Nisqually Indian Tribe

NISQUALLY TRIBAL ELECTION THIRD PARTY AUDITOR

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Third-Party Election Auditor for Nisqually Tribal Council Election Cycle – 2027

Issue Date: November 10, 2026
Proposal Due: November 30, 2026, 5:00 PM PST
Contact: Nisqually Tribe Election Committee, **Committee Coordinator** committee@nisqually-nsn.gov

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1. Purpose & Background

The Nisqually Tribe seeks proposals from qualified third-party auditors to serve as its Election Auditor (as defined in Nisqually Tribal Code Title 13, Section 13.01.02) and to support the Tribe's Election Committee in administering the Tribal Council election under the newly enacted Title 13 code provisions. Per Title 13, the auditor shares oversight responsibilities with the Election Committee to ensure transparent, fair, and verifiable elections for nominees, primary, and general elections among Tribal membership. The Election Auditor administers and oversees the election process (particularly balloting, voting, vote counting and election certification) and performs its duties in cooperation with and under the supervision of the Election Committee, which conducts and supervises the overall Election Process in accordance with Title 13 and the Nisqually Constitution. The Election Auditor would support Nisqually Tribe in its next official Tribal Council election and would be available to contract for special elections and other processes within Title 13 as necessary and with Election Committee coordination.

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2. Election Calendar

The Election Auditor must be available for the following election phases of their first election with Nisqually Tribe The Primary Election and the General Election are each two-day (Saturday and Sunday) events:

- **January 2027:** Pre-election planning and logistics coordination
- **February 2027:** Nominations Meeting -the first Saturday of February (February 2, 2027) (per Section 13.02.07)
- **March 2027:** Primary Election - the second Saturday and Sunday of March (March 13-14, 2027) (per Section 13.02.08)
- **April–May 2027:** Preparation, General Election, vote tabulation, and certification. General Election – the first Saturday and Sunday of May (May 1-2, 2027)
- (Dates are tentative, exact dates will follow updated election code.)

3. Scope of Services

Auditor responsibilities include but are not limited to those set forth in Sections 13.02.05, 13.02.06, 13.02.15, and 13.03 of Title 13, namely:

- Review and validation of election notices and candidate materials for compliance with Title 13 provisions
- Providing voter service throughout the election period, including telephone support via an 800 number and an email address available from 9:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. PST on business days
- Maintaining and securing the Official Election Ballot Box at the Tribal Center (with the assistance of the Election Committee)
- Monitoring of nomination procedures, signature or petition verification
- Oversight of ballot printing, secure handling, and distribution
- Supervising activity at the polls on each Election Day, including verifying the eligibility of every voter against the Eligible Voter list, distributing one ballot to each Eligible Voter, keeping a record of voters and resolving balloting disputesIndependent vote tabulation and cross-verification against official results
- Certifying the results of the Primary and General Elections in writing to the Election Committee
- Ensuring secure chain-of-custody for physical and electronic ballots and data
- Preparation of interim and final audit reports with findings, corrective actions, and recommendations
- Attendance at Election Committee meetings during each phase upon request (virtual or in person), including the pre-election compliance review with the Election Committee and Tribal Election Attorney at least ten (10) business days before each election
- Support for post-election audits, dispute resolutions, recounts, or challenges including conducting recounts upon a verified petition and deciding election protests in accordance with Section 13.03
- Safeguarding of voter and candidate personal information and election data, including compliance with applicable confidentiality requirements under Title 13 and Nisqually Tribal law
- Timely performance of all tasks in accordance with the deadlines established by Title 13 and the Election Committee

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4. Qualifications & Experience

Proposers must demonstrate:

- Experience auditing or overseeing tribal, municipal, or state elections or other governance activities.
- Deep understanding of election law, chain-of-custody protocols, ballot security, and auditing standards
- Familiarity with Indigenous governance structures and culturally appropriate practices
- Independence—no current or prior relationship, financial interest, or other conflict of interest with any Nisqually candidate, Tribal Council member, Election Committee member, or Tribal staff. Proposers must disclose any actual or potential conflict in writing.
- Professional credentials (e.g., CERA, CFE, CISSP) or equivalent relevant experience
- Ability to meet Title 13 code requirements as defined in attached draft

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5. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document, should not exceed twenty-five (25) pages (excluding resumes, and other attachments) and must include the following, in the order listed:

1. **Cover Letter & Proposal:** Confirm independence, availability for the full cycle, acceptance of selection by the Election Committee specifying:
    1. **Firm Profile:** Background, staff qualifications, organizational structure
    2. **Relevant Experience:** Case studies, client references, outcomes from similar audits
    3. **Staffing Plan:** List of assigned personnel, roles, bios, and hourly/daily rates
    4. **Budget:** Detailed cost breakdown by phase and deliverables, including travel and expenses
    5. **Certifications and Insurance:** Proof of auditor qualifications, malpractice insurance, error & omissions coverage
    6. **Work Plan:** Detailed approach aligned to the January–May 2027 election timeline

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6. Evaluation Criteria

Selection will be based on:

- Demonstrated election audit experience (25%)
- Understanding of Title 13 compliance requirements (25%)
- Quality of the work plan and project management approach (25%)
- Cost effectiveness and transparency (15%)
- References and past performance (5%)
- Cultural competency and community engagement approach (5%)

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7. Submission Instructions

- Submit electronically in PDF format to Committee Coordinator **committee@nisqually-nsn.gov** by November 30, 2026, 5:00 PM PST.
- Late submissions will be disqualified.
- Questions may be submitted by November 25, 2026; responses will be shared with all applicants.
- The Election Committee anticipates notifying the selected proposer on or about December 4, 2026, subject to the Committee's review and negotiation process.

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8. Terms & Conditions

- The auditor will contract with and receive direction from the Election Committee, with advisory by the Election attorney.
- Nisqually Tribal Council members in seats not a part of the election and no intention of running for election may engage with the process as a point of contact or liaison as necessary.
- All work is subject to Title 13 code provisions and Nisqually tribal law.
- The Tribe reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive informalities, or negotiate as needed.
- The selected auditor must maintain confidentiality and professional standards throughout the contract.

- All reports, data, work papers, and other materials prepared by the Election Auditor in connection with this engagement are the property of the Nisqually Indian Tribe. The Election Auditor must return or securely dispose of all Tribal election data at the conclusion of the engagement as directed by the Election Committee.
- Nothing in this RFP or any resulting contract waives, limits, or is intended to waive the sovereign immunity of the Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Consistent with applicable Nisqually Tribal law, qualified Indian- or Tribally owned firms may receive preference in the selection process.

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9. Post-Selection Deliverables & Timeline

- **December 2026:** Contract execution, detailed scheduling, document review
- **January 2027:** Kick-off and planning
- **February 2027:** Nominations Meeting oversight (First Saturday of February) and report, Primary Election preparation
- **March 2027:** Primary Election monitoring (second Saturday and Sunday of March) and audit report & certification
- **April 2027** General Election preparation, ballot printing, and oversight
- **May 2027:** General Election monitoring (first Saturday and Sunday of May) and audit report & certification
- **June 2027:** Final report, Post-election debrief and final close-out summary

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Thank you for your interest in supporting the integrity and trust of Nisqually Tribal Council elections. We look forward to receiving your detailed proposal.