

Minutes of the Richland County Board of Voter Registration and Elections
Wednesday, October 14, 2015
4:00pm, County Council Chambers

Board Members in Attendance

Ms. Marjorie Johnson, Chair

Ms. Adell Adams, Vice-Chair

Ms. Sylvia Holley

Ms. Jane Emerson

Mr. E. Peter Kennedy

Staff in Attendance

Mr. Samuel Selph, Director

Ms. Lillian McBride, Deputy Director

Staff Members – Elections & Voter Registration Department

Others in Attendance

Mr. James Brown, Legislative Delegation

Media

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:08 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 September 9, 2015.
- A discussion was held regarding the vote of dissent for the motion regarding the usage of the synopsis of Attorney Hamm's report recommendations from the 2012 November General Election as a guide when preparing for elections.
- Ms. Johnson stated that her reason for voting no was because Attorney Hamm's report addressed prior issues that she considered moot as of today.

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- A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded. Approved.

Board Chair Comments

- Delegation Discussion re: Legal Issues
 - Ms. Johnson stated that it was imperative for the Board Members to have legal representation for past, pending, and future legal matters.
 - Currently, there are 2 pending legal matters; the most pressing matter concerns the payment of a Court Order.
 - Concerns regarding being found in contempt due to the outstanding payment were discussed.
 - The issue has been discussed with County Council, Finance Department, County Administrator, Treasurer Department, and Legislative Delegation but the matter is still pending.
- Status of ROA (Budget Amendment Request)
 - It was noted that a copy of the proposed ROA had been previously forwarded to all Board Members for review.
 - The ROA is requesting funding going forward based on the original budget proposal that was submitted spring of 2015.
 - The ROA would address the possible shortfall of \$1,000,000 and would include the money needed to conduct the City of Columbia election as well as the elections for 2016.
 - The potential budget shortfall could result in not being able to conduct the upcoming elections with paid poll workers.
 - A question was posed seeking clarification of the phone request item contained in the report.
 - Mr. Selph responded that the quote was from information received from the County's IT Department. In the past, the department was able to borrow phones from the IT

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Department but due to a shortfall, all the loaner phones have been provided to other County departments.

- Additional clarification was requested as to whether the ROA proposal contained additional requests from the original budget proposal that was submitted in the spring of 2015 specifically in the amount of \$284,000.
 - Mr. Selph stated that the ROA is making many of the same requests with the addition of phones for the department's call center and motherboard batteries for the voting machines.
 - A question was posed as to the ROA's request for an additional position and Mr. Selph responded that a part time individual has been hired and will begin working on Monday, October 19, 2015.
 - Ms. Johnson stated her concerns that poll workers will not work for free, staff have to work overtime and that the department is not authorized to spend more money than what has been allocated.
 - Mr. Selph indicated that in past years, the poll worker line item was in the red for over \$200,000 and that his preference was not to overspend the budget.
 - A motion was made to transmit the proposed ROA for Council's approval. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- Capital Improvement Program Status
 - It was noted that a copy of the proposed Capital Improvement Project Report was included in the Director's Quarterly Report.
 - Mr. Selph advised the Board that each year, County Council allows departments to make requests that will enhance their respective departments.
 - The department's main desire is for the voting machines and office to be under one roof.
 - The department's report requested \$1.4 million dollars to purchase the proposed building.

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- A question was posed as to 3 departments that had previously expressed interest in partnering with the department in purchasing a building.
- Mr. Selph stated that due to delays, the Waverly Magistrate Department renewed their lease and the Planning and Zoning Departments moved half of their department to the Health Department.
- Mr. Selph stated that as of October 2015, the department has dodged a bullet two times this year with regards to the current location of the department's warehouse:
 - Windstorm - power lines were knocked down
 - Flood – a major flood occurred within the state but fortunately, no water came through the building
- A discussion was held to include the need to keep requesting a central location in order to house the department's voting machines and office personnel.

Director's Comments & Updates

- Election Preparation Status
 - Mr. Selph advised the Board that the department is prepared for the upcoming November 2015 elections.
 - 76 precincts will open for the City of Columbia election.
 - Poll workers are being trained and polling sites are being evaluated to ensure accessibility for the upcoming elections.
- Media Coverage
 - No report
- Delegation & Municipal Discussions
 - Mr. Selph reported that discussions have been held with various municipalities and an update of those discussions will be provided during the Board's Executive Session.

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- Quarterly Report Distribution

- A copy of the Director's Quarterly report was provided to the Board which includes highlights from the previous quarter.

Executive Session re: Pending Litigation

- A motion was made to proceed into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- The Board entered into Executive Session at 5:11pm.
- A motion was made to come out of Executive Session at 6:04pm. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- The Board indicated that no decisions were made and there were no actions to report from the Executive Session.
- A motion was made to reconsider the earlier vote regarding the ROA proposal. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- It was discussed that the ROA proposal should include items that were previously submitted during the original budget proposal with the addition of phones, signage, motherboard batteries, PEB batteries, and a new position.
- A motion was made to adopt the additional budget items of \$1,182,272. Seconded. Approved 5-0.

Public Questions & Comments

- None

Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10pm.

Recorded by: Amie Brunson