



How to Run for Local Office

A Workshop Offered by the Juneau League of Women Voters,
City & Borough of Juneau, and *Juneau Votes!*

Saturday, June 12, 2021
9 am – 1:30 pm
Virtual Workshop on Zoom



**League of Women Voters[®]
of Juneau**

In Cooperation with the City and Borough of Juneau, the Juneau School District,
the Alaska Division of Elections and the Alaska Public Offices Commission

“How to Run for Local Office” Workshop
June 12: Virtual Webinar, 9am – 1:15pm
Workshop Agenda

9:00 am	Welcome and Housekeeping	Kirsa Hughes-Skandjis, President, LWVJ Beth McEwen, CBJ Municipal Clerk Andrea Hirsh, CBJ Outreach & Senior Services Librarian
9:10 am	The Jobs of Assembly and School Board Members	Kristin Bartlett, Moderator Rorie Watt, CBJ City Manager Bridget Weiss, Superintendent, JSD Loren Jones, Deputy Mayor, CBJ Brian Holst, Board of Education, JSD
10:10 am	Break	
10:15 am	Candidate Legal Requirements	Donna Knight-Staton, Moderator Beth McEwen, Municipal Clerk Ashley Beedle, Former Campaign Treasurer
11:15 am	Break	
11:20 am	Campaigning – and Then What?	Peggy Cowan, Moderator Laury Roberts Scandling, Former Campaign Organizer Alicia Hughes-Skandjis, Assembly Member, CBJ Deedie Sorensen, School Board Member, JSD
12:20 pm	Break	
12:25 pm	Preparing to Run for Local Office	Sally Saddler, Moderator Christine Woll, Assembly Member, CBJ Martin Stepetin, Sr., School Board Member, JSD Beth McEwen, Municipal Clerk
1:10 pm	Wrap Up and Evaluation	Kirsa Hughes-Skandjis, President, LWVJ
1:15 pm	Adjourn	

How to Run for Local Office Tool Kit

INTRODUCTION

You **can** make a difference in our community! And it's not that hard.... Or, to put it another way, "Many hands make light work."

The City Borough of Juneau is one of only four unified home-rule municipalities (consolidated city/county functions) in the state of Alaska. As such it has a great deal of local control and autonomy. All who live here depend on engaged citizens - dedicated and competent community leaders –being willing to step forward and serve either in elective office or on one or more of Juneau's 30+ appointed public bodies¹:

Whatever the office, our public institutions are stronger when voters have a choice of candidates to represent them. Democracy works only when enough citizens have the courage and determination to run for, and hold, public office.

Regardless of whether you are thinking about running for election this year, or perhaps at some unspecified time in the future, this Tool Kit provides information for the reader about how to get elected as well as more about what it takes to carry out the responsibilities of holding elective office.

Those elected to the Juneau Assembly and Board of Education (School Board) are expected to apply their skills and talents in finding positive ways to address a broad range of complex community problems. Appointees to other bodies are likewise expected to apply their skills and talents in finding positive ways to resolve problems on specific issues.

All elected and some appointed positions require a significant commitment of volunteer time and energy. Thus, it is desirable to have in waiting a pool of individuals who are willing to step up and carry the load when incumbents need to take a break or move on to other things.

As everyone who has been there will tell you, there is nothing more rewarding than public service. Knowing how your government works, and helping to make it work better, is satisfying work indeed.

As preparation for running, or for those who want to serve but just not in elective office, serving on one of Juneau's appointed Boards and Commissions may be satisfying work for you.

¹ These appointed bodies include:

- Enterprise Boards
- Hybrid Board/Commissions
- Advisory Boards/Commissions/Ad Hoc Committees
- Appeal Boards (Quasi-Judicial bodies)

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Panelist Biographies

Kirsa Hughes-Skandijs is president of the League of Women Voters Juneau. Kirsa will host the webinar on behalf of the League. Kirsa moved here in 2004 to attend UAS. She loves voting, easy hikes, and dogs.

Kristin Bartlett is the Chief of Staff of the Juneau School District. She is a third generation Juneauite and graduate of Juneau-Douglas High School: Yadva.at Kalé. She studied Art, Languages and International Business in pursuit of her degree in Business Administration from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Bartlett has spent her career working in the field of marketing, public relations, advertising and lobbying in Alaska, California, and Australia. She has been with the Juneau School District since 2008, where she works closely with the Board of Education and Superintendent's Cabinet on policies and regulations, emergency preparedness and school safety, community outreach, and communications.

Ashley Beedle is a CPA who has worked with the accounting firm Elgee Rehfeld, LLC since 2003. She is an experienced accountant who has received extensive training in a broad range of topics. Ashley has worked with multiple municipal and state candidates to ensure accuracy with their financial reporting and compliance with state rules and regulations during their campaigns.

Diane 'Di' Cathcart has worked for CBJ since 2001, beginning in the Parks & Recreation Department before moving to the City Manager's Office as the Executive Assistant to the City Manager and Mayor. Di took a two year break from CBJ to take care of her family in the Midwest. In June 2018, with Laurie Sica retiring and Beth McEwen moving into the Municipal Clerk position, there was an opening in the Municipal Clerk's Office. Di was very happy to take the position of Deputy Municipal Clerk and return to Juneau with her family. When not busy helping Beth keep everything running smoothly in the Clerk's Office, you can find Di on the trails harvesting the bounty of wild edibles with her husband, son and their Newfoundland, Nellie.

Peggy Cowan is on the Board of League of Women Voters Juneau and coordinates the How to Run for Local Office Workshop on behalf of the planning committee this year. She is an educational consultant working with professional organizations, school districts and the University of Alaska. A retired superintendent of Juneau School District and the North Slope Borough School District, she moved to Juneau to work for the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. She started in Alaska when she moved to Fairbanks to work for the Alaska Sea Grant College Program at the University of Alaska.

Beth McEwen is the Municipal Clerk for the City Borough of Juneau. She has worked with CBJ since 1997 and served as Deputy Clerk from 2000-2018. Beth received her Certified Municipal Clerk designation in 2004 and her Master Municipal Clerk certification in 2012. She is an active member of the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks and the International Association of Municipal Clerks and in 2015 she was awarded the Alaska Municipal League Municipal Employee of the Year. Beth and her family have lived in Juneau since 1975 and she graduated from JDHS and UAS and has raised her sons and is now the proud grandmother of a seven year-old grandson. She is an active member of the Douglas Community Methodist Church and a member of the Eagle River Methodist Camp Board of Directors. Beth is a dedicated civil servant and “government geek” and has a passion for democracy in action. She loves to hike and spend time in nature, recharging her internal batteries, so she can keep going with all the demands of the Clerk’s office work.

Andi Hirsh has worked at the Juneau Public Libraries for the last 8 years as the Outreach and Senior Services Librarian. She works to make the library more accessible to those who face additional barriers to using it, including bringing "pop-up" libraries to senior centers, book clubs to detention facilities, and more.

Alicia Hughes-Skandijs has been a member of the Assembly since January of 2019, when she was appointed to fill a vacancy. Since then she's run for office twice, won twice, and has been very busy ever after. When she's not in a meeting, she loves getting outside and spending time with her friends and her dogs.

Brian Holst has been a member of the Juneau Board of Education since 2014 serving in his third term. He served as President for five years. He Chaired a Board of Education at an international school in Serbia for two years as well. He is a graduate of Juneau-Douglas High School and spent twenty years working internationally, mostly in Latin America and Eastern Europe before returning to Juneau about ten years ago. Brian is currently the Executive Director of the Juneau Economic Development Council. With his wife Estela, they have four children, two of which have graduated from JDHS (one this year!) and two more still in high school.

Loren Jones came to Juneau as a CBJ employee in 1975. He began working for State of Alaska in 1976 and retired in 2003. He served on the CBJ Social Services Committee in the 80’s. Most of his State service was in the Department of Health and Social Services, and he spent two years as a Legislative Aide to Rep. Peter Goll and 3.5 years in Office of Management and Budget under Gov. Cowper. Mr. Jones ran for Assembly in 2011 and lost, but he ran again in 2012 and won his first term. In October 2021, he will complete 9 years on the Assembly. He has served two separate two-year terms on the Alaska Municipal League Board of Directors, and he also just completed 6 years on the Marijuana Control Board.

Donna Knight-Staton grew up in Pullman, Washington and graduated from WSU in 1973 with a degree in Elementary Education and Fine Arts. After graduation, she went to the University of Oregon and obtained a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction and a Reading Certification in Remedial Reading. She moved to Juneau with her soon-to-be husband, Norm in 1976, where she became a reading specialist throughout the Juneau School District and retired in 2014. They have two adult daughters, Katie and Tess. A son, Ryan, passed away in 2014. Donna loves to travel, having been to Japan, Mexico, Nova Scotia, and across the United States and Europe. At home she enjoys reading, gardening, walking, and cross-stitching. She and Norm have a brand new grandson, Dylan Ryan born May 15th, 2021. Feeling blessed.

Sally Saddler is a retired economist who spent 35 years in the world of community & economic development, education, and workforce development in Alaska. She believes in empowering people to change the world through education, and is excited to work with the League of Women Voters to help people learn about and participate in their government. She is currently a member of the Rotary Club of Juneau, and sits on the boards for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Alaska, Renewable Juneau and Alaska Heat Smart. She has served two terms on the Juneau Board of Education (4 years as president) and holds a BA in Economics from The George Washington University.

Laury Roberts Scandling was born and raised in Alaska and has lived in Haines, Kodiak, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. She moved to Juneau in 1978 after college to work in radio and television. She served as Assistant Press Secretary and then Director of Constituent Relations for Governor Steve Cowper in the late 80s. In mid-life she became a high school teacher of English and History in alternative programs and finished her 20-year career in the Juneau School District in 2012 as assistant superintendent. Laury has been interested in and active in politics since her teens, including working for the late Senator Ted Stevens in Washington, DC, in the mid-70s. She managed her first campaign in 1986 and since then, has volunteered in various management roles in a half-dozen other campaigns. She has been a League of Women Voters member 30 years and is a past president of the Juneau LWV.

Deedie Sorensen is in her second year on the Juneau School District Board of Education. She is a retired elementary teacher who spent more than 35 years teaching in the Juneau schools. During her teaching career she was an active member of the Juneau Education Association where she spent many years as a member of the JEA Political Action Committee. As a result of her involvement in this committee, she developed an understanding of the integral relationship between the actions of the Alaska Legislature and the downstream impact of the Juneau School District's ability to deliver quality education experiences for Juneau's families. She also spent many years interviewing candidates for the Board of Education and CBJ Assembly. Her continued commitment to and advocacy for public education informed her decision to seek public office.

Martin Stepetin, Sr. was born in Anchorage and raised on St. Paul Island, and he has four children in the Juneau School District. He is serving his first term on the Juneau School District Board of

Education. In his campaign, Stepetin said that he was interested in improving reading and literacy, as well as looking into expanding the Tlingit Culture Language and Literacy program to anyone interested in participating.

Christine Woll holds a District 2 seat on the Juneau Assembly, which she won in 2020. Prior to running for Assembly, Christine served on the Juneau Commission on Sustainability and chaired Juneau's Blueprint Downtown steering committee. In her day job, she is the regional program director for The Nature Conservancy, a job that involves collaborating with Southeast communities to manage lands and waters for social, economic, and conservation benefits. Christine lives with her husband Peter and their dog Stikine on the Mendenhall Peninsula.

Rorie Watt arrived in Juneau in 1992. He became City Manager in 2016 and prior to becoming City Manager, he worked for the CBJ for over twenty years. He began his municipal career as a seasonal construction inspector in 1993 and worked his way up to become the Director of the Engineering and Public Works Department. Rorie is a first generation American, the son of Scottish immigrants. He graduated from Cornell University with a degree in Operations Research and Industrial Engineering and became a licensed Civil Engineer in Alaska in 2001. Prior to working for the CBJ, Watt was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sierra Leone and worked for different social service organizations. He enjoys trying to solve difficult problems.

Dr. Bridget Weiss is the Superintendent of the Juneau School District. Bridget is a 3rd generation Juneauite. Bridget earned a Bachelors in Mathematics, a Minor in Physical Education from Whitworth University in 1984. Following graduation, she spent the next 26 years in Spokane as a high school math teacher, coach, high school assistant principal, elementary principal, Executive Director of Instructional Programs and Superintendent. Once back in Alaska, Bridget spent four years as principal of North Pole High School and four years as Director of Student Services at the Juneau School District. She has served Juneau as the Superintendent for the past 3 years. Her work has been in districts as small as 1,800 and as large as 29,000 students. Bridget attained her Masters in Mathematics from Eastern Washington University and her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Washington State University.
