

Candidacy Requirements

For

Town Council Town of Gate City

County of Scott May 3, 2011 Special Election



INTRODUCTION

This bulletin and all required forms are available on our website:

http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Cidate_Information/Index.html

Each document is explained in Item IV on Pages 3 and 4 herein.

The filing deadline and the officer with whom the qualifying forms are filed also is addressed.

Your particular attention is called to Item I on Page 1. This section addresses advertising and campaign material identification.

Should you have questions relating to your candidacy, please do not hesitate to call our toll-free line (800)-552-9745. Within the Call Menu, press 2 for Campaign Finance and Ballot Access assistance. Select 1, 2 or 4 if your question relates to campaign contributions and expenditures, campaign advertising, or disclaimers. Select 3 if your question relates to candidate ballot access. You also can reach us at 804-864-8901.





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I. ADVERTISING AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The governing body of any town with a population of less than 25,000 may provide, by ordinance, that the provisions of the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act (CFDA) shall be applicable to elections for town offices. Check with the Gate City Town Clerk to determine if the town has adopted such an ordinance.

Further, the Act imposes certain requirements relating to advertising and identification of campaign ads and materials, including sample ballots.

Refer to Chapter 14 in the *Candidate Campaign Committee Summary* published by the State Board of Elections for specific requirements. If you have questions on the Act, please call our toll-free line and ask for the Campaign Finance Division.

The following is provided for your additional information:

A. Sample Ballots

Any **sample** of a paper or voting equipment **ballot** must contain the words **SAMPLE BALLOT**, the appropriate disclaimer required by the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act, and, in addition, must:

- (a) contain the words **SAMPLE BALLOT** in not less than 24 point type; and
- (b) be printed on paper of a color **other than white or yellow (canary)**.

B. Posting

Contact your County Administrator to determine whether local ordinances prohibit or restrict the posting of campaign materials.

No locality shall have the authority to prohibit the display of political campaign signs on **private property** if the signs are in compliance with zoning and right of way restrictions applicable to temporary nonpolitical signs and if the signs have been posted with the permission of the owner of the property. [§15.2-109 of the Code of Virginia]

C. Violations

If you believe the law has been violated and you have facts concerning the violation, you should report them in writing to the Commonwealth's Attorney for the Scott County.

Violations of state-owned right of way restrictions should be reported to your regional Virginia Department of Transportation office.

II. VDOT INFORMATION

A “clean” campaign is a sign of the time



Don’t “trash” your print budget or throw away volunteer time.

HIGHWAY WORKERS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REMOVE POSTERS AND FLYERS ON SIGNS, GUARDRAILS - OR ANYWHERE ELSE ON STATE-OWNED RIGHT OF WAY. CAMPAIGN PRINT MATERIALS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE TO WIND UP IN THE BACK OF A VDOT TRUCK. AND VOLUNTEER TIME IS TOO VALUABLE TO BE WASTED ON PUTTING UP MATERIALS THAT ARE DESTINED TO COME DOWN.



Don’t make highway workers “play politics” on the job.

PICKING UP POLITICAL MATERIALS IS A COSTLY ACTIVITY FOR VDOT. BUT THE COST TO THE CANDIDATE COULD BE EVEN HIGHER. VOTERS DON’T LIKE TO SEE THEIR TAX DOLLARS SUPPORTING SUCH ACTIVITIES. THEY EXPECT TO SEE HIGHWAY WORKERS PATCHING POTHOLES, FILLING LOW SHOULDERS, OR MOWING GRASS.



Don’t let campaign materials turn into litter.

MANY VOTERS VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME TO CLEAN UP ROADSIDES IN VDOT’S “ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY” PROGRAM. AFTER SPENDING SEVERAL BACK-BREAKING HOURS BENDING OVER TO PICK UP POLITICAL POSTERS, THEY WON’T FEEL TOO KINDLY TOWARDS THE NAMES AND FACES THAT THEY SEE OVER AND OVER AGAIN.



Don’t get “stuck” by bumper stickers.

ONE LITTLE BUMPER STICKER CAN CAUSE A LOT OF EXPENSE. IF APPLIED TO A ROADSIDE SIGN, THE STICKY RESIDUE IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO REMOVE. THE SIGN MAY HAVE TO BE REPLACED ENTIRELY. THE LARGE GREEN HIGHWAY SIGNS, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN COST UP TO \$800. EVEN A HUMBLE STOP SIGN COSTS MORE THAN \$50. DON’T RISK ALIENATING VOTERS BY DESTROYING THE VERY SIGNS THAT THEIR TAX DOLLARS HAVE PAID FOR.



Don’t risk someone’s life.

ONE MISPLACED SIGN AT AN INTERSECTION COULD BLOCK A MOTORIST’S VISION - AND COST SOMEONE HIS LIFE. THAT’S WHY VDOT TRAFFIC ENGINEERS REVIEW THE PLACEMENT AND POSITION OF EACH HIGHWAY SIGN TO ENSURE SAFETY - AND TO MINIMIZE “VISUAL CLUTTER”. UNDERSTANDABLY, CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERS ARE THINKING ABOUT VICTORY - NOT SAFETY. AND THAT COULD POSE A DEADLY PROBLEM.

DO put signs, posters, and other campaign materials anywhere you want on private property with the owner’s permission, of course. And because political signs and posters located off the right of way aren’t considered “outdoor advertising”, you won’t even need a permit.

VDOT - call your local Virginia Department of Transportation office for details.

III. QUALIFICATIONS TO BE A CANDIDATE

A candidate must be:

- ◆ Qualified to vote for and hold the office sought;
- ◆ A resident of the Commonwealth for one year immediately preceding the election;
and
- ◆ A resident, by the time of filing, of the Town of Gate City.

IV. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED

A candidate must file certain documents in order to qualify to appear on the ballot. Each form is described below. An explanation of who is required to file each item also is provided. Each document can be downloaded from our website:

http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Cidate_Information/Cidate_Forms.html

A. **Certificate of Candidate Qualification**

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. **All** candidates are required to file this form.

B. **Declaration of Candidacy**

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. It must be filed by all Independent (non-party) candidates.

Candidates for political party nomination by a method **other than a primary** file this declaration and the petitions described below only if so required by the rules of the political party. Contact your county chair to determine if they are required.

IV. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED (continued)

C. Petition of Qualified Voters

This document is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections. Petitions containing at least the number of signatures required for the office sought must be filed **together with** the *Declaration of Candidacy*. Petitions must be filed by all Independent (non-party) candidates.

1. Petition Circulator

Petitions can be circulated either by the candidate or by any person who is, or who is eligible to be, registered and qualified to vote in the Town of Gate City.

The person circulating the petition must affirm before a notary or other person authorized to administer oaths, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signature. Falsely taking this affidavit is a felony under Virginia law. The petition **NEVER** can be left unattended, i. e., left on the counter at a grocery store, restaurant, etc.

2. Number of Signatures Required

Petitions must contain the signatures of at least **125** qualified voters of the Town of Gate City.

The State Board recommends that a candidate get at least half again the number of signatures required to assure that enough signers are qualified voters.

3. Regulation on Material Omissions on Candidate Petitions

At its November 22, 2010 meeting the State Board of Elections adopted regulations on material omissions on candidate petitions. This regulation identifies what does and does not constitute material omissions on a candidate's petition for the purpose of disallowing the petition. The document is posted to Virginia's Regulatory Town Hall website and can be viewed through the following hyperlink:

<http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/viewstage.cfm?stageid=5735&display=documents>

Please review the regulation before circulating the Petition of Qualified Voters form.

V. FILING DEADLINE AND WHERE TO FILE

For A Convention/Mass Meeting Candidate

Postmarks are acceptable **only** if this document is mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the form is filed.

REQUIRED FORMS	WHERE TO FILE	FILING DEADLINE
*1. Certificate of Candidate Qualification	General Registrar of the County of Scott	5:00 p.m. 3/18/2011

Any person who fails to file all the required forms by the above deadline MAY NOT have his name printed on the Special Election ballot.

* Refer to Page 3 herein for details.

VI. FILING DEADLINE AND WHERE TO FILE

For An Independent (Non-Party) Candidate

Items 1 and 2 listed below **must be received** by the *General Registrar* by the filing deadline. Postmarks are acceptable **only** for *Item 3* and **only** if it is mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the form is filed.

REQUIRED FORMS	WHERE TO FILE	FILING DEADLINE
*1. Declaration of Candidacy	General Registrar of the County of Scott	5:00 p.m. 3/18/2011
*2. Petitions of Qualified Voters		
*3. Certificate of Candidate Qualification		

**Any person who fails to file all the required forms by the above deadline
MAY NOT have his name printed on the Special Election ballot.**

* Refer to Pages 3 and 4 herein for details.

VII. ORDER OF NAMES ON BALLOTS

In Special Elections

The candidates of political parties appear first on the ballot in the order determined by a drawing conducted by the State Board of Elections. Independent (non-party) candidates appear in alphabetical order following the candidates of political parties.

VIII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Listed below are the most commonly asked questions. If you need further details, please call us on our toll-free number.

A. Who may circulate a candidate's petitions?

A candidate may circulate his own petitions but is not required to do so. A candidate's petitions may be circulated by any person who is, or who is eligible to be, a qualified voter of the Town of Gate City.

The circulator must affirm before a notary or other person authorized to administer oaths, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signatures. Falsely taking this affidavit is a felony under Virginia law. The circulator can **NEVER** leave the petition unattended, i.e., left on the counter at a grocery store, restaurant, etc.

B. I am circulating a petition for a candidate. May I also sign as a qualified voter the petition that I am circulating?

I am a Notary circulating petitions for a candidate. May I notarize the petition pages I circulate?

NO TO BOTH. The person circulating the petition must swear, under oath, that he **personally witnessed** the affixing of each signatures on the petition and no person can witness his/her own signature.

C. I am a candidate and a Notary. May I notarize the petition pages circulated by other persons?

NO. § 47.1-30 of the *Code of Virginia* prohibits a notary from performing a notarial act on any document in which the notary or his spouse is a party, **or** in which either of them has a direct beneficial interest.

Any Notary who violates these provisions is considered guilty of official misconduct, may be removed from office and may be subject to other penalties.

VIII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (continued)

D. I work for the federal government; can I be a candidate?

Pursuant to the federal law commonly known as the Hatch Act, you may be a candidate in a **non-partisan election** or, if you live in the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park or Portsmouth or in the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania or Stafford, you may be an **Independent candidate for local office in a partisan election**. An election is considered partisan if any of the candidates for the office you would seek are nominated by a political party.

To determine whether you might also be affected by the rules and regulations of the agency for which you work, **contact your personnel officer**.

It should also be noted that most employees of the legislative branch of the federal government are not covered by the Hatch Act but may be affected by other rules and regulations.

E. I work for the state or a local government; can I be a candidate?

Some state and local government employees **are prohibited** from being candidates. You may be so prohibited if your Agency receives federal funds. **Contact the personnel officer where you work**. If necessary, present the facts of your case in writing, including the office you wish to seek, to the Hatch Act Unit, **U.S. Office of Special Counsel**, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 218, Washington, D. C. 20036-4505 or call them at 800-854-2824 or 202-254-3650. That office will determine if you are affected by the Hatch Act. Their web address is <http://www.osc.gov>

Most state and local government employees are not prohibited by law from being a candidate. However, you may be affected by the rules and regulations of the agency or ordinances of the government for which you work. **Contact your personnel officer**.

F. What activities are permitted at the polls on election day?

Please refer to the Do's and Don'ts with Guidelines for Campaigners and Authorized Representatives published by the State Board of Elections. We suggest that you provide this information to any person who will either serve as your representative inside the polls or work for you outside the polls on election day.

http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Cidate_Information/Cidate_Bulletins_Forms.html