

**Minutes of the GREB WorkGroup
November 19, 2018**

The GREB WorkGroup met at 10 am on November 19, 2018 in the McGuireWoods Conference Room, Gateway Plaza, Richmond ,Va.

Present: John Hager, Kate Hanley, Al Ablowich, Renee Andrews, Bill Bell, Barbara Gunter, Lisa Jeffers, Walt Latham, and Robin Lind; joined at 10:10 am by teleconference: Tracy Howard.

Attending from the public: Norfolk DoE Stephanie Iles, Mecklenburg DoE Jason Corwin, James City County DoE Dianna Moorman, Nottoway County DoE Angela Stewart, Sussex County DoE Bill Jenkins, Prince George County EB member Barbara Tabb, League of Women Voters members Mary Crutchfield, Maggi Luca, Deb Wake, and Carol Noggle.

The minutes of the September 17 meeting were approved as corrected.

The chair asked the secretary to read aloud the letter of appreciation for former State Board of Elections Chair Charles Judd who had resigned from the GREB WorkGroup in July. The letter was adopted unanimously and is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Discussion ensued on Charge 1: A study of compensation of Directors of Election with Ms. Gunter reaffirming her belief that salaries should be brought to the same level as Treasurers or Commissioners. She added her personal opinion that because Directors of Election function as department heads, the localities should assume part of the cost.

Ms. Hanley said there was value to having Registrars recognized as agency heads where they work. Encourage the localities to take ownership, and encourage the Commonwealth to fully fund the Registrars and the EBs, including the technology expenses. She described the increasing complexities with two-factor and four-factor authentication.

Mr. Latham said not all localities have the infrastructure to handle these issues. The administration is pushing cyber security issues and maybe a training program, he said.

Mr. Lind said that the department's request for full funding is still with the administration's budget team. The Commissioner does not know if it has been included or not, he said. His proposal also includes three new positions at ELECT, specifically for training.

When queried by Ms. Hanley, Ms. Gunter said she did not favor another study. The request for funding is put in every year, she said, but no one is fighting and

scrapping for it. Referring to the study completed last year, Mr. Bell said it was the first time everyone was on the same sheet of music and the first time he really understood.

The localities understand it; they're not getting reimbursed, said Ms. Hanley. This is not a good year to be cutting back on elections.

This is an old subject we've been working on for about five years, said Mr. Hager. We introduced the title of Director of Elections and that didn't work. Did the studies and that didn't work either. The duality of the system weakens the case. The people with the most clout are being paid, even though it has two chunks to it. Only way is to go back to someone with influence. Convince him to make a frontal attack. Get some significant partnership with other legislators. Just talking about it won't do anything. It's got to be comprehensive. It's got to start now.

Mr. Hager said part of the recommendation would be a plan to achieve the result.

On a motion by Mr. Latham, seconded by Mr. Howard, the board voted unanimously to recommend that the compensation of General Registrars/Directors of Election be be equivalent to State Compensation Board schedule for Treasurers and that legislation be enacted in the 2019 session of the General Assembly to enact this.

Charge Two: Study of Funding of Elections by the State.

Mr. Lind reported all subcommittee members overwhelmed by the election; Ms. White is absent because of illness and suggested tabling this charge. He explained that most members of the General Assembly do not understand the true cost of elections.

We need to remind localities that they have skin the game, said Ms. Hanley.

Charge Three: GIS Capabilities of Localities.

The state government is responsible for getting the lines cleaned up said Ms. Gunter. We have no authority to do any of those changes.

We have a car but we can't make the roads to ride on, said Mr. Bell. The state has to make the road to ride on.

Mr. Howard explained that bills have already been introduced by Senators Chase and Peake which creates an opportunity to explain in subcommittee that the state has to do it first.

It is not just a GIS issue, said Mr. Latham.

Mr. Bell said the state needs to direct all localities to adjudicate their lines with their neighbors and agree and send the file to Richmond where it will be put on record, with no further disagreements.

Mr. Latham moved that the WorkGroup recommend the state direct the localities to send in their GIS files and adjudicate their boundaries and the state will become the official keeper of the jurisdictional boundaries of the Commonwealth. After much discussion the motion was seconded by Mr. Howard. Adopted unanimously.

Charge Four: A study of Cyber Security measures.

Mr. Ablowich explained that Commissioner Piper asked the WorkGroup subcommittee to defer action while the state is working on the issue. We were agreeable. Whatever the state puts out will not encompass all that localities need, he said.

Ms. Hanley described a third-party registration effort that sought hyperlinked response emails — a process that was prohibited by county policy.

Mr. Latham described state standards being established for localities and security upgrades that might eventually restrict access to VERIS if localities did not meet new standards.

Mr. Latham moved that Mr. Ablowich coordinate with ELECT to express concerns they need to coordinate future work with the local IT departments. Mr. Ablowich seconded. Adopted unanimously.

Ms. Hanley led a lively discussion on moving the June Primary to third Tuesday. Mr. Howard said a bill had already been introduced to move the June Primary and another was expected to be introduced that would also move May Town elections a week out.

Ms. Hanley moved, in interest of school safety, to support moving the Primary to the 3rd Tuesday in June; Seconded by Ms. Gunter. Adopted unanimously.

Mr. Hager asked for further discussion on the reform of the State Board of Elections which was previously supported in the 2018 session. Ms. Tabb said a 6-member bill has been reintroduced by Del. Ransone and Mr. Latham said a 9-member bill has been proposed by the Registrars' Association.

You shouldn't have the same people who have a political interest in the outcome of the election, running the election, said Mr. Latham. The main principle is to reorganize the board, he said.

Discussion ensued on the appointment of the Commissioner of Elections as a civil service position heading an independent agency.

Mr. Latham moved, seconded by Ms. Andrews, to establish the position of Commissioner of Elections as a civil service position to be appointed and/or removed by the State Board of Elections. Adopted unanimously.

For the Good of The Order

Discussion ensued on the annual reports of the WorkGroup. Mr. Lind asked whether, since the Department of Elections had not responded to the WorkGroup's two previous reports, the report should be directed to the Secretary of Administration or Governor, referencing the lack of previous response. Mr. Hager recommended the report be presented to the new board in person when it meets to organize in February.

Mr. Bell introduced the subject of Post Office delivery policy on election day which is not being applied uniformly, some mail being sent to regional section sorting centers while others are being sorted and delivered in the place of origin.

Ms. Andrews made a motion to move the date to 11 days before an election for requesting an Absentee ballot by mail. Seconded by Mr. Latham. Adopted unanimously.

Discussion ensued on voter registration applications being collected by third-party groups and turned in too late for processing. Mr. Bell reported on voters being transferred to other localities because of the tardiness of submission; he recommended some remedial action to ensure timely compliance. Mr. Howard explained that DMV licenses changed from Drivers' Licenses to "Drinkers" Licenses when individuals turned 21 years old. This accounts for a large number of DMV transactions

Mr. Latham suggested that various political stakeholders and legal groups be assembled to produce a solution.

The board agreed to meet next on December 18th at 10 am.

[Subsequently, at the request of Co-Chair Hager, the date was changed to December 19.]

The meeting adjourned at 12:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin Lind
Temporary Permanent Recording Secretary

SUMMA GRATIA

PERCEIVING AN INTENSE DESIRE WITHIN THE ELECTIONS COMMUNITY IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA FOR COMMON-SENSE SOLUTIONS TO PERSISTENT PROBLEMS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS, AND

RECOGNIZING THAT THE UN-TAPPED EXPERTISE OF HIGHLY-QUALIFIED GENERAL REGISTRARS AND ELECTORAL BOARD MEMBERS COULD BE OF INCALCULABLE BENEFIT, AND

KNOWING THE EXEMPLARY CIVIC-MINDEDNESS OF THESE INDIVIDUALS WHEN CALLED TO DUTY, AND

REALIZING THAT THE DEEP NEED FOR IN-DEPTH RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS INTO THE MOST SERIOUS ISSUES CONFRONTING ELECTIONS COULD NOT BE SATISFIED BY EXISTING ADMINISTRATION MECHANISMS, AND

UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THE STATUS QUO,

THE HONORABLE CHARLES E. JUDD FORMER STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS CHAIR

CONCEIVED OF THE FORMATION OF A WORKGROUP COMPRISED OF CITIZENS OF THE COMMONWEALTH TO ASSIST THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS, THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS, THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEADERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

FROM ITS VERY CREATION IN 2014, HE WORKED TIRELESSLY TO ENCOURAGE, SUPPORT, INSPIRE AND CAJOLE GREB MEMBERS TO BETTER SERVE THE MORE THAN FIVE MILLION VOTERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, AND WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN INCREASING SUPPORT FOR ELECTIONS REFORM WITHIN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SUCCEEDING ADMINISTRATIONS.

THE GREB WORKGROUP NOW EXPRESSES ITS PROFOUND THANKS AND GREATEST APPRECIATION TO MR. JUDD FOR HIS UNSTINTED LABORS ON BEHALF OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA.

THE HON. JOHN HAGER THE HON. KATE HANLEY
CO-CHAIRS

GREB WORKGROUP

AL ABLOWICH, RENEE ANDREWS, BILL BELL, BARBARA GUNTER,
TRACY HOWARD, LISA JEFFERS, WALT LATHAM, ROBIN LIND,
CLARA BELLE WHEELER, MICHELE WHITE.

NOVEMBER 19, 2018