

## GREB Agenda 2016

An analysis of the Final Report of the GREB Workgroup submitted at the close of 2015 reveals a number of tasks which remain incomplete. These tasks become the focus of the reconstituted Workgroup for 2016.

[Please note: the title "Director of Elections" was formally added by Code to the General Registrar effective July 1, 2015 at the recommendation of the GREB Workgroup. Consequently all references below are to Director of Elections.]

### **Recommendations 3 & 4 of the First Charge:**

The Department of Elections was not supported by the Administration in its request that Director of Elections salary brackets be conformed to those of Treasurer nor in its recommendation that localities receive 100% reimbursement of electoral board and director of elections salaries as required by §24.2-108 and -111. Budget amendments submitted in support of GREB's recommendation were not accepted.

This recommendation needs additional support through wider education and communication with the Administration and members of the General Assembly money committees.

### **Charge 2: Roles & Responsibilities of Electoral Board Members**

Although a superior document was developed creating a definition, job description and summary of Electoral Board duties, distribution was inadequate.

A renewed effort is required to distribute this document to all Electoral Boards, members of the General Assembly, state political party executive directors, clerks of court and Circuit Court Judges. It is also recommended that GREB reach out to the leadership of VRAV and VEBA to encourage them to provide qualified speakers for statewide organizations such as VACo, VML, Virginia Clerk's Association, and Judicial Conference when they conduct regional or state meetings.

We may want to seek legislation, rule or regulation requiring Electoral Board nominees to affirm they have read and agreed to the document before their nomination is accepted by the Circuit Court judge.

There may be need to explore an evaluation process for EB members that requires minimum performance levels for reappointment or basic performance metrics that are reported annually to local party chairs, circuit courts and the Department of Elections, holding EB members accountable.

### **Charge 3: Examine State Funding Mechanisms for Localities**

This is somewhat covered in the First Charge but additional education and communication is required of both the general assembly members and local jurisdictions. Resistance to adequately fund elections at the local level will not disappear while the Budget Act

continues to disregard Code requirements for state reimbursement to localities for the costs they incur.

#### **Charge 4: Evaluate Staffing of Directors of Election Offices**

A thorough description of technical proficiencies as well as professional skillsets required for the position of Director of Elections is essential to support adequate and commensurate funding.

#### **Charge 5: Standards for and Recognition of Continuing Education**

A summary of other constitutional offices that have salary supplements based on attaining professional certifications would be extremely helpful. An analysis of this data could provide actionable legislative remedy.

#### **Charge 6: Funding and Staffing Levels of ELECT**

Following the failure of the Administration to support ELECT requests, Budget Amendments were introduced to request funding to replace the dwindling HAVA monies that will be exhausted in FY2018. These amendments failed but the \$7 million need persists. Without this funding, the Department of Elections will be effectively gutted and cease to function.

Beyond this fundamental fiscal need to maintain current operations there is a critical need to analyze staffing levels at the Department of Elections to adequately support the 133 jurisdictions that depend upon it.

#### **Charge 7: Study Other Areas As Deemed Necessary**

1. GREB's recommendation to seek recodification of §24.2 has been adopted by the SBE.

The need for personal outreach to the Code Commission and senior legislators is evident if this is to proceed .

2. The creation of a Commissioner of Elections, distinct from the secretary of the State Board of Elections, was effected but legislation that was incomplete. The original legislation also contemplated increasing the State Board from three to five members and transferring the appointment of the Commissioner from the Governor to the State Board. This legislation and its original intent to ensure the non-partisan operation of elections needs to be revisited.

#### **Charge 8. Other Items to be considered**

The Workgroup must be willing to consider other issues that arise from the review, analysis and pursuit of the preceding charges.