**What Has Worked Well in Anoka**

* We began in the summer of 2021 and have evolved by working closely with other counties to understand what they have done and what might work, or not work, for us.
* We begin with prayer because we know Who is really in charge. (He has blessed us with diverse, talented and determined members.) We then follow with the Pledge of Allegiance.
* We have become very organized. We meet on the same weeknight, at the same time, and usually at the same location. We send out a meeting agenda before each meeting. We try to have one person send group emails to limit the number of emails being sent and received. Members can request to be on the agenda to share their ideas and information with the group; however, the topics must stay focused on election reform. We circulate links to current election news items among us and aggregate it into a weekly listing from which presentations can be made. Each chooses topics/issues, studies them and reports on them. We are doers, not complainers.
* Meetings are run with purpose and stay on point. Members raise their hand and take turns. We do not talk over each other. We remain open-minded and depend on the entire team for answers.
* Meetings have a time limit, so we move through topics quickly and thoroughly. This also seems to help people desire to return.
* We began with just 3 people attending county commissioner meetings twice a month and arriving early to attempt to speak directly to the council members prior to the meeting since Anoka had no “public comment” time allotted. We would present them with news articles and information. We also later learned we could speak at the Election subcommittee once a month and so began to organize 3 to 5 people to speak for 2 minutes each. In January, the Council allowed “public comment” back at their meetings.
* We now prepare 5, 2-minute speeches twice a month and present at those meetings as well. We present them with the paperwork that corresponds with it prior to beginning to speak. We videotape them and Erik van Mechelen posts them on his sub stack. We follow-up by sending it to them electronically.
* We follow County protocols for their meetings and policy on requesting data.
* We make a point of knowing what is of public record and can be requested.
* We thoroughly search public records (e.g. agenda packets) posted online covering, in the case of Anoka County, 2015-present, obtaining election related data (including financial data) and contracts governing elections.
* When the County is not responsive to our request, we learn from that as well. We log where the hidden parts of the system remain, planning to use when we discuss transparency issues. It also tells us where to reword our questions/FOIA requests or where to investigate further.
* We are honest, polite, persistent but respectful. We try to communicate to them that this IS a bipartisan issue. We are not pointing fingers at them; we are their ally, here to make their job easier by doing research and reporting to them so they do not have to do as much investigation.
* We support each other and know this is a tough battle, but we are doing this for the men and women who have gone before us, many of whom have dedicated, and possibly lost, their lives for the freedom we have to still be in this fight.