

To: Neary, Mark[mark.neary@sos.wa.gov]; Augino, Lori[lori.augino@sos.wa.gov]
Cc: Julie Anderson[julie.anderson@piercecountywa.gov]; Mary Schmidtke[mary.schmidtke@piercecountywa.gov]; Cindy Hartman[cindy.hartman@piercecountywa.gov]; Kyle Haugh[kyle.haugh@piercecountywa.gov]
From: Mike Rooney
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Mark and Lori -

The Pierce County Auditor's Office is requesting concurrence to use the CARES Act grant funding to purchase an additional Runbeck mail sorter. The purchase of this additional sorter will integrate seamlessly with our current sorter. The addition of a second sorter will double our throughput for incoming and audit passes. An additional benefit is the ability to run an incoming and audit pass simultaneously. This new capacity will allow our team to keep signature check and openers working on a consistent basis by preventing down time.

COVID 19 safety concerns and Homeland Security resilience recommendations strongly indicate that Pierce County should obtain a second mail sorter.

- Few people required - COVID
- Shorter "dwell" time (handling) - COVID
- Interoperability and redundancy in the face of disaster – Cybersecurity and COOP

Having only one sorter is a significant vulnerability. Adding a sorter provides depth and increases our speed and capacity.

Additionally, it is our hope to get Automatic Signature Recognition (ASR) certified by the OSOS shortly after the April Election. This process utilizes our sorter server to run the application. The reduction in processing time for an incoming mail pass will reduce the need to bring in large teams of part time signature check staff. Signatures which are automatically approved will directly reduce the signatures that must be manually checked. We anticipate up to half of our current incoming mail could be signature checked via this process. The signatures that are approved via this new process will be able to be run on one of the two sorters within minutes of passing ASR. We believe this will be a game changer in our staffing.

The second sorter also provides redundancy and COOP benefits to Pierce and other counties using a Runbeck sorter. The second sorter creates added capacity not only for Pierce County but for other Runbeck counties in the state as well. Should another county's sorter become inoperable (mechanical failure, natural disaster, terrorist/foreign substance attack, or compromised security) they could process ballots on the second sorter or if needed the sorter could be loaned to another county for the duration of the election.

We hope you agree with our assessment. Our plan is to make this purchase as soon as monies our available for use.

Thank you.

Michael Rooney
Elections Manager

Pierce County Auditor's Office - Elections

P: (253) 798-2148

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