in voter registration and election management systems and processes.
2. **Results-focused** – We establish stakeholder driven goals, measure our performance and seek out new ways to improve accuracy, efficiency and standardization of voter registration and election management activities.
3. **Collaborate and Promote Visibility** – We are responsive and transparent to stakeholders in our roles, functions and actions.
4. **Engage Stakeholders** – We enrich the quality of decision-making and buy-in by:
   - bringing forward the and sharing the ideas, issues, concerns, and interests of stakeholders
   - providing direct, timely communication back to stakeholders to accurately inform and engage them in the governance process

VoteWA Governance Model

VoteWA governance includes the structure, roles, membership, responsibilities, accountabilities, and decision-making processes needed to bring value to VoteWA users.

Executive Steering Committee	• Highest decision-making body and as such is responsible for advising on strategic and administrative issues.
VoteWA Advisory Board	• Guide the technical evolution of VoteWA, generating recommendations and roadmaps.
Learning & User Engagement Groups	• Share knowledge, information, and expertise with each other about VoteWA.

Executive Steering Committee

The Executive Steering Committee (the Committee) is the highest decision-making body and as such is responsible for advising on strategic and administrative issues.

Membership

The Committee (13 total members) will consist of representatives from County Election Offices and the Secretary of State's Office. The Washington State Association of County Auditors will elect eight county auditors as representatives to the Committee. The Secretary of State's Office will appoint two county auditors from County Election Offices and three representatives from the Secretary of State's Office. For consistency and continuity, it is recommended that the three representatives from the Secretary of State's Office be the Assistant Secretary of State, the Director of Elections, and the VoteWA Support Manager. Members will serve a two-year term with appointments being made in December. There are no term limits. The Committee is led by two co-chairs; one chair is a representative from the Secretary of State's Office and one chair is a representative from a County Elections Office. Members will be selected to ensure equitable representation, with consideration of the following:

- represent OSOS functions
- represent diverse group of elections offices
- Registered voters:
  - small = < ~ 50K
  - medium = 50K – 150K,
  - large = 150K – 750K
  - extra-large = > 750K
- population density (small, medium, large, extra-large)
- geographic location (WSACA Regions: NW, SW, Central, Eastern)
- systems/methods (voting/tabulation system)

Appointments of State Representatives

In December, the Secretary of State will appoint two elected county auditors / election directors from County Election Offices and three representatives from the Secretary of State's Office. The terms are two-years and there are no term limits.

Vacancies or replacements will be filled at the pleasure of the Secretary of State, at any time.

Nominations and Elections for County Representatives

The Washington State Association of County Auditors will elect eight county representatives to the Committee at the Auditors' annual meeting. Each county shall be entitled to eight (8) votes.

Nominations for county representatives shall be called for by the WSACA president at least 30 days prior to the Auditors' annual conference. Nominations shall be closed at 8:30 pm on the first day of the annual conference and all members will be notified via email by the chair of the Nominating Committee.

Members unable to attend the conference shall be responsible for notifying the President that they wish to vote absentee no later than 3 days prior to the commencement of the conference. No nominations shall be taken from the floor, to provide for absentee ballots.

Rules for voting by absentee or proxy are detailed in WSACAs Standard Operating Procedures.

The eight candidates receiving the most votes will be declared elected. If two or more candidates tie with an equal number of votes, the winner will be determined by lot drawing.

County representatives duly elected shall take office immediately.

Vacancies for County Representatives

In the event a vacancy should occur in any one of the elected WSACA county representatives, the vacancy shall be filled by the following procedure:

- A meeting of the WSACA Executive Board shall be called by the president within 30 days of the date of the vacancy.
- The WSACA Executive Board, then meeting at a time and place suitable to the majority of its members, shall appoint an eligible and willing member to fill an existing vacancy. The member appointed shall serve until the next annual Auditors' conference.

Committee meetings

The Committee shall have conference calls at least once per month and have quarterly in-person meetings. In-person meetings shall be rotated amongst the members offices. The monthly and quarterly meetings for the upcoming year will be set in May each year. A simple majority voting membership present constitutes a quorum. A quorum must be present to conduct a Committee meeting.

It is expected that Committee members make every effort to attend meetings. Members shall not designate proxies to attend in their absences. If a Committee member has more than 2 unexcused absences a row they will be required to resign, and a new member appointed to fill the vacancy.

Issues brought before the Committee shall be decided by consensus. If a decision cannot be reached via consensus method, the decisions shall be made by a simple majority vote of the Committee membership, regardless of attendance. In the event that a simple majority cannot be achieved, the motion fails. Consensus is not a majority vote or unanimity; every opinion counts. Every discussion should involve a good faith effort to hear and understand each other. Consensus accounts for dissent and addresses it, although it does not always accommodate it. The best way to determine consensus is to actually read and understand each person's arguments, even if they are divided on the surface. A consensus can be found by looking for common ground and synthesizing the best solution that the group can achieve at that time. A complicated dispute might involve several issues, and some issues may be more controversial than others. But a disagreement on one issue should not prevent consensus on another issue. It is not helpful to expect complete and total agreement on every aspect of the dispute.

The chairs of the Committee are responsible for soliciting and compiling agenda items. The appropriate meeting materials shall be compiled and distributed electronically to the board members at least one week prior to the regularly scheduled meetings.

Conduct of meeting

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings unless the body agrees on an alternative parliamentary procedure at the beginning of any meeting.

Sub-Committees

The Committee has the authority to create sub-committees that will be responsible for completing specific tasks. The Committee will appoint all members to the sub-committee and will create reporting requirements for them.

Responsibilities

Executive Steering Committee members are responsible for decision-making, setting strategic direction and roadmaps, advising on strategic and administrative issues, and financial stewardship. To meet this responsibility the Committee members are required to provide the following:

- Strategic decisions on policy, procedures and functionality as it relates to:
    o Allocation of development hours provided for in the VoteWA Maintenance & Support Contract (e.g., 70% allocated to enhance/improve existing functionality and develop requested new capabilities, 20% to bug fixes, etc.) and reassess as needed
    o Identification and prioritization of future development of VoteWA
    o Requests for development of VoteWA
    o User training
    o Help Desk success
    o User acceptance testing
    o Service level targets and commitments
    o New/future VoteWA projects
- Financial Stewardship
    o Funding sources
    o Budget review
- Review and analysis of legislation and rules impacting VoteWA
- Establish a method of communication between the Committee and other election stakeholders including but not limited to:
    o County Auditors
    o Secretary of State
    o Legislators
- Identify terms of interest to other stakeholders (i.e. political parties, activist groups) and share information appropriately

VoteWA Advisory Board

The VoteWA Advisory Board (the Board) would replace all existing VoteWA committees (Super Users, Data Governance, etc.). The board will serve as a liaison between the County Auditors and the Office of the Secretary of State on the functionality and usability of VoteWA. They will guide the technical evolution of VoteWA, generating recommendations and roadmaps.

Membership

The Board (15 total members) will consist of representatives from County Election Offices and the Secretary of State's Office. Counties will appoint 13 representatives and the Secretary of State's Office will appoint two representatives to the Board that will serve a two-year term, with appointments being made in December. The terms shall be staggered and there are no term limits. The Board is led by two co-chairs; one chair is a representative from the Secretary of State's Office and one chair is a representative from a county.

Advisory Board members will receive hours towards their Election Certification for meetings attended and travel cost reimbursements from the Secretary of State's Office for in-person meetings.

Election Administration can vary greatly depending on the number of registered voters, number of election administrators, etc. in a county. Members will be elected from these established groups:

Group	WSACA Region	# of Advisory Board members	Counties included in group based on # of registered voters
OSOS	n/a	2	
County Group 1		1	King
County Group 2	Central	2	Yakima, Benton, Chelan, Grant, Franklin, Kittitas, Okanogan, Douglas, Klickitat, Ferry
County Group 3	East	2	Spokane, Walla Walla, Stevens, Whitman, Asotin, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Adams, Columbia, Garfield
County Group 4	Northwest	2	Snohomish, Kitsap, Whatcom, Skagit, Island, Clallam, Jefferson, San Juan
County Group 5	Southwest	2	Pierce, Clark, Thurston, Cowlitz, Lewis, Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Wahkiakum
County at-large		4	At-large (members can be from any county in the state)

Nominations and Elections for County Representatives

Each county group noted in the above chart will elect a representative to serve on the Board. Each county will have one vote for each position in their region and one vote for each of the at-large positions. For example, Yakima County would be able to vote for a total of 6 candidates, 2 for the Central region members and 4 for the at-large members. WSACA will conduct the election.

Elections will be held on the second Tuesday in December. The nomination for representatives will be held during the month of November and shall be closed at 5 p.m. on November 30.

The candidate receiving the most votes for each county group will be declared elected. If two or more candidates tie with an equal number of votes, the winner will be determined by lot drawing.

County representatives duly elected shall take office immediately.

Vacancies for County Representatives

In the event a vacancy should occur in any one of the elected WSACA county representatives, the vacancy shall be filled by the following procedure:

- A meeting of the county group shall be called by the current representative of that county group within 30 days of the date of the vacancy. In the case of a vacancy of the current representative, the meeting shall be called by the county auditor/director of elections of that county.
- The County Group, then meeting at a time and place suitable to the majority of its members, shall appoint an eligible and willing member to fill an existing vacancy. The member appointed shall serve until the next regular election.

Board meetings

The Board shall have conference calls at least once per month and have an in-person meeting bi-annually. The monthly and bi-annual meetings for the upcoming year will be set in December each year. A simple majority voting membership present constitutes a quorum. A quorum must be present to conduct a Board meeting.

Issues brought before the Board shall be decided by consensus. If a decision cannot be reached via consensus method, the decisions shall be made by a simple majority vote of the Board membership, regardless of attendance. In the event that a simple majority cannot be achieved, the motion fails. No veto power shall apply. Consensus is not a majority vote or unanimity; every opinion counts. Every discussion should involve a good faith effort to hear and understand each other. Consensus accounts for dissent and addresses it, although it does not always accommodate it. The best way to determine consensus is to actually read and understand each person's arguments, even if they are divided on the surface. A consensus can be found by looking for common ground and synthesizing the best solution that the group can achieve at that time. A complicated dispute might involve several issues, and some issues may be more controversial than others. But a disagreement on one issue should not prevent consensus on another issue. It is not helpful to expect complete and total agreement on every aspect of the dispute.

The chairs of the Board are responsible for soliciting and compiling agenda items. The appropriate meeting materials shall be compiled and distributed electronically to the board members at least one week prior to the regularly scheduled meetings.

Sub-Committees

The Board has the authority to create sub-committees that will be responsible for completing specific tasks. The Board will appoint all members to the sub-committee and will create reporting requirements for them.

Responsibilities

VoteWA Advisory Board members are responsible for acting as the liaison between the Counties and the Secretary of State. To meet this responsibility the Board members are required to provide the following:

- Consultation on policy, procedures and functionality as it relates to:
  - Identification and prioritization of future development of VoteWA to enhance/improve existing functionality and develop requested new capabilities
  - Requests for development of VoteWA
  - User Training
  - Help Desk Success
  - User Acceptance Testing
- Review and analysis of legislation and rules impacting VoteWA
- Establish a method of communication between the Advisory Board and other election stakeholders including but not limited to:
  - Executive Steering Committee
  - County Auditors
  - Secretary of State
  - Election Administrators
- Attending Learning & User Engagement Groups for your region to:
  - Provide an update on the work of the Advisory Board, including the status of current and future priorities
  - Get feedback from the group on needed development, training needs, VoteWA support issues, user testing, etc.
- Send a survey to users asking for feedback:
  - Within 2 weeks following the end of candidate filing week
  - Within 2 weeks following certification of the Primary Election
  - Within 2 weeks following certification of the General Election

Learning & User Engagement Groups

Learning & User Engagement Groups will share knowledge, information, and expertise with each other about VoteWA. These groups provide an outlet to help build VoteWA networks through collaboration, discussions, and interactive sessions with VoteWA experts.

Membership

A Learning & User Engagement Group will be established for each of the four regions in the WSACA district map (see map to the right). Counties in each region will appoint 2 people annually to co-chair and facilitate meetings.
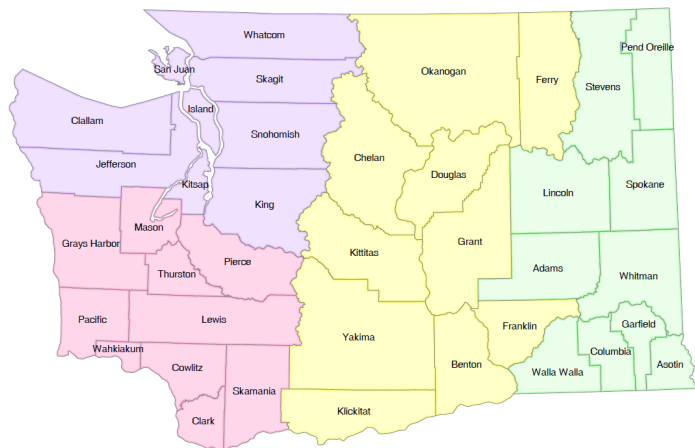
The Secretary of State's Office will appoint two members to attend meetings as it is critical for the State to understand issues and concerns from a county election administrator perspective.

User Engagement Group meetings

Regions can determine the frequency of meetings and whether they are in-person or via conference calls. Attendance is optional, but encouraged to share knowledge, information, and expertise with each other about VoteWA. The chairs of the Group will communication information and feedback from these meetings to the VoteWA Advisory Board.

Definitions

Maintenance [1]
- Corrective maintenance: Reactive modification of a software product performed after delivery to correct discovered problems.
- Adaptive maintenance: Modification of a software product performed after delivery to keep a software product usable in a changed or changing environment.
- Perfective maintenance: Modification of a software product after delivery to improve performance or maintainability.
- Preventive maintenance: Modification of a software product after delivery to detect and correct latent faults in the software product before they become effective faults.

Enhancement [2]
Changes made to an existing application where new functionality has been added, or existing functionality has been changed or deleted. This would include adding a module to an existing application, irrespective of whether any of the existing functionality is changed or deleted.

New Development [2]
Full analysis of the application area is performed, followed by the complete development life cycle, (planning or feasibility, analysis, design, construction and implementation).

[1] ISO/IEC 14764
[2] International Software Benchmarking Standards Group (ISBSG) Glossary of Terms for Development & Enhancement (version 5.17)