

## GENERAL REGISTRARS AND ELECTORAL BOARD WORKGROUP

Double Tree by Hilton Hotel

June 28, 2016

Final Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 5:12 pm by Co-Chairmen John Hager and Kate Hanley.

**ATTENDEES** In attendance were Clara Belle Wheeler, SBE Vice Chairman; Electoral Board members Al Ablowich, Renee Andrews, William Bell, Robin Lind; General Registrars Barbara Gunter, Larry Haake, Tracy Howard; Charles Judd, *ex officio*; and other members of the elections community.

### NEW BUSINESS

**INPUT FROM THE ELECTIONS COMMUNITY TO ADD TO THE WORK PLAN** Co-Chairman Hager stated that there were some items remaining from the previous year, but today we will be receiving input from the elections community about other potential issues.

#### ELECTIONS COMMUNITY INPUT TO THE WORKGROUP:

- Praise was expressed for the remarkable work from the last three years and getting the legislators to act on the suggestions from the Workgroup. VEBA and VRAV supported the proposals. The group is doing significant work, and it should continue.
- The speaker encouraged the group to take on Officer of Elections responsibilities, including objective measurement of the proposals and recommendations made.
- Rose Mansfield will no longer be taking Minutes for the meetings. If the minutes are sent to her, she will post on the website and on Townhall.
- The Workgroup should attend VEBA Legislative Day, VEBA Annual Meeting and the Annual VRAV meeting.
- Because the salary for a General Registrar may not be sufficient to own or rent property in the jurisdiction, the smaller localities need to be able to hire their GR from surrounding counties.
- A lot of concern has been expressed about photography, especially with cell phone, within the polling place.
- A question was raised about location of emergency polling places and the need clarity on exactly where they may be located
- Concern was expressed about the salary and hours of Assistant Registrar (AR), especially in the smaller localities. The *Code* says that only one AR is necessary one day a week in the smaller jurisdictions. The AR position needs greater recognition and salary. Governing bodies do not understand the role of the AR, all the technology changes and all the responsibilities of the office.
- Please try to streamline the planning and election management for an election. A new GR needs better tools for these when coming into an office.
- Comments were presented about technology expansion—use of current technology and data—in the GR offices. Fairfax County and ELECT are having discussions about the use of a commercial cloud-type server. Questions have arisen about where the server is located and who owns the data being stored on the cloud. The commercial industry is protecting data better than a government organization, as shown by recent activities of data lost.

- There was a question about the cost of ELECT’s efforts to build a new EPB, with their current concern for funding. They would be competing with the commercial work space. An opinion was stated that the state’s version is not really competitive with commercial EPBs.

**WORKGROUP COMMENTS FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**EB Member Lind** Three localities are pursuing salary increases for the Registrars on their own (City of Falls Church, Goochland County and Hanover County).

**GR Haake** The questions about using cloud-based technology include who owns the voter data being stored and can this data be stored outside of Virginia.

**EB Member Lind** Analyzing and reviewing minimum funding and staffing levels should be included in the new Work Plan and to study other areas as determined necessary. He also stated that ELECT has made comments about not knowing what the Workgroup is working on. Chairman Alcorn wants measurement of data.

**Co-Chairman Hanley** As we determine the Work Plan at the next meeting, we need to discuss the use of technology and keeping us all ahead of the curve.

**GR Haake** Larry Haake discussed the history of the salary increase proposal. He also stated that Commissioner Cortes said they are going through a metamorphosis to include information technology.

**SBE Vice Chairman Clara Belle Wheeler** The private sector has different EPBs available; the same one will not fit everyone. There needs to be involvement of localities to determine technology needed and the encouragement of discussion of how those things will be implemented by ELECT, instead of last-minute types of decisions. There should be a well-thought-out plan for doing business.

**EB Member Renee Andrews** As a result of legislative changes reassigning duties from the EB to the GR, the job description written last year needs to be updated. We need to stress that the job description be used and sent to the Party Chairs and to the Clerk of the Court when it is time to appoint a new EB member. The *Code* says every County and City Attorney shall issue copy of FOIA to new EB members. We, as GRs and EB members, need to notify County/City Attorneys of this. Also, the GRs should be added to the list of who should be notified.

**Ex officio Judd** It might be advisable to change the annual training from one big meeting to 7 regional trainings; in a road show fashion. There would be more penetration, and there would be more uniformity resulting from these trainings.

We should try to change the *Code* to close schools for all November General elections and for the March Presidential Primary.

**SUBCOMMITTEE TO DEVELOP PROPOSED WORK PLAN** Larry Haake, Tracy Howard and Robin Lind were appointed to the Subcommittee to Develop the Proposed Work Plan from the ideas presented at the meeting. The Co-Chairmen stated that the Work Plan would be discussed at the July meeting and finalized at the August meeting.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**SBE ELECTION OFFICER TRAINING** Clara Belle Wheeler will scan the materials developed and send them to all Workgroup members for discussion at July meeting.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS** Dates were set for the next two meetings: **July 27** and **August 23** at 10 am in Richmond. Charlie Judd will check on the availability of a meeting room at the GAB for the meetings. A September 14 meeting date was also proposed, but will be finalized at a future meeting.

**MEETING NOTIFICATIONS** We will need to get materials to Rose Mansfield to post on Townhall and the SBE website. We can use email communication within the Workgroup itself. EB Member Lind will create an email group. Working papers need to be proofed before posting.

**Co-Chairman Hager** remarked that the Workgroup will regroup on how it will be functioning at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT** The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

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Co-Chairman John Hager

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Co-Chairman Kathryn Hanley