

Minutes of the Richland County Board of Elections and Voter Registration
Wednesday, July 8, 2015
4:00pm, County Council Chambers

Board Members in Attendance

Ms. Marjorie Johnson, Chair

Ms. Sylvia Holley

Ms. Jane Emerson

Mr. E. Peter Kennedy

Staff in Attendance

Mr. Samuel Selph, Director

Ms. Lillian McBride, Deputy Director

Ms. Chelle Epps, Manager of Voter Registration

Ms. Yonita Simmons, Outreach Coordinator

Ms. Cheryl Goodwin, Election Systems Coordinator

Ms. Sheron Harris, Absentee Coordinator

Ms. Amie Brunson, Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance

Ms. Ericka Moore, City of Columbia

Local print and television media

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

- A motion was made to adopt the meeting's agenda. Seconded. Approved.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

- The Board Members reviewed the minutes from June 10, 2015. A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded. Approved.

Board Chair Comments

- Director's 2nd Quarter Report
 - Ms. Johnson indicated that the comments received from Ms. Emerson in the June 2015 Board Meeting were taken under consideration by the Director.

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- Copies of the Director's 2nd Quarter Report were provided to all Board Members and it was agreed that the contents of the report would be discussed during Executive Session.
- Meeting with Delegation
 - A meeting was held on June 16, 2015 with Senator John Scott, Mr. Tony McDonald, County Administrator, Ms. Marjorie Johnson, Board Chair, Elections & Voter Registration Department, Mr. Samuel Selph, Elections & Voter Registration Department Director, and Ms. Lillian McBride, Deputy Director, Elections & Voter Registration Department to discuss various issues concerning the Elections & Voter Registration Department.
 - Legal Coverage – The department currently has pending as well as probable legal matters and has asked for legal counsel concerning these items. Advised that as long as the department stays within the County guidelines, the department should be covered.
 - Legal Fees – The department currently has an outstanding legal bill of \$35,000 from the SC Public Interest Foundation. In the past, the department had been provided assurance that the outstanding bill would be paid; but as of today, the bill is still outstanding.
- Budget Shortfall
 - Ms. Johnson provided information regarding the FY2016 budget that was approved for the department paying special attention to poll worker pay that would be needed to fund the upcoming elections.
 - It was stated that over \$1 million dollars will be needed and although the department requested the necessary funds, only \$160,000 was allotted for poll worker payments for FY2016.
 - It was noted that many of the funds that are expended for poll worker payments are reimbursed by the State Election Commission and/or various Municipalities but those

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funds are placed into Richland County's General Fund and are not placed back in the department's budget.

- Storm Incident at Storage Facility
 - Mr. Selph provided information and a slideshow to illustrate the damage from a recent storm in June 2015.
 - The pictures detailed downed power lines and trees. Additionally, the warehouse's air condition was not in service from Sunday – Monday.
 - On the Monday following the storm, Richland County's Maintenance Department was called and all repairs were made by 2:30pm that day.
 - All voting machines and related equipment that are stored at the warehouse will be checked and tested before the upcoming November 2015 elections.
- Consolidation / Relocation Project
 - No Report

Director's Comments & Updates

- SCARE Legislative Priorities
 - Mr. Selph provided the Board with information regarding the Legislative Priorities that the SC Association of Registration & Election Officials, Inc. (SCARE) Legislative Committee will recommend for adoption at the SCARE mid-year conference to be held August 3, 2015 at Hilton Head, SC.
 - Improve Absentee Voting Process
 - ✓ Allow no excuse absentee voting
 - ✓ Delete the witness signature on mail in absentee ballots
 - ✓ Allow permanent absentee status for various reasons (i.e. over 65, physically disabled, etc.)
 - ✓ End *in-person absentee voting* at 5:00pm, Friday prior to Tuesday elections. (Absentee ballots may be *returned* until 7:00pm on Election

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Day.

- *Adequately Fund Registration & Elections*
 - ✓ Voting System - Presidential Report: “...new voting technology to address soon-to-be antiquated voting machines”
- *Improve Voter Experience*
 - ✓ Recruit Adequate Number of Election Workers
 - ✓ Allow SC registered voters to serve as election workers anywhere in South Carolina (ex. A college student living on campus)
 - ✓ Increase Election Workers pay
- *Clean Up Election Laws*
 - ✓ Appoint a study committee to compare Title 5 and Title 7
 - ✓ Adjust the special election calendar to accommodate 45 day UOCAVA ballot delivery mandate
- *State of Emergency*
 - ✓ Authorize and or clarify the authority to postpone elections in cases of emergencies.
- *City of Columbia Election*
 - Mr. Selph informed the Board of the department’s 2 proposals for the upcoming 2015 City of Columbia Election.
 - Plan 1 – opening 80 precincts to conduct the election
 - Plan 2 – combining precincts to conduct the election
 - A tentative meeting has been scheduled for July 21, 2015 with the City of Columbia and the department to present the 2 proposals.
 - As of today, a contract has not been agreed upon between the City of Columbia and Richland County regarding conducting the upcoming election.

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- Ms. Erika Moore, City Clerk, informed the Board that in the past, the City of Columbia approved an agreement to conduct previous elections but Richland County did not execute the proposed agreement.
- Director's 2nd Quarter Report
 - A motion was made to accept the Director's 2nd Quarter Report as written. Seconded. Approved.

Executive Session re: Litigation; Director's Evaluation Process

- A motion was made to proceed into Executive Session to discuss litigation and the Director's evaluation process. Seconded. Approved.
- The Board entered into Executive Session at 5:27pm.
- A motion was made to come out of Executive Session at 6:01pm. Seconded. Approved.
- The Board indicated that no decisions were made and there were no actions to report from the Executive Session.

Public Questions & Comments

- None

Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:03pm.

Recorded by: Amie Brunson, Administrative Assistant