Campaign to Win
Campaign for Fun

Massachusetts Pirate Party
Winter - Fall 2012
What We Will Cover

• What is your goal?
• What office to choose?
• Preparing yourself
• Getting started
• The campaign
• Useful books
What is Your Goal?

• To win
• To identify supporters and volunteers for future efforts
• To educate voters about issues that matter to you
• It is best if you do all three!
What Are You Facing?

• Over half of the candidates for contested elections lose

• The better connected and financed candidate often wins

• As a result, many offices have only one person running for them
What Office to Choose?

- Town & city
- State House & Senate
- County
- US House of Representatives
- Governor’s Council
- US Senate & Mass. constitutional offices
Town Elections

- Town elections held in first half of every year. Check your town. Offices are:
  - Selectboard
  - Town Moderator, Treasurer, etc.
  - School Committee
  - Town Meeting Member - Not all towns
City Elections

- City elections held in November of odd years. Offices are:
  - Mayor
  - City Council / Board of Aldermen
  - School Committee
State House & Senate

- Massachusetts General Court is made up:
  - House: 160 members
  - Senate: 40 members
- Elections held in November of even years
- Both overwhelmingly Democratic
State House & Senate (cont.)

- Getting on the ballot:
  - Signatures from at least:
    - 150 valid voters (House)
    - 300 valid voters (Senate)
  - Papers available - Feb ‘12
  - Papers due - Apr ’12
County Elections

- County Commissioner
- District Attorney
- County Treasurer
- Registrar of Probate
- Registrar of Deeds
- Sheriff & Clerk of Courts
US House Elections

• District based: Ten - 2010 & Nine - 2012
• All held by Democrats with large $$$
• Getting on the ballot:
  • Signatures from at least 2000 valid voters
  • Papers available - Feb ‘12
  • Papers due - Apr ’12 (D/R/G), Aug ’12 oth
Other Offices

Good luck!
Preparing Yourself

• Be honest with yourself: Are you ready?
  • No - Try another approach
  • Yes - Let's get started
Be Honest With Yourself

- Do you really want the job?
- Are you prepared for the pressures of campaigning?
- Does your partner support your run?
- Are you prepared for the impact on your work and family life?
- Are you known in your community?
Not ready? Try Another Approach Instead

• Try a less demanding office or a lower goal
• Start an issue campaign
• Join (or start) local party chapter
• Volunteer or get appointed to a local board or commission
• Join a community activist group
Ready!

Lay the Ground Work

- Attend and speak up at town meetings, public hearings, etc.
- Get involved in local organizations
- Volunteer for local boards and commissions
- Support other candidates
- Write letters to the editor
Getting Started

• Find people to help
• Roles that need filling
• Know your district & constituencies
• Find your issues & core message
• Plan logistics
Find People to Help

• For most offices, you cannot run alone
• Identify people who will help you:
  • Party members
  • Friends
  • Family
Roles That Need Filling

• Treasurer (cannot be the candidate)
• Campaign Manager
• Volunteer Coordinator
• Field Operation Manager
• Website / Social Media Organizer(s)
• Data Manager
Roles That Need Filling (cont.)

• May not be able to find someone for each role

• Some of your campaign organizers may wear more than one hat

• Cannot do without a Treasurer

• Having a campaign manager helps

• Delegate!
Know Your District

- Who and where are the voters?
  - Get voter lists from city/town (has address, DOB, gender, party info.)
  - Get demographics (US Census data)
  - Find out if voters are owner / renters
- What are local issues of concern?
Your Constituencies

• Identify your constituencies, i.e. the voters most likely to support you

• From the district data you have, see if you can identify who they are individually

• If you have to limit your efforts, knowing who is most likely to support you will help
Find Your Issues

• Identify the key issues to focus on:
  • Two or three max for local campaigns
  • More for state campaigns (but still a small number)
• The issues you choose must resonate with the voters who you want to support you
Develop a Core Message

- Once you know your key issues, you then need to develop a core message
- It should be short & simple ...
- ... but should tie in with your key issues
Test Your Core Message / Issues

• Test it first with a friendly audience then with other audience

• Refine your message

• If you can find a way to bring all questions back to your core message, Bonus!
Plan Logistics

• Volunteers - How many and when?
• Write a focused budget and fundraising plan with an eye to what do we buy with the first $500, the next $1000, etc.
• Find someone to design fliers & signs
• Find someone to take professional pictures of the candidate for fliers / media
The Campaign

• Initial Activities
• Volunteers, Fundraising and Follow Up
• Get on the Ballot
• Materials, Internet, Media & Publicity
• Meet Voters, Go Door-to-Door & GOTV
• Election Day & The Days After
Initial Activities

- Open social media accts. since they are free
- Identify initial contributors
- Obtain and file committee-to-elect papers
- Get checks from initial contributors
- Open bank account and make first deposit
- Open web site
Volunteers

• It is important to have someone organizing volunteers

• Providing lunch/dinner for volunteers is a good way to thank them for group efforts such as mailing parties & Door-to-Door outings

• Be sure to thank volunteers with a written note - keep note cards for your thank yous
Fundraising

- Make a list of potential contributors from family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.
- Write a phone fundraising script that talks about your issues
- Call your contributors list
- Mail reminder letter with return envelope
- Mail thank you letter to all contributors
Follow Up

• Ask contributors whether they would:
  • endorse you in writing
  • volunteer
  • hold a house party for you
• Follow up on all offers of assistance
• Send thank you letters promptly
Get on the Ballot

- Make sure you know all of the requirements & dates to get on the ballot
- Pick up nomination papers
- Gather signatures
- File nomination papers
- Mail thank letter to anyone who helped gather signatures
Getting Signatures

• Get the most signatures in the least time

• Know which voters you need:
  • City/Town - Any voter in city/town
  • Other:
    • Dem/Rep/G-R: In Party or unenrolled
    • Ind./Pol. Designation: Any voter
Getting Signatures (cont.)

• Ask voters to sign and print their name so their name can be read clearly

• Never leave your nomination papers unattended

• Never put any stray marks on nom. papers:

• If someone puts a stray mark on one, put it aside and don’t use it for any more voters
Getting Signatures (cont.)

- Find places where YOUR voters are likely:
  - Your neighborhood
  - Busy city/town squares
  - Dump/recycling center
  - Festivals & places people aren’t in a rush
- Always be polite, but don’t chat!
Materials

• You will need to develop materials to give out or post: fliers, mailers, yard signs, etc.

• Have a common logo - if only your name.

• If you are strapped for cash, try 1/3 of a page fliers, double sided

• If you have the money, try mailable fliers
Internet

- Setup Blog, Twitter, Facebook Fan Page, etc.
- Tie blog posts to your social networks
- Frequent Personal Posts
- Once you have a bunch of posts, start following people & media from your district
- Resend others relevant tweets
Internet (cont.)

• Find creative ways to share you & your message:
  • Post pictures of you, volunteers and supporters on the campaign trail
  • If you can make fun videos, do
  • Use a service to email supporters, but don’t spam people
Media

- Identify local media & reporters
- Setup meetings
- Meet with media to talk about your issues
- Make sure you follow reporters on twitter, hopefully they will follow your campaign
- Keep in contact with reporters, invite them to your events & Door-to-Door outings
Publicity

• If you have enough support, hold a kick-off event.
  • Invite all of your supporters and media.
  • Make sure it is well attended
  • Ask supporters to put up yard signs
  • Hold stand-outs/visibilities in last month
Meet voters!

- Have a supporter who is a parent of a child at that school introduce you during morning drop off or afternoon pickup
- Attend block parties and city/town festivals
- Have meet & greet events at senior centers and for members of local groups
Meet voters! (cont.)

• Keep track of who you meet & their concerns

• Follow up with the voters you meet either by dropping off a flier with a thank you note or by mailing a flier & a thank you

• Have supporters write letters to friends telling them why they are voting for you
Go Door-to-Door

- Purpose of Door-to-Door effort is to:
  - meet voters & tell them about you
  - identify which voters will support you
- From the voter list, you should develop a walk list. Divide streets into even and odd sides to make record keeping easier
Go Door-to-Door (cont.)

• Mark a voters level of support with 1 as will vote for you and 5 as will not vote for you.

• If a voter isn’t supportive, move on quickly but politely. Find someone who is

• When someone isn’t home, be sure to leave a flier hanging on their door handle
Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

• All your efforts must lead to the GOTV effort

• Through the Door-to-Door effort you have hopefully identified a lot of voters who will support you

• Now you have to make sure they will be at the polls on election day
GOTV (cont.)

- Call all supporters to remind them that you need their vote. Tell them where their polling place is & when it is open. Ask if they need a ride to the polls
- As close to the election as you can, drop off notices to all supporters telling them where to vote and when their polling place is open
Election Day Tasks

• Have a poll watcher at every polling place recording which of your supporters voted

• Have volunteers to call supporters to remind them to vote, preferably from the checklist listed above

• Have volunteers hold signs outside polling places. Know the state/city/town rules!
Election Day Tasks (cont.)

- Have volunteers:
  - bring coffee, hot chocolate and snacks to volunteers at polling places,
  - pick up supporter checklists from poll watchers and
  - drive supporters to the polls
Once the Polls Close

• Have poll watchers get the preliminary vote count from their polling place

• Hold election night party to thank volunteers and supporters
The Days After

• Update website & social media accts. with thank you and election results

• Distribute “Thank You” stickers to all yard signs and mail remaining thank you cards

• Write a thank you voters letter to send as a letter to the editor of local media

• Fundraise to clear away any campaign debt
Useful References

• How to Win Your 1st Election - Susan Guber

• The Campaign Manager - Catherine Shaw

• How to Run for Local Office - Robert J. Thomas

• Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout - Donald P. Green & Alan S. Gerber

• http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/17/facebook-mayoral-election-south-dakota