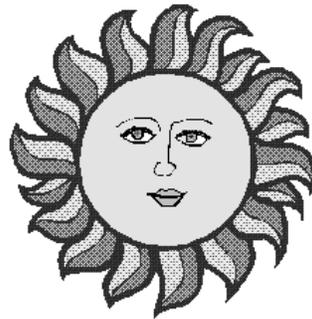


# **Kingdom of Atenveldt Kingdom Seneschal Officer Procedures**



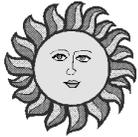
## **Procedures for Conducting Baronial and Local Group Pollings**

**Edited and approved by:**

**Duke Craven, KSCA  
Kingdom Seneschal**

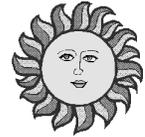
**Written by:**

**Duchess Katerina O'Callaghan, OP  
Deputy Kingdom Seneschal**



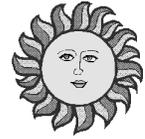
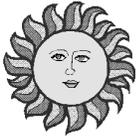
# Kingdom of Atenveldt

## Office of the Kingdom Seneschal



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## Procedures for Conducting Baronial and Local Group Pollings

### *I. Before Reading These Procedures*

These procedures are provided as a resource for Kingdom Seneschals conducting Baronial and Local Group Pollings in the Kingdom of Atenveldt. They are based on Kingdom tradition and the guidelines in effect in the “**Society For Creative Anachronism, Inc. Organizational Handbook**”, the **Seneschal’s Handbook** and “**Lex Atenveldtus**” as of March 2011. Readers should review the following sections of SCA governing documents in conjunction with this document:

- Section “V. TERRITORIAL BARONS AND BARONESSES” of the “**Society For Creative Anachronism, Inc. Organizational Handbook**” (called “CORPORA”) <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/govdocs.pdf>
- The communication and “ESTABLISHING NEW BRANCHES” polling guidelines in the **Seneschal’s Handbook** (called the **KINGDOM SENESCHAL’S HANDBOOK**) <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/SocSenHandbook-200510.pdf>
- Section V. TERRITORIAL BARON AND BARONESS and V. C. Appointment of a Vicar and/or Vicaress portions of “**Lex Atenveldtus**” (called “**KINGDOM LAW**”) <http://www.atenveldt.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=WcLAK1jpHNY%3d&tabid=114&mid=1383>

While the primary intent of these procedures is to document how a Barony is polled as part of the process of selecting or confirming support for a Territorial Baron and Baroness, procedures for “generic polling of an SCA group” are also explained i.e., how to poll the populace on issues unrelated to the Baronial succession (like advancement in group status, zip code allocation between SCA groups, etc.). These “generic group polling” procedures are the same as those the Kingdom Seneschals Office would use when any SCA group (not just a Barony) is polled on an issue, i.e., when polling the populace of a Canton, Shire, College, etc.

### *II. What is a Baronial or Local Group Polling?*

Within the Society, the membership of an SCA group (Kingdom, Principality, Barony, Shire, Canton, College, Incipient Group) is defined as the paid SCA members (those holding a Sustaining, Associate or Family membership) residing within the zip codes assigned to that SCA group. For a list of the zip codes assigned to each SCA local group in Atenveldt, see the “[Official Zip Code List](#)” on the LANDS page of [www.atenveldt.org](http://www.atenveldt.org).

A “Baronial Polling” or “Local Group Polling” is a sampling of the paid SCA members living in the zip codes assigned for that Barony or Local Group to solicit their opinions on a particular subject for the purpose of analysis.

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL’S HANDBOOK VII.B.10:** “The populace must understand that a petition or polling is not a vote! It is merely a way for the Kingdom Seneschal to assess the opinions of the people.”

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As stated earlier, pollings can be conducted for various purposes. Whether or not the detailed results of a poll are announced to the populace, is dependent on the reasons the poll was conducted. For example, the number of members polling “for” and “against” a possible Shire advancement in status to Barony would be announced to the populace. However, the number of members polling “for” each of the specific couples wishing to be the new Baron and Baroness of a Barony would not be announced.

### **III. When is a Polling held?**

A polling may be held by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal at any time. The subject of the poll may be any topic for which the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal seek the populace’s opinion, i.e., “Do you support the Shire advancing in status to Barony?” or “Do you support your zip code being assigned to the Shire of XYZ?” or “Do you support the current Baron and Baroness remaining in office?”, etc.

#### **A. When *must* a Polling be held (when is it required)?**

CORPORA and KINGDOM LAW require that the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal conduct a polling when these things happen:

##### **1. Changes in Group Status**

The Kingdom Seneschal is required to conduct a polling of an SCA group whenever the group petitions for a change in status. That applies to Principalities, Baronies, Shires, Cantons, Colleges, and Incipient groups. So, if an Incipient Shire wishes to become a Barony, or a Barony wishes to become a Province, or a Barony wishes to downgrade to become a Shire, the opinions of the membership living in the group’s zip codes must be solicited to determine their support of the change.

##### **2. The Crown wishes to Remove a Warranted Baron and/or Baroness**

The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal may remove a sitting Territorial Baron and/or Baroness before their Baronial warrant expires, as long as they have “just and stated cause” and have conducted a Baronial Polling to solicit the opinion of the populace on the matter.

**CORPORA, Section V.3:** “The Crown may remove a territorial Baron and/or Baroness for just cause stated in writing and presented only to the Baron and/or Baroness; however, the Crown must request a written opinion from the populace of the barony before taking such action.”

**LEX ATENVELDTUS, Section V.A.5:** “The Crown may Suspend and/or Remove a Baron and Baroness for just and stated cause. In order to remove a Baron and Baroness, the Crown must request a written opinion from the populace of the barony before taking such action.”

There is no requirement that the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal conduct a polling to “suspend” a sitting Baron and/or Baroness before their Baronial warrant expires.

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**CORPORA, Section V.2:** “The Crown may suspend a territorial Baron and/or Baroness for the duration of a reign, for just cause stated in writing and presented only to the Baron and/or Baroness. Suspension would prohibit the use of the baronial titles and arms, the conduct of baronial courts, and the presentation of baronial awards.”

### 3. A New Baron and/or Baroness must be Invested

Whenever a new Baron and/or Baroness must be selected and invested for the group, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal are required to solicit the opinions of the membership to determine their support of the proposed candidate(s). This includes polling in the following situations:

- The three year warrant of the current Baron and Baroness is expiring, and they do not wish to renew for an additional two years.\*
- The two year “warrant extension” of the current Baron and Baroness is expiring, so KINGDOM LAW does not allow a renewal of their warrant.\*

\* *In cases where a three year or two year Baronial Warrant expires, Kingdom Law requires that the sitting Baron and Baroness and Kingdom Seneschal schedule an Investiture “in the 45 days before or after expiration of their Baronial warrant”, and that the Kingdom Seneschal and Crown schedule a Baronial Polling to be “conducted in the 60 to 90 days before the date of their stepping down”.*

- The current Baron and Baroness have resigned (or wish to resign) and are stepping down.
- A Baron (or Baroness) is currently sitting alone, and the Crown is soliciting opinions on the addition of a new Baroness (or Baron) to join the sitting Nobility.\*\*

\*\* *This situation is rare, but has precedent in Atenveldt. However, before a Baron/Baroness may be added, a Crown and Kingdom Seneschal must have agreed to warrant the sitting Baron or Baroness to sit alone. Many Crowns and Kingdom Seneschals feel that the Territorial Baron and Baroness position is too much work for one person, and so They will not sign such a warrant. That is the reason Letters of Intent for a Baron and Baroness Polling are often not accepted for candidates who wish to sit alone.*

- The current Baron and Baroness have already been removed from office, and the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal need to select a new Baron and Baroness.

### B. When *can* a Polling be held?

The simple answer to this is “anytime”. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal may poll the populace at any time on any topic. When conducted to determine how much support a sitting Baron and/or Baroness have from their populace, such “mid-Reign” pollings are often called “Confidence Polls”.

**LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.2:** “The Crown may poll the populace at any time during the warrant period. These polls are at the discretion of the Crown and may be conducted for any reason.”

### **IV. Terms and Definitions**

**Absentee Ballot:** When pollings are conducted at an SCA event (i.e., not by mail), an option is provided to allow members of the group who cannot attend the day of the polling to send an “**Absentee Ballot**” to the Kingdom Seneschal. Announcements of the polling to the populace must include the following **Absentee Ballot** information:

- The date by which **Absentee Ballots** must be *received by* the Kingdom Seneschal
- The method for sending **Absentee Ballots** (usually US Mail without signature required, or email), and how receipt of the ballots will be confirmed (by email for emailed ballots and by SASE for ballots that are mailed)
- The content the sender must include in the **Absentee Ballot** for the ballot to be accepted (a preference in the poll, modern name, SCA name, mailing address for the person’s membership, copy of proof of membership, copy of picture ID showing the person is 18 years old or older)
- How **Absentee Ballots** will be included in the poll. Generally, they are included in the first poll, and are also counted in **Run-off pollings** if (and only if) the candidate that the ballot supports is included in the **Run-off polling**, etc.

**Ballot:** The physical piece of paper that paid members are given to indicate their preference in a polling. When a polling is conducted at an SCA event, the ballot only includes the “preference choices” printed on it. Members participating in the polling are not given a ballot until they go to a polling table and their eligibility to participate in the poll is verified (i.e., their membership, residency and age have been verified).

When a poll is conducted by mail, the polling guidelines must be printed on the ballot, and special precautions are implemented to ensure that ballots are not copied, and that ballots are only sent to (and returned by) paid members residing in specific zip codes.

**Confidence Polling:** This term is generally applied to mid-reign Baronial Pollings that the Crown conducts to determine whether the paid members living in a Barony support the currently sitting Baron and/or Baroness.

**Letter of Intent:** One of the first steps in selecting a new Baron and/or Baroness, is determining who is interested in the position. To do this, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal ask that “**Letters of Intent**” be submitted by those who wish to be considered as candidates for the positions of Baron and Baroness. Once these letters are received, the Crown reviews the letters, and determines which couples shall be included on the ballot. The candidates accepted by TRM are then announced in the Baronial newsletter, along with the date, time and guidelines for the polling.

It is the Crown’s prerogative to accept or decline specific “**Letters of Intent**”, and determine which couples may be considered in the polling for the position. It is extremely important that the position of Baron and Baroness is held by people the Crown can work with and depend upon to represent the Crown to the populace, and by people who the Crown is willing to warrant for three years.

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**CORPORA V.B.1:** The basic duties of the Baron and/or Baroness are ceremonial in nature in reflecting the royal presence in the barony. The Crown may assign additional duties and responsibilities, according to the laws and customs of the kingdom.

**LEX ATENVELDTUS V.A.1.b:** Since the Baron and Baroness are direct representatives of the Crown, only the Crown's signatures are necessary on the warrant. The issuance of a warrant for the office does not change the procedure for removal of a Baron and Baroness.

**LEX ATENVELDTUS V.A.4.b:** The Crown shall solicit recommendations for the office of Territorial

To be eligible, candidates submitting a **“Letter of Intent”** for Baron and Baroness must be paid members of the SCA, and in most cases, they must also reside within the zip codes assigned to the Barony. Announcements of the Crown's request for **Letters of Intent** must include the following information for candidates:

- The date by which **Letters of Intent** must be *received by* the Crown, Kingdom Seneschal and (usually) the sitting Baron and Baroness.
- The method for sending **Letters of Intent** (usually US Mail without signature required, or email).
- How receipt of the letters will be acknowledged (email for emailed ballots and SASE for mailed).
- The required content of the **Letters of Intent**. This must include full contact information for both people (modern name, SCA name, mailing address, phone numbers and email addresses), copy of proof of membership, a statement that the couple understands the responsibilities of the position and intends to serve a full three year warrant, and a statement that the couple understands their **Letter of Intent** will be published in the Baronial Newsletter.) The Crown may also optionally ask the candidates to include other information, i.e., the couple's plans and dreams for the future of the Barony, their history of participation in the Barony, etc.

**“Polling” vs “Voting”:** One of the most difficult SCA concepts for the populace to understand (and this includes officers and candidates for Baron and Baroness) is the idea that a Local Group Polling is not like an election in the democratic sense, nor is it intended to be. So the actual number of people who support specific options on a ballot are not always made public, and may not completely govern the decisions made on the topic. Unlike a binding “vote”, a polling is just a way for the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal to get an idea of how much support specific ideas or candidates have from paid members in the group.

For example, in the case of a polling as to whether a Barony should be formed by a group of members in a Shire, having 55% of the ballots support the idea may not mean that the request to form a Barony will be approved. That is especially true if only 40% of the paid members living in the zip codes cast ballots, or if the Shire Officers or neighboring SCA groups don't unanimously support formation of a Barony.

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.10:** “The populace must understand that a petition or polling is not a vote! It is merely a way for the Kingdom Seneschal to assess the opinions of the people.”

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**Run-off Polling:** In polls conducted to determine support for specific Baronial Candidates for Baron and Baroness, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal are required to consult with a majority of the paid Society members in the area, and are trying to identify candidates who are not “substantively opposed by the populace of the barony”. See **Section X: Validating and Compiling Polling Results for the Crown** in this document for more information.

That means that the Crown is looking for candidates who have the support of more than 50% of the paid members living in the zip codes assigned to the Barony. When the results of a first ballot do not show any one set of candidates with the required level of support, a second (and sometimes a third or fourth) poll must be held to identify one set of candidates that meets this standard. These subsequent polls are called “**Run-off Pollings**”.

**Vicar and Vicaress:** When a Barony is without a Baron and Baroness, KINGDOM LAW allows the Crown to optionally appoint a Vicar and/or Vicaress to manage the group until a Baronial Polling and an investiture may be conducted to install a new Baron and Baroness. The Crown defines the Rights and Privileges delegated to each Vicar and/or Vicaress based on the reasons for the specific appointment. See “**LEX ATENVELDTUS, Section V.C Appointment of a Vicar and/or Vicaress**” for additional information.

### **V. Polling Methods**

The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal may conduct pollings using one of two methods:

#### **A. Method 1: Polling at an SCA event**

This is the most common method used in Atenveldt, and is almost always used for Baronial Pollings held to select a new Territorial Baron and/or Baroness. Such pollings must be held at an event published in *Southwind*. The Kingdom Seneschal must also publish the date and time of the polling in *Southwind*. The polling guidelines must be published in the Baronial Newsletter, and it is recommended that they are also published in *Southwind*.

#### **B. Method 2: Polling via US Mail**

This method is most commonly used for issues that are not time sensitive, like group status changes and zip code issues between local SCA groups. Mailed polls are not the preferred method for selecting a new Baron and Baroness. That does not mean a Crown and Kingdom Seneschal may not use a mailed poll for selection of a Baron and Baroness, but this method is not often chosen because:

- KINGDOM LAW mandates that there be no more than a 60-90 day window between a Baronial polling and Baronial Investiture. This standard can be difficult to meet with a mailed poll, especially when **Run-Off Pollings** must be conducted.
- Mailing labels for a mailed poll are generated by the Corporate Office based on a zip code list sent to them by the Kingdom Seneschal. So guidelines for who gets a ballot are driven by the label options offered by the Corporate Office. Since the registry can only generate mailing labels for all Sustaining, Family and Associate members (regardless of the age of the members) it is difficult to limit participation in the poll to those over the age of 18 years old (the usual standard for a Baronial polling in Atenveldt).

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- A Baron and Baroness may only be installed by the Crown if (and only if) more than 50% of the paid members residing in the zip codes support the candidacy (more is explained about this later in this document). If there are no candidates with sufficient support in the polling, the Crown may not select Baronial Heirs, and difficult decisions must be made as to how to proceed. Those decisions can be very disruptive for a local group, and are best explained in person by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal on the day of the polling. This situation is of special concern when there is only one set of Baronial candidates on the ballot.

Funds for printing of ballots, postage, and (when necessary) rental of a PO box for returned ballots must be approved by the Kingdom Financial Committee before mailed pollings are announced. Special guidelines apply for polling by mail to ensure that only ballots from paid members living in the designated zip codes are counted, and each member only casts a single vote.

### **VI. Who runs a Local Group Polling?**

#### **A. Role of the Crown**

For polls that are not related to the Baron and Baroness, for example polls to ascertain the populace opinion on group status changes or zip code re-assignments, the Kingdom Seneschal is the decision maker. However, the Kingdom Seneschal always consults with the Crown before implementing changes based on polling results. In some cases (like polls held to determine if a SCA group can advance their status), the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal are required to agree before group advancement can be implemented.

Because Territorial Barons and Baronesses are warranted as direct representatives of the Crown, the Crown is the primary decision maker in all Baronial Pollings related to selection of a Territorial Baron and Baroness. That includes decisions about which candidates for Baron and Baroness are accepted and appear on ballots, when a Confidence Polling is needed to determine support for a sitting Baron and Baroness, or when a polling should be held to determine how the populace feel about removal of a sitting Baron and Baroness. In some cases, a Crown may choose to delegate decisions related to such pollings to Their Heirs, if the polling event is scheduled in Their successor's Reign.

In a Baronial Pollings related to the Baron and Baroness, the Crown's responsibilities include the following:

1. Only the Crown can call for a mid-Reign "Confidence Poll" of the populace to determine the current support for a sitting Territorial Baron and Baroness.

<p><i>LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.2:</i> "The Crown may poll the populace at any time during the warrant period. These polls are at the discretion of the Crown and may be conducted for any reason."</p>
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2. When a Baronial Investiture is on the Kingdom Calendar, the Crown works with the Kingdom Seneschal to set the date for a Baronial Polling to select a new Baron and Baroness. By KINGDOM LAW, this date must be 60-90 days before the Investiture.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.1.***

- a. In the six months before stepping down, a Territorial Baron and Baroness must meet with the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling) and Kingdom Seneschal to determine the date for a Baronial Polling to be conducted in the 60 to 90 days before the date of their stepping down.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V***

4. In all required polls,
  - a. The date of the Baronial polling shall be set by the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling), based on the Crown's Royal Progress and the time required for publication of polling information in the Kingdom newsletter.

In the case when a Territorial Barons and Baronesses steps down unexpectedly or is removed before their warrant expiration, the Crown works with the Kingdom Seneschal to set a date for a Baronial Polling and an investiture to select a new Baron and Baroness. By KINGDOM LAW, these dates must be no more than 60-90 days apart.

***WHEN A BARONY DOES NOT HAVE A SITTING BARON AND BARONESS***

In cases where a Baron and Baroness is suspended, removed, or must step down immediately, and the suspension or required advertising period for a Baronial polling leaves the Barony without a sitting Baron and Baroness, the Kingdom Seneschal must advise the Crown that the Barony shall temporarily become "Crown Lands". Two options are then available to ensure the daily functioning of the Baronial Officer corp until a new Baron and Baroness can be installed (the Crown must choose one of these options):

OPTION 1: The Crown may concurrently hold the title of Crown of Atenveldt and Territorial Baron and Baroness for the group until such time as a polling can be held and a new Baron and Baroness invested. During that time, the Crown signs all Baronial warrants and other official documents required to run the group, serves on the Baronial Financial Committee in place of the Baron and Baroness, and receives Baronial Officer reports.

OPTION 2: The Crown may appoint a Vicar and/or Vicaress to hold the lands for the Crown until such time as a polling can be held and a new Baron and Baroness invested. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal must warrant the Vicar and/or Vicaress for this position, and the Crown must define the Rights and Responsibilities of the Vicar and Vicaress for that warrant period. See "LEX ATENVELDTUS, Section V.C Appointment of a Vicar and/or Vicaress" for additional information.

3. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal request **Letters of Intent** from candidates who wish to run for the position of Territorial Baron and/or Baroness. The Crown holds sole responsibility for determining which **Letters of Intent** are accepted, and defining the final list of candidates whose names appear on the polling ballot.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V***

4. In all required polls,
  - f. The Crown shall solicit recommendations for the office of Territorial Baron and Baroness by asking for letters of intent for the position. Candidate letters must state that the candidates are prepared to sit for a full three year initial warrant period. The Crown shall announce in the Baronial newsletter the names of those candidates that the Crown deems to be considered for the purpose of the polling with the rules governing the polling and the polling date.

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4. The Crown consults with the Kingdom Seneschal about the results of the polling to ascertain support of the candidates for Baron and Baroness, and whether a **Run-off Polling** is needed. The Crown holds sole responsibility for determining what candidates are included in a **Run-off Polling**, and for determining the candidates who will be invested as Baron and Baroness.

### *Is the Crown Required to Attend a Baronial Polling?*

While the Crown (or their designated representative) is required to attend a Baronial Investiture (the responsibility can be delegated by the Crown, but that is very rare), there is no requirement that the Crown attend a Baronial Polling event. In fact, there is a long Atenveldt history of Crowns being unable to attend polling events in distant Baronies. While it is true that polls may be conducted by mail, a mailed poll is not the preferred method for determining the populace support for a Baron and/or Baroness.

In cases where the Crown is unable to attend a polling, the Kingdom Seneschal (or the designated Deputy Kingdom Seneschal running the polling) must be able to readily communicate with the Crown by phone to discuss issues arising at the polling event, report the results, advise on the necessity for a **Run-off Polling** (when needed), and understand the Crown's decisions as to who may be included in each **Run-off Polling**, and what set of candidates are to be announced as Baron and Baroness.

5. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal sign the warrant for the new Baron and Baroness.

## **B. Role of the Kingdom Seneschal**

The Kingdom Seneschal is responsible for publicizing and running all Local Group Pollings, ensuring all legal guidelines for a poll are followed, advising the Crown on the important decisions the Crown is required to make as part of that process, and (when the polling is held to determine support for a sitting Baron and Baroness or to select Baronial Heirs) communicating the polling process to the sitting Territorial Baron and Baroness and Baronial officers.

Baronial Pollings to select a new Baron and Baroness, and Local Group Pollings related to changes in the group's status, are some of the most divisive, disruptive, factionalizing activities that can go on in an SCA group. Members of the populace often campaign and become overly emotional and passionate in the weeks before a polling, and (when selecting Baronial Heirs) in the weeks between a polling and a Baronial Investiture. The Kingdom Seneschal's office makes every effort to ensure that an aggressive schedule keeps the transition period (from the polling date to a decision on group advancement or investiture of Heirs) is as short as possible.

To minimize the negative impact a Baronial Polling for a new Baron and Baroness has on the cohesiveness of a Barony, LEX ATENVELDTUS mandates that there be no more than a 60-90 day window between a Baronial Polling to solicit populace opinions on Baronial Candidates, and the investiture of a new Baron and Baroness.

In cases where the Kingdom Seneschal lives in the Barony where a polling to select a Baron and Baroness is scheduled, it is Atenveldt tradition that the Kingdom Seneschal delegate all responsibility for that polling to a qualified Deputy Kingdom Seneschal who does not reside in the Barony to be polled. This is done to avoid even the appearance of favoritism or bias in the running of the poll.

# Kingdom of Atenveldt - Office of the Kingdom Seneschal

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## When Polling to Select a Baron and Baroness

When polling to select a Baron and Baroness, the responsibilities of the Kingdom Seneschal (or designated Deputy Kingdom Seneschal) include the following:

1. Ensuring Territorial Barons and Baronesses whose warrants expire in the next year schedule their Baronial Investiture on the Kingdom Calendar. This must be done at the Kingdom Calendar Meeting held in May of the year before the warrant expires.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.1.***

d. In the year before completion of their warrant, a Territorial Baron and Baroness must send a representative to the Kingdom Calendar Meeting to ensure a Baronial Investiture is scheduled on the Kingdom Calendar in the 45 days before or after expiration of their Baronial warrant.

2. Consulting with the Crown/Heirs to set the date for a Baronial Polling to select a new Baron and Baroness, and to determine whether the polling should be conducted at an SCA event or by mail. See **Section V. Polling Methods** in this document for the pros and cons of choosing a mailed polling for selecting a new Baron and Baroness.

By KINGDOM LAW, the polling date must be 60-90 days before the Investiture. When the polling is held at an event, the event can be conducted at an event already on the Kingdom Calendar, or a new Kingdom event held for the polling or a fighter practice, as long as that event is properly advertised as a Kingdom Calendar Event in *Southwind* before the polling.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.1.***

b. In the six months before stepping down, a Territorial Baron and Baroness must meet with the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling) and Kingdom Seneschal to determine the date for a Baronial Polling to be conducted in the 60 to 90 days before the date of their stepping down.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V***

4. In all required polls,

a. The date of the Baronial polling shall be set by the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling), based on the Crown's Royal Progress and the time required for publication of polling information in the Kingdom newsletter.

In the case when a Territorial Barons and Baronesses steps down unexpectedly (before their warrant expiration), the Kingdom Seneschal must work with the Crown to schedule both the polling and investiture as soon as possible, as long as the polling and investiture dates are properly published and advertised, and no more than 90 days apart. See ***WHEN A BARONY DOES NOT HAVE A SITTING BARON AND BARONESS*** in **Section VI.A. Role of the Crown, Item 2** in this document for the decisions the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal must make (and the Kingdom Seneschal implement) when a Barony does not have a sitting Baron and Baroness.

3. Publishing an announcement of the polling date, time, and location in both the *Southwind* and the Baronial newsletter, and the polling guidelines in the Baronial newsletter. Polling information must be published 90 days before the polling date. Polling guidelines must include **Absentee Ballot** procedures, qualifications for participating in the poll (including

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what a member must bring to the polling table on the day of the poll), and information about possible **Run-off pollings**.

It is recommended, but not required, that polling guidelines also be published in *Southwind*. If they are not, the polling information that appears in *Southwind* should refer members to the Baronial newsletter for additional information about **Absentee Ballots** and proof of membership and ID they must bring on the day of the poll.

4. Coordinating with the Baronial Officers to ensure the following tasks are completed:
  - a. Publishing a request for **Letters of Intent** from those interested in running for Baron and Baroness in the Baronial Newsletter 90 days before polling date.
  - b. Publishing the polling guidelines in the Baronial Newsletter 90 days before polling date.
  - c. Publishing the **Letters of Intent** from those candidates accepted by the Crown in the Baronial Newsletter. These must be published 60-45 days before polling date.
  - d. Communicating with the Local Seneschal and the Event Steward to ensure:
    1. The event where the polling is scheduled is properly advertised in *Southwind* and the Baronial Newsletter
    2. A secluded or separate area of the event is reserved for the polling table(s) by the Event Stewards
    3. The Event Steward understands and budgets for site requirements (tables, chairs, etc.) for the polling area
5. Ordering and preparing membership lists for use at the polling tables (usually one in alphabetic order and one in zip code order).
6. Creating and printing a ballot for the polling, and ensuring enough ballots are available for use in **Run-off Pollings** if they are necessary.
7. Receiving and compiling **Absentee Ballots** results and ensuring they are included in the compiled results on the day of the polling.
8. Setting up and running the polling at the event.
9. Privately advising the Crown of polling results (and **Run-off Polling** results), along with explaining the options TRM have in making decisions about whether additional polls are needed, candidates who could be included in additional polls, and the final selection of Heirs for the Barony.
10. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal sign the warrant for the new Baron and Baroness.

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### When Polling via US Mail

For mailed polls, whether they are for selection of a Baron and Baroness or to solicit populace feedback on other issues, the Kingdom Seneschal holds sole responsibility for the following:

1. Requesting and getting Kingdom Financial Committee approval for funds needed for printing of ballots, postage, and (when necessary) rental of a PO box for returned ballots
2. Announcing and advertising the polling to the populace
3. Designing and printing the ballots
4. Requesting mailing labels from the Corporate Office and using the labels within 10 days (a Corporate requirement)
5. Mailing the ballots
6. Validating the returned ballots and compiling the results
7. Reporting the results to the Crown, other Officers and the populace (when appropriate). Traditionally, results in polls to select a Baron and Baroness are *not* announced to the populace, but results of polls related to group status, zip code re-alignment, and other issues are generally announced.

### **C. Role of the Sitting Baron and Baroness in Pollings for Baronial Heirs**

In polls to select a new Baron and Baroness, the sitting Baron and Baroness are responsible for working with the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal to get the Stepping Down/Investiture and polling events on the Kingdom Calendar, encouraging and supporting candidates who are interested in running for the position, and explaining the transition process to the candidates and populace. ***They hold no responsibility for administration or running of the polling.***

The sitting Baron and Baroness's responsibilities include the following:

1. Ensuring their Stepping Down/Baronial Investiture event is placed on the Kingdom Calendar at the Kingdom Calendar Meeting held in year before their warrant expires.

***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.1.***

e. In the year before completion of their warrant, a Territorial Baron and Baroness must send a representative to the Kingdom Calendar Meeting to ensure a Baronial Investiture is scheduled on the Kingdom Calendar in the 45 days before or after expiration of their Baronial warrant.

2. Working with the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal to schedule the Baronial polling no more than 60-90 days before the Stepping Down/Investiture. In the case when a Territorial Barons and Baronesses must step down before their warrant expires, they must coordinate with the Kingdom Seneschal to schedule a polling and investiture as soon as possible, as long as the polling and investiture dates are no more than 90 days apart.

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### ***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V.A.1.***

f. In the six months before stepping down, a Territorial Baron and Baroness must meet with the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling) and Kingdom Seneschal to determine the date for a Baronial Polling to be conducted in the 60 to 90 days before the date of their stepping down.

### ***LEX ATENVELDTUS Section V***

4. In all required polls,

a. The date of the Baronial polling shall be set by the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown (or the Heirs who will reign at the polling), based on the Crown's Royal Progress and the time required for publication of polling information in the Kingdom newsletter

3. Assisting the local Seneschal in appointing Event Stewards for the polling event (following their traditional procedures for selection of Event Stewards for their Baronial events), ensuring the required event advertising is published in *Southwind* and the Baronial newsletter, and that the Baronial Chronicler understands the polling announcements to be published in the Baronial newsletter. This may include budgeting for a special issue of the Baronial newsletter to publish the **Letters of Intent**.
4. Encouraging, supporting, and explaining the role of Baron and Baroness to the populace and those who are considering running for the position, and support fair, polite, and meaningful discourse between the candidates and between the populace and the candidates.

## **D. Role of Baronial Officers in Pollings for Baronial Heirs**

When polling to select a new Baron and Baroness, the Baronial officers are responsible for planning, budgeting, running and advertising the polling and Stepping Down/Investiture events, just as they do for all other Baronial events. They also coordinate with the Kingdom Seneschal to ensure the required polling announcements are published in the Baronial newsletter, and an area is reserved at the polling event to run the poll. ***They hold no responsibility for administration or running of the polling, and no officers or residents of the Barony may be involved in polling activities on the day of the polling.***

In polls to select a new Baron and Baroness, the Baronial Officer responsibilities include the following:

1. The local Seneschal and the sitting Baron and Baroness must ensuring a Baronial Investiture is placed on the Kingdom Calendar at the Kingdom Calendar Meeting held in year before the Baron and Baroness's warrant expires. In the case when a Territorial Barons and Baronesses must step down before their warrant expires, this must be coordinated with the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal to schedule a polling and investiture as soon as possible, as long as the polling and investiture dates are no more than 90 days apart.
2. The sitting Baron and Baroness and the Local Seneschal must appointing Event Steward(s) for the polling event (following their traditional procedures for selection of Event Stewards for their Baronial events), and manage the event advertising and administration, just like any other Baronial event. If the polling is scheduled at a fighter practice, or an event that is not already on the Kingdom Calendar, they must complete the required event forms, budget and *Southwind* advertising to make the polling event a Kingdom Calendar Event.

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3. The Baronial Chronicler must publish the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal's polling announcements, the polling guidelines, and the candidates' **Letters of Intent** in the Baronial newsletter. This may include budgeting for a special issue of the Baronial newsletter to publish the **Letters of Intent**.

### **VII. Who may cast a ballot (setting the polling requirements)**

This is by far the most controversial polling issue handled by the Kingdom Seneschal. To participate in a Local Group Polling,

1. **Individuals must be paid members of the SCA.** That means they must have a current Sustaining, Associate or Family membership.
  - a. For pollings held at an SCA event, membership is verified before the individual is given a ballot. Verification of membership is completed at the polling table using a current membership list, or the individual may present an online membership renewal dated after the date the membership list was generated by the Milpitas Registry.
  - b. For polls by mail, mailing labels for the polling are generated by the Corporate Office based on a zip code list sent to them by the Kingdom Seneschal. So guidelines for who gets a ballot are driven by the label options offered by the Corporate Office. Since the registry generates mailing labels for Sustaining, Family and Associate members (regardless of the age of the members) it is difficult to limit participation in a mailed poll to those over the age of 18 years (the usual standard for a Baronial polling in Atenveldt).

**CORPORA, III.D.2:** "The Society permits very broad participation by people who are not members as defined in the By-Laws. However no part of the Society can be required to solicit or heed their views regarding branch status, or any other situation where the opinion of the populace is to be consulted. Law, custom, or actual practice may allow consultation with nonmembers, but it cannot be required."

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.9:** "Branch pollings as a rule must include all paid members in good standing of any type within the boundaries of the area being polled, and the Corporate Office requires that the labels be used within 10 days after they are issued. Persons who actively play in the area but live outside the area may be polled at the discretion of the Kingdom Seneschal."

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.10.d:** Non-member support can't replace member indifference or opposition. While non-members may be allowed to express an opinion, they can't be allowed to drown out the voice of the paying members. If people complain, refer them to Corpora Article I."

2. **Members must reside in the zip codes assigned to the Local Group.** That means they must receive their *Southwind*, or have an SCA membership, in a Zip Code belonging to the Local Group. For a list of zip codes for SCA groups in Atenveldt, see the "[Official Zip Code List](#)" on the LANDS page of [www.atenveldt.org](http://www.atenveldt.org).
  - a. For pollings held at an SCA event, zip code residence is verified before the individual is given a ballot. Verification of zip codes is completed at the polling table using a current membership list, or the individual may present an online membership renewal dated after the date the membership list was generated by the Milpitas Registry.

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- b. For polls by mail, mailing labels for the polling are generated by the Corporate Office based on a zip code list sent to them by the Kingdom Seneschal. So only those living in the correct zip codes are mailed a ballot.

### ***SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ZIP CODE REQUIREMENT FOR PHOENIX METRO BARONIES***

The Phoenix metropolitan area is unusual, because it includes three separate Baronies and an SCA College all within easy driving for residents living in the metro area. This results in many members residing in the zip codes belonging to one of the Baronies, but playing exclusively in another Barony. In 2004, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal implemented a special program for Baronial pollings conducted in the Phoenix area that allowed the following:

- Two different colored ballots with identical content are prepared for Baronial pollings for Baronies located in the Phoenix metro area.
- Current paid members who do not live in the zip codes assigned for the Phoenix Barony being polled, but who do reside in a zip code belonging to one of the other SCA groups in the Phoenix metro area, are allowed to cast a different colored ballot if they sign a **Pledge Form** stating they “play exclusively in the group being polled and pledge not to poll in any other Baronial Pollings held in the Phoenix metro area for a period of 3 years”.

The different colored ballots are separately counted by the Kingdom Seneschal, and considered by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal when polling results are reviewed. The Kingdom Seneschal also ensures the **Pledge Forms** from the last 3 years of Baronial Pollings are available (and checked) whenever Baronial Pollings are held in the Phoenix Metro area.

This special exclusion *does not* allow members living in zip codes outside the Phoenix zip codes to poll in a Phoenix Baronial polling, and *does not* apply for Baronial Pollings in Baronies in other parts of Atenveldt.

3. **Traditionally, members may only poll in a Local Group polling if they are 18 years old or older, and they present picture ID to prove their identity and age at the polling table.** While there is no specific requirement that minors be excluded from casting a ballot in a Local Group polling, many people (including many Crowns) feel that decisions about who is selected as Baron and Baroness, and/or decisions about group status, should not be based on giving equal weight to a ballot cast by an adult and one cast by a minor. As a result, the tradition in Atenveldt has been to limit participation in polls to individuals who are 18 years old (or older). However, this guideline can be omitted or changed if the Crown wishes it modified for a specific polling. Alternatively, a different colored ballot could be used to allow a “Youth Polling” for minors, and those results could be tallied and evaluated separately by the Crown.
- a. For pollings held at an SCA event, members must present picture ID at the polling table and age is verified before the individual is given a ballot.
- b. As stated earlier, mailing labels generated for pollings by mail include all Sustaining, Family and Associate members (regardless of the age of the members). So an age requirement for sending a ballot is more difficult to enforce in a mailed poll.
4. **For pollings held at an event, Absentee Ballots are only included when they are received by the published deadline, and include all of the required information.** This usually includes the person’s preference in the poll, modern name, SCA name, mailing address for the person’s membership, copy of proof of membership, copy of picture ID showing the person is 18 years old or older.

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### VIII. Legally Required Polling Announcements

#### For a Polling to Select New Baron and Baroness

Who Announces it?	What is Announced?	When is it Announced?	Where is it Announced?
Crown and Kingdom Seneschal	Date of Baronial Polling (must be set 60-90 days before Stepping Down/ Baronial Investiture)	6 months before end of Baronial warrant, OR ASAP when Baron & Baroness step down unexpectedly	Kingdom Calendar in ( <i>Southwind</i> & <a href="http://www.atenveldt.org">www.atenveldt.org</a> ), and Baronial Calendar
Crown and Kingdom Seneschal	Due Date & content for candidate "Letters of Intent" (must be due less than 30 days from announcement )	90 days before polling date	Baronial Newsletter
Kingdom Seneschal	Date/time and event location for poll included in EVENT ARTICLE or date of mailing and deadlines for mailed poll	90 days before polling date (must be included in one <i>Southwind</i> issue before polling date)	<i>Southwind</i> and Baronial newsletter
Kingdom Seneschal	Polling Guidelines (including Absentee Ballot info)	90 days before polling date	Baronial newsletter (also recommend doing in <i>Southwind</i> )
Kingdom Seneschal	Letters of Intent from Candidates accepted by Crown	60-45 days before polling date	Baronial newsletter

#### For Polls on Issues other than Selecting a new Baron and Baroness

Who Announces it?	What is Announced?	When is it Announced?	Where is it Announced?
Crown and Kingdom Seneschal	Date and Subject of Polling	No later than 90 days before polling date	<i>Southwind</i> & Local Group newsletter (if group has one)
Kingdom Seneschal	Date/time and event location for poll included in EVENT ARTICLE or date of mailing and deadlines for mailed poll	90 days before polling date (must be one <i>Southwind</i> issue before polling date)	<i>Southwind</i> and Local Group newsletter (if group has one)
Kingdom Seneschal	Polling Guidelines (including Absentee Ballot info)	90 days before polling date	Local Group newsletter (if group has one) and <i>Southwind</i>

### IX. Running a Polling

#### A. Polling held at an SCA Event

The Kingdom Seneschal is in charge of all aspects of running Local group pollings (and **Run-off Pollings**) held at an SCA event. In cases where the Kingdom Seneschal lives in the Barony where a polling to select a Baron and Baroness is scheduled, it is Atenveldt tradition that the Kingdom Seneschal delegate responsibility for that polling to a qualified Deputy Kingdom Seneschal who does not reside in that Barony. This is done to avoid even the appearance of favoritism or bias in the running of the poll.

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In addition to the responsibilities and publication deadlines explained in **Section VI.E Role of the Kingdom Seneschal** of this document, the Kingdom Seneschal (or Deputy Kingdom Seneschal designated to running the polling) is responsible for these onsite tasks:

1. Recruiting, organizing and instructing a staff to work at the polling tables. Traditionally, all of the staff should be members who reside in another SCA group. ***The sitting Baron and Baroness, Baronial Officers and members of the Baronial populace should not be assigned any polling responsibilities, or asked to assist at the polling tables.***
2. Setup of the polling area, and security to allow those who are polling privacy when completing ballots.
3. Ensuring all required paperwork is onsite, available and explained to the staff working the polling, including:
  - a. Current membership lists (one sorted by zip code and one sorted alphabetically by modern name)
  - b. Published guidelines for participation in the poll
  - c. A current zip code list for the group
  - d. A sufficient number of printed ballots for the polling and possible **Run-off Pollings**
  - e. The Kingdom Seneschal and Crown (no one else) should have a count of the **Absentee Ballots** received prior to the polling

### ***SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR PHOENIX METRO AREA BARONIAL POLLINGS***

For Baronial polls in the Phoenix metropolitan area, the following additional items must be available at the polling table:

- A second set of ballots on a different colored paper
- A **Pledge Form** that allows members living in Phoenix zip codes that are outside the Barony to pledge that they “play exclusively in the group being polled and pledge not to poll in any other Baronial Pollings held in the Phoenix metro area for a period of 3 years”.
- The Pledge Forms from Baronial pollings held in the Phoenix metropolitan area for the prior 3 years should be available at the polling table for verification.

See the ***SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ZIP CODE REQUIREMENT FOR PHOENIX METRO BARONIES*** in **Section VII Who may cast a ballot (setting the polling requirements)** of this document for additional information.

4. Announcing opening and closing of the polling tables.
5. Enforcing requirements for participation in the poll, including:
  - a. Ensuring staff confirms current membership, zip code and age requirements.
  - b. Resolving membership, age and residency problems for those who wish to poll.
  - c. Ensuring members who submitted **Absentee Ballots** do not also poll at the event.
  - d. For Baronial Pollings in the Phoenix metro area, ensuring members who signed **Pledge Forms** and participated in Baronial Pollings in other Phoenix Baronies in the prior 3 years do not poll at the event.
6. Setting up a “double counted” system for counting ballots that keeps the results confidential. This system should ensure that no one except the Kingdom Seneschal knows the final results. The most commonly used system is:

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- a. Use three teams of two people for counting, and solicit a promise they will not discuss the results with anyone
  - b. Divide the ballots into approximately three equal groups
  - c. Have each team count their third of the ballots twice (counted once by each person), and write down the results
  - d. The three teams write down their results and give them to the Kingdom Seneschal to compile.
7. Ensuring all used ballots are disposed of confidentially.
  8. Compiling the results (including **Absentee Ballots**), reviewing the results with the Crown, and advising the Crown when a **Run-off Polling** is needed.
  9. When a **Run-off Polling** is required, the Kingdom Seneschal coordinates staff to prepare ballots that only show the candidates in the **Run-off Polling**, and the polling is repeated until a single set of candidates has sufficient support to be invested as Baron and Baroness.

### B. Polling via US Mail

The majority of Baronial pollings by mail are related to topics other than selection of a new Baron and Baroness, although polls by mail have been used in Atenveldt for selection of a Baron and Baroness in the past. See **Section V. Polling Methods** in this document for the pros and cons of choosing a mailed polling for selecting a new Baron and Baroness.

Mailed polls are generally used to solicit populace opinions on the (additions/transfer) of zip codes for a Local Group, changes in Local Group status, formation/dissolution of groups, etc.

The Kingdom Seneschal must complete the following procedures for a polling by mail:

1. Present a proposal to the Kingdom Financial Committee (KFC) that includes:
  - a. Reasons a polling is needed
  - b. A budget for cost of the polling including printing of ballots, estimated postage, and (when necessary) rental of a PO Box for returned ballots.
2. Once the KFC has approved costs for the polling, an article should be published in the Local Group newsletter (if there is one, or *Southwind* if the group does not have one) that includes the following:
  - a. The reasons for the polling
  - b. The polling guidelines for who will receive ballots (sustaining, family associate members, members in specific zip codes, etc.), deadlines for return of ballots, and whether results will be announced, etc. (The results of pollings related to the selection of a Baron and Baroness *are not* announced to the populace, but results of pollings on other topics *are* announced.)
3. Ballots must be designed as follows:
  - a. Ballots must be printed on colored paper
  - b. Ballots must be consecutively numbered before they are sent.

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- c. The following information must be appear on the ballot:
- Reason for the polling
  - Date by which poll must be “postmarked” or “received” to be counted
  - Address to which poll must be mailed
  - Clarification as to whether scanned/mailed ballots will be accepted

While the ballot design varies according to the polling topic, the most common design for mailed ballots includes a one piece ballot with polling information on one side of the paper, and a pre-printed return address on the other side. The Kingdom Seneschal can then mail the ballot in an envelope, and members can mark their selection on the ballot, fold the ballot, add a stamp and mail it back.

4. Mailing labels must be requested from the Corporate Office in Milpitas for a list of the zip codes (in numerical order) to be included in the poll. This should be done after the ballots are finalized and printed, since guidelines require “the labels be used within 10 days after they are issued”.

For Baronial Pollings in the Phoenix metro area, labels for members who signed **Pledge Forms** and participated in Baronial Pollings in other Phoenix Baronies in the prior 3 years should be identified and omitted from the polling.

***KINGDOM SENESCHAL’S HANDBOOK VII.B.9:*** “Branch pollings as a rule must include all paid members in good standing of any type within the boundaries of the area being polled, and the Corporate Office requires that the labels be used within 10 days after they are issued. Persons who actively play in the area but live outside the area may be polled at the discretion of the Kingdom Seneschal.”

***KINGDOM SENESCHAL’S HANDBOOK APPENDIX G: MISCELLANEOUS:***

I. Corporate Mailing Labels

- A. You may request mailing labels for these purposes:
1. Kingdom approved Branch polling
  2. Kingdom Newsletters
  3. Kingdom A&S Issues
  4. Kingdom Law Issues
- B. Other than the above cases (all of which come through the Kingdom Seneschal or Kingfom Chronicler\_ the corporate office cannot issue mailing labels/files for mailing to themembership
- C. As a reminder, when requesting labels, please submit the ZIP codes, in numerical order,for the area you wish labels generated.
- D. Labels must be used within 10 days of receipt.

5. Before returned ballots are counted, the ballots must be ordered based on the “consecutive numbering” assigned before they were mailed, and checked to ensure duplicates have not been submitted. **In the case of duplicate numbered ballots, both versions of the ballot are disqualified and not counted.**

### ***X. Validating and Compiling Polling Results for the Crown***

#### **A. Polling Confidentiality**

While the decisions made based on polling results are made known to the public, the Kingdom Seneschal holds a special responsibility for maintaining the following two critical confidentiality guidelines related to ballots cast in a polling of a local group:

- **How a member completes a ballot is confidential.** That means that all polling procedures should be designed so a ballot cannot be associated with the member who completed the ballot. Further, completed ballots should be personally disposed of by the Kingdom Seneschal so that no one can review, re-count, assess, or understand the way specific members polled.
- **In a Baronial polling to select a new Baron and Baroness, the final number of ballots cast for specific candidates should not be known to anyone except the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal in charge of the polling.** The importance of this cannot be overstated. No one, not the sitting Baron and Baroness, the candidates who are selected as Heirs, or other Kingdom or Baronial Officers, should be told the exact numbers. Such information can have an enormous negative impact on the Barony, and on the support the new Territorial Baron and Baroness receive from the populace.

#### **B. Validating Enough Ballots Have Been Cast for a Poll to be Valid**

Whenever a Local Group Polling is conducted, the polling results must be evaluated in terms of the number of paid members living in the zip codes being polled, and the number of members who participated in the poll.

*KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.10.a:* "A substantial majority of the Society members in the area must have responded to the poll."

Prior to all Local Group pollings, the Kingdom Seneschal should use a current membership list to determine the number of current members residing in the zip codes for the group that is being polled. That number is needed to evaluate whether the polling results are valid. In the case of a Baronial Polling to select a new Baron and Baroness, the level of participation in the poll is a critical point in determining whether a specific set of candidates can be legally invested.

If, for example, the Kingdom Seneschal polls a set of zip codes to determine whether they wish to be re-assigned from a Shire to a Barony, the Kingdom Seneschal must evaluate the polling results based on the following:

- The number of members who reside in the zip codes
- The number of members who respond to the poll
- The **percentage of those polled** who SUPPORT or DO NOT SUPPORT the re-assignment of the zip codes
- The **percentage of the members residing in the zip codes** who SUPPORT or DO NOT SUPPORT the re-assignment of the zip codes

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<b>EXAMPLE:</b>	<b>Total Members in Zip Codes:</b>	<b>32</b>	
	<b>Total Members Polling (Ballots):</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>69% of members responded</b>
	<b>Ballots that SUPPORT Joining Barony:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>55 % of ballots SUPPORT</b>

That means 69% (22/32) of the members responded, and 55% (12/22) of the ballots cast supported the re-assignment of the zip codes to the Barony. But only 38% (12/32) of the members living in the zip codes support the change.

While a Kingdom Seneschal could consider the above **EXAMPLE** poll valid (because it meets the **Kingdom Seneschal's Handbook** standard with 69% or "a substantial majority of the Society members in the area" responding to the poll), the results could also be interpreted more conservatively, and judged "not strong enough" support to make the zip code reassignment. (Welcome to the world of the Kingdom Seneschal!!!)

### C. Advising the Crown & Deciding if Run-off Polling is Needed

In polls conducted to determine support for specific Baronial Candidates for Baron and Baroness, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal are required to consult with a majority of the paid members residing in the Barony, and identify candidates who are not "substantively opposed by the populace of the barony". While letters of support from non-members and members outside the Barony may be considered by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal, they cannot overrule or be weighted as heavily as the views of the paid members in the group.

**CORPORA V.A.I:** "The barony's opinion on the matter must be requested and received in writing, and the appointments must not be substantively opposed by the populace of the barony. Territorial Barons and Baronesses are officers and must maintain appropriate membership status."

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.10.a:** "A substantial majority of the Society members in the area must have responded to the poll."

**KINGDOM SENESCHAL'S HANDBOOK VII.B.10.d:** "Non-member support can't replace member indifference or opposition. While non-members may be allowed to express an opinion, they can't be allowed to drown out the voice of the paying members. If people complain, refer them to Corpora Article I."

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4. In all required polls,

- b. The Crown, or Crown's representative, shall consider the recommendations of the populace prior to making their decision regarding the new Baron

That means that the Crown is looking for candidates who have the support of more than 50% of the paid members living in the zip codes assigned to the Barony. That can be very hard to determine when more than two sets of candidates are included on the ballot.

When a first ballot does not show any one set of candidates with support totaling "more than 50% of the paid members living in the zip codes", the Kingdom Seneschal determines that the SCA legal standard for selecting a new Baron and Baroness has not been met. So a second (and sometimes a third and fourth) poll, i.e., "**Run-off pollings**", must be held. When such results are presented to the Crown, the Kingdom Seneschal should **require a Run-off Polling**.

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When one set of Baronial candidates has the support of more than 50% those who polled, **and** a “substantial majority of the Society members in the area” participated in the poll, the Kingdom Seneschal’s recommendation should be based on how many couples were included on the ballot.

- If one or two sets of candidates were listed on the ballot, the Crown may select the Baronial candidates with the support of more than 50% of those who polled as Baronial Heirs.
- If more than two sets of candidates were listed on the ballot, a final **Run-off Polling** with only two sets of candidates should be recommended.

The best selection the Crown can make is a set of Baronial candidates with the support of more than the support of 50% those who polled **and** the support of more than 50% of the members residing in the Barony.

### FIRST POLL with Five Sets of Candidates on Ballot

**Total Members in Baronial Zip Codes:** 263  
**Total Members Polling (Ballots):** 223 (85% of the members participated in polling)

Candidates	Ballots in Support	% of 197 Ballots Cast in Poll	% of 263 members living in Barony
1	11	5%	4%
2	9	4%	3%
3	60	27%	23%
4	47	21%	18%
5	96	43%	37%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>85% of members in the Zip Codes</b>

This first poll shows none of the couples have the support of more than 50% of the members participating in the polling *or* the support of more than 50% of the members residing in the Barony.

### FIRST Run-off Poll with THREE Sets of Candidates on Ballot

**Total Members in Baronial Zip Codes:** 263  
**Total Members Polling (Ballots):** 218 (83% of the members participated in polling)

Candidates	Ballots in Support	% of 218 Ballots Cast in Poll	% of 263 members living in Barony
3	66	30%	25%
4	29	13%	11%
5	123	56%	47%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>83% of members in the Zip Codes</b>

This **Run-off Polling** shows Couple 5 *does have* the support of more than 50% of the members participating in the polling. However, they *do not have* the support of more than 50% of the members residing in the Barony.

### SECOND Run-off Poll with TWO Sets of Candidates on Ballot

**Total Members in Baronial Zip Codes:** 263  
**Total Members Polling (Ballots):** 220 (84% of the members participated in polling)

Candidates	Ballots in Support	% of 220 Ballots Cast in Poll	% of 263 members living in Barony
3	69	31%	26%
5	151	69%	57%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>84% of members in the Zip Codes</b>

This **Run-off Polling** shows Couple 5 *now has* the support of more than 50% of the members participating in the polling, as well as the support of more than 50% of the members residing in the Barony.

When a poll is held at an SCA event, the associated **Run-off pollings** are held as soon after the first ballot as possible, to allow people who participated in the first ballot to also participate in the **Run-off Polling**. In the case of a mailed poll, **Run-off polling(s)** are generally held by mail.

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**Run-off pollings** use the following guidelines:

- The Crown selects two or three sets of candidates to be included in the **Run-off polling**. This is usually the two sets of candidates with the most support in the initial ballot. If, however, there are three sets who received almost equal support, the Crown may choose to include three sets of candidates on the **Run-off Polling** ballot.
- The Crown or Kingdom Seneschal announces the candidates included in the **Run-off polling**, and the polling is held immediately. When held at an event, only those members who are still present may cast ballots.
- Generally, **Absentee Ballots** cast for the candidates are counted if (and only if) the **Absentee Ballot** was cast for a candidate included in the **Run-off polling**.

### D. What conditions can invalidate a polling for Baronial Heirs?

The Kingdom Seneschal is responsible for ensuring that SCA procedures and guidelines are properly followed when a Baronial Polling is conducted, and that a sufficient number of people participate in the poll to indicate real membership support exists in the local group for Baronial Heirs. Questions or concerns about the procedures used to conduct a polling should be taken directly to the Kingdom Seneschal for investigation and resolution. Members who broadcast concerns about the validity of polling results, but do not take those concerns to the Kingdom Seneschal for investigation and clarification, will be viewed as “spreading rumors” by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal, and may be subject to sanction.

A Baronial Polling may be considered invalid for any of the following reasons:

1. “Substantially more” than 50% of the paid members living in the zip codes did not participate in the poll.
2. Individuals were allowed to cast ballots who should not have been allowed to poll, and there were sufficient numbers of those ballots to change the results. For example, non-members were allowed to cast ballots, and those ballots were included (i.e., counted with equal weight) as member ballots when the results were tallied.
3. None of the candidates received more than 50% of the ballots cast in the poll.
4. The Baronial Heirs selected by the Crown did not receive the support of more than 50% of the ballots cast in the poll.

By far the most common of these reasons is the first one. This happens most often when only one set of Baronial Candidates is included on the ballot. When that single set of candidates does not receive the support of more than 50% of the paid members residing in the zip codes, the Crown may not select them as the next Baron and Baroness.

In cases where a polling is invalidated,

1. The Crown and Kingdom Seneschal must void the polling, call for additional **Letters of Intent**, and conduct a new polling.

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2. If the sitting Baron and Baroness are willing to extend their warrant for a few months to allow for the new polling and an investiture, the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal can choose to sign a short warrant extension for them.
3. If the sitting Baron and Baroness do not extend their Reign, or the Barony is without a sitting Baron and Baroness, the *WHEN A BARONY DOES NOT HAVE A SITTING BARON AND BARONESS* decisions explained in **Section VI.A. Role of the Crown, Item 2** of this document must be made by the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal. This may include making the Barony “Crown Lands”, as well as the possible appointment of a Vicar and/or Vicaress.

### ***XI. Informing the Candidates & Populace of the Results***

#### **A. Pollings to Select a Baron and Baroness**

While it is the prerogative of the Crown to announce their selection of a new Baron and /or Baroness in any way they wish, the Kingdom Seneschal should advise the Crown on some actions that may ease the stress generated during a Baronial polling. These recommendations should be made to the Crown:

- Prior to starting the poll, the Crown should try to solicit assurances from all of the candidates that they will openly and graciously support the Heirs selected by the Crown, regardless of who is chosen. This is extremely important to the health of the Barony.
- No one except the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal (not even the currently sitting Baron and Baroness or the candidates selected as Heirs) should *ever* be told the numbers of ballots cast for specific candidates.
- The candidates should be taken out of sight of the populace, and privately told who the Crown has selected before the decision is announced to the populace. This allows candidates to graciously react to the Crown’s decision, and prepare themselves to openly support the Heirs.
- As a courtesy, the Crown should privately inform the sitting Baron and Baroness of their choice of Heirs before the decision is announced to the populace.

#### **B. Pollings on other Matters (not selection of a Baron and Baroness)**

The Kingdom Seneschal may choose how and when polling results on matters other than the selection of a Baron and Baroness are announced, and the amount of information about the polling that is to be included and made known to the public. This can include announcements in Court, in the Baronial newsletter, in Southwind, etc.

## **XII. SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **A. SAMPLE: Crown's Request for Letters of Intent from Candidates for Baron and Baroness**

This announcement should be published in the Baronial Newsletter 90 days before the polling date.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION AS A BARONIAL CANDIDATE:**

1. Baronial candidates must be current paid members, and must receive their Southwind or have an SCA membership in a Zip Code belonging to the Barony of **[INSERT NAME OF BARONY]**.
2. Candidates must be at least 18 years old.
3. Candidates must have **Letters of Intent** in the hands of the Crown, the Kingdom Seneschal, and the Baron and Baroness no later than **[INSERT DATE]**. Letters should be written with the understanding that (if accepted by the Crown), the letters will be published in the **[INSERT NAME OF BARONIAL NEWSLETTER]** for the populace to review prior to the polling.
4. Candidates must include the below information in their Letter of Intent:
  - a. Full contact information, including SCA and modern names, addresses, phone numbers, email, and membership numbers and expiration date
  - b. Their reasons for seeking the position
  - c. Their history of participation in the SCA and the Barony of Ered Sul
  - d. Their plans for the future of the group
  - e. Their understanding of the responsibilities of the position of Baron and Baroness.
  - f. Their statement that they are willing to be installed with a three year warrant in the position, and understand their Letter of Intent will be published in **[INSERT NAME OF BARONIAL NEWSLETTER]** if their candidacy is accepted by the Crown.

Questions about these Guidelines should be directed to the Crown ([crown@atenveldt.org](mailto:crown@atenveldt.org)) or the Kingdom Seneschal ([seneschal@atenveldt.org](mailto:seneschal@atenveldt.org))

**[NAME OF KINGDOM SENESCHAL or DEPUTY KINGDOM SENESCHAL IN CHARGE OF POLLING]**

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### **B. SAMPLE: Baronial Polling Guidelines when Selecting a Baron and/or Baroness (*more than one set of candidates on ballot*)**

When more than one set of candidates is listed on the ballot, this announcement would be published in Southwind and in the Baronial Newsletter, and may be published to the Baronial website and online lists belonging to the Barony.

#### **[INSERT NAME OF BARONY] BARONIAL POLLING**

A polling of the current paid members of the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY] will be conducted at the [INSERT SITE NAME] to determine their support of candidates for Baron and Baroness. The polling will be held [INSERT TIME] to [INSERT TIME], [INSERT DAY and DATE]. The populace should be aware that if the first polling does not show a clear preference of the populace, a second polling will be held immediately following the closing and tabulation of ballots for the first poll. Members are encouraged to plan to remain onsite to participate should a second poll be necessary. To participate in all pollings held that day,

You must be a Sustaining, Associate or Family member who is 18 years old or older, and must receive a Southwind or have an SCA membership in a Zip Code belonging to the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY].

- a. Current paid memberships will be verified on a membership list at the polling site, or you may present an online membership renewal dated after the date the membership list was generated by the Milpitas Registry. The Kingdom Seneschal recommends you bring proof of membership with you to ensure participation in the poll.
- b. You must reside in zip codes belonging to the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY], and this will be verified on the membership list at the polling site.

**NOTE:** Paid members who play in the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY], but do not reside in the zip codes belonging to the Barony, may not cast ballots. However, they are encouraged to make their views on candidates known to the Crown by sending personal letters to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal expressing their candidate selections and preferences. The Crown will consider such letters when reviewing the polling results.

- c. You must be 18 years old or older and present a picture ID at the polling site that shows your date of birth or age.

#### **ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR BARONIAL POLLING**

If you are unable to attend the polling to cast a ballot, you may follow the below procedures to submit an Absentee Ballot for the polling. Please understand that NO EXCEPTIONS will be made to the timeline or contents required for an Absentee Ballot to be counted. So please review the requirements carefully, and send your letters in as soon as the candidates are announced by the Crown.

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### IF YOU WISH TO SUBMIT AN ABSENTEE BALLOT:

- a. Write to the Kingdom Seneschal (email or a mailed letter) stating your preference in the poll. Emailed letters will be acknowledged by email. Mailed letters must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope so receipt of the ballot can be acknowledged.
- b. Your letter must *in the hands of the Kingdom Seneschal* no later than **[INSERT DAY and DATE]**. Please mail ballots early enough to arrive by that date, and allow for delays in the mail. ***Do not send ballots with signature required at delivery, as that may delay their receipt.***
- c. Your letter must include ALL of the following:
  1. Your candidate preference
  2. SCA and modern name, and full mailing address for your membership
  3. Proof of membership (membership number and membership expiration date)
  4. A scanned or hard copy of a picture ID showing you are 18 years old (or older).

Absentee ballots will be counted in the first polling. If a second or subsequent polling is conducted, and your ballot was for one of the candidates included in that poll, it will also be counted in that subsequent. If your ballot was for a candidate NOT included in the subsequent polling, it will not be counted.

Questions about these guidelines should be directed to the Kingdom Seneschal ([seneschal@atenveldt.org](mailto:seneschal@atenveldt.org))

**[NAME OF KINGDOM SENESCHAL or DEPUTY KINGDOM SENESCHAL IN CHARGE OF POLLING]**

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**C. SAMPLE: Baronial Polling Guidelines when Selecting a Baron and/or Baroness (*only one set of candidates* on ballot)**

When only one set of candidates is listed on the ballot, this announcement would be published in Southwind and in the Baronial Newsletter, and may be published to the Baronial website and online lists belonging to the Barony.

**[INSERT NAME OF BARONY] BARONIAL POLLING**

A polling of the current paid members of the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY] will be conducted at the [INSERT SITE NAME] to determine their support of a candidate for Baron and Baroness. The polling will be held [INSERT TIME] to [INSERT TIME], [INSERT DAY and DATE].

The Kingdom Seneschal wishes to emphasize the importance of members attending this polling event, and casting a ballot to show whether they support this candidacy (the ballot will contain a choice to SUPPORT/NOT SUPPORT the candidates). Remember that the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal *may only install* a Baron and Baroness supported by the majority of the members living in the Barony. This polling is the populace's forum for showing that support, and ensuring a Baron and Baroness may be invested.

You must be a Sustaining, Associate or Family member who is 18 years old or older, and must receive a Southwind, or have an SCA membership in a Zip Code belonging to the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY].

- a. Current paid memberships will be verified on a membership list at the polling site, or you may present an online membership renewal dated after the date the membership list was generated by the Milpitas Registry. The Kingdom Seneschal recommends you bring proof of membership with you to ensure participation in the poll.
- b. You must reside in zip codes belonging to the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY], and this will be verified on the membership list at the polling site.

**NOTE:** Paid members who play in the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY], but do not reside in the zip codes belonging to the Barony, may not cast ballots. However, they are encouraged to make their views on candidates known to the Crown by sending personal letters to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal expressing their candidate selections and preferences. The Crown will consider such letters when reviewing the polling results.

- c. You must be 18 years old or older and present a picture ID at the polling site that shows your date of birth or age.

**ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR BARONIAL POLLING**

If you are unable to attend the polling to cast a ballot, you may follow the below procedures to submit an Absentee Ballot for the polling. Please understand that NO

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EXCEPTIONS will be made to the timeline or contents required for an Absentee Ballot to be counted. So please review the requirements carefully, and send your letters in as soon as the candidates are announced by the Crown.

### IF YOU WISH TO SUBMIT AN ABSENTEE BALLOT:

- a. Write to the Kingdom Seneschal (email or a mailed letter) stating your preference in the poll. Emailed letters will be acknowledged by email. Mailed letters must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope so receipt of the ballot can be acknowledged.
- b. Your letter must *in the hands of the Kingdom Seneschal* no later than **[INSERT DAY and DATE]**. Please mail ballots early enough to arrive by that date, and allow for delays in the mail. *Do not send ballots with signature required at delivery, as that may delay their receipt.*
- c. Your letter must include ALL of the following:
  1. Your support or non-support for the candidate
  2. SCA and modern name, and full mailing address for your membership
  3. Proof of membership (membership number and membership expiration date)
  4. A scanned or hard copy of a picture ID showing you are 18 years old (or older).

Absentee ballots will be counted in the first polling. If a second or subsequent polling is conducted, and your ballot was for one of the candidates included in that poll, it will also be counted in that subsequent. If your ballot was for a candidate NOT included in the subsequent polling, it will not be counted.

Questions about these guidelines should be directed to the Kingdom Seneschal ([seneschal@atenveldt.org](mailto:seneschal@atenveldt.org))

**[NAME OF KINGDOM SENESCHAL or DEPUTY KINGDOM SENESCHAL IN CHARGE OF POLLING]**

Atenveldt Kingdom Seneschal

**D. SAMPLE: Text to ADD to Polling Guidelines for Baronial Pollings in Phoenix (Polling when you don't live in the Baronial Zip Codes)**

See the *SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ZIP CODE REQUIREMENT FOR PHOENIX METRO BARONIES* in Section VII Who may cast a ballot (setting the polling requirements) of this document for information about when the following text must be included in Polling Guidelines for a Baronial Polling..

**\*\*\*\* SPECIAL ZIP CODE EXCEPTION TEXT \*\*\*\***

If you DO NOT HAVE a membership address in a zip code assigned to the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY IN BEING POLLED], but your membership is current in a zip code in metropolitan Phoenix, you will be asked to sign a Pledge Form before you can receive a ballot. The Pledge Form shows your agreement with this statement:

"I consider myself a member of the populace of the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF BARONY BEING POLLED], and promise the Crown of Atenveldt that I will not cast a ballot in any Pollings held in the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY ], the Barony of [INSERT NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY ] or the College of Brymstonne for 3 years following the date of this polling."

A list of the members who sign this Pledge Form will be kept by the Kingdom Seneschal's office, and by the Seneschals of the three Baronies in the Phoenix metropolitan area and the College of Brymstonne. After signing the Pledge Form, you will be given a different color ballot to indicate your preference for Baron and Baroness.

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**E. SAMPLE: "Pledge Form" used in Phoenix Metropolitan Area Baronial Pollings**

**BARONY OF [INSERT BARONY BEING POLLED]  
PLEDGE FORM FOR BARONIAL PREFERENCE POLLING  
[INSERT DATE OF POLL]**

The undersigned members of the SCA reside in Zip Codes assigned to the Barony of [NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY], the Barony of [NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY], or the College of Brymstonne, but wish to participate in the Baronial Preference Polling for the Barony of [BARONY BEING POLLED]. By signing this roster, they indicate their agreement with the following statement:

"I consider myself a member of the populace of the Barony of [BARONY BEING POLLED], and promise the Crown of Atenveldt that I will not cast a ballot in any Populace Pollings held in the Barony of [NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY], the Barony of [NAME OF OTHER PHOENIX BARONY] or the College of Brymstonne for 3 years following the date of this polling ([INSERT DATE OF POLL])."

SCA NAME (SIGN)	MODERN NAME (PRINT)	MEMBER #	ZIP CODE
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____	_____
13. _____	_____	_____	_____
14. _____	_____	_____	_____