

**Minutes of the Richland County Board of Voter Registration and Elections  
Wednesday, December 9, 2015  
4:00pm, County Council Chambers**

**Board Members in Attendance**

Ms. Marjorie Johnson, Chair

Ms. Adell Adams, Vice-Chair

Ms. Sylvia Holley (via Conference Call)

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

**Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 4:07 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 October 14, 2015.
- A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes. Seconded. Approved.

**Board Chair Comments**

- ROA Status to Fund EVR Operations
  - Ms. Johnson reported that the status of the ROA is the same as before but she had been advised to send a personal copy of the ROA to County Council Members because sending does not always mean receiving.

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- The Board is requesting that the needs of the department be taken seriously.
- Funding requests need to be placed in writing and inquiries made as to if other departments are in the same financial position as the Voter Registration & Elections Department.
- Although the department is mandated to conduct elections, the department is currently operating in the red and is facing numerous elections and hours of pay.
- Proposed Letter to Richland Delegation re: Financing
  - Ms. Johnson stated that it is the same issue of funding and the department does not have the money to work.
  - At the beginning of the fiscal year, the department received an allocation of money but it was not reasonable to conduct the number of elections within the fiscal year.
  - Ms. Johnson asked for Board discussion regarding the department's financial status.
  - Ms. Emerson requested to receive monthly financial reports and to wait until the report was received before sending a letter.
  - Ms. Johnson stated that the department is not in possession of a tally sheet and that the majority of the budget is human resource bundled.
  - The department does not have control over the pay and the balance and does not know what day to day balances are.
  - Mr. Selph responded that more than 85% of the department's budget is personnel services and that the department's expenditures are done by the County.
  - The department can provide personnel line items and that the department has been prudent with operational line items.
  - During the budget request process, the department requested \$1 million but is currently running a deficit in the poll worker line item.
  - Mr. Selph stated that the department can provide the Board with an accounting budget by the following Monday.

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- There are many upcoming elections in 2016 and he stated his concerns about the expenditures for the Presidential Preference Primary Elections as well as the June Primary Election.
- Mr. Kennedy, Ms. Holley and Ms. Adams all stated that they agreed with sending the letter as proposed.
- Ms. Emerson stated that she was not challenging anything but that the Board should receive a financial report each month and when not received, it calls into question many things.
- With providing proper oversight, the Board approved a budget and should receive an accounting of what has been spent and what has not.
- Ms. Holley responded that if the department is operating in the red, why would a monthly report be needed regarding the department's spending.
- Ms. Johnson stated that Ms. Emerson's comments have been noted and the Board has agreed to send a letter requesting the department's financial standing for public accounting purposes.
- Ms. Johnson indicated that she will request the Director to provide automatic reports that will detail numbers, balances, dates and a few line items; the report will be received during the January 2016 Board Meeting.

**Board Comments – Discussion**

- Camera Viewing Options
  - Mr. Kennedy discussed placing cameras in the rooms where the ballots will be opened for security purposes and to provide additional viewing options for the public.
  - Ms. Johnson stated that would be against the law because ballots are not allowed to be photographed.
  - Mr. Selph stated that if transparency is the issue at hand, members of all the parties are invited to watch the process.

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- Mr. Kennedy asked whether an opinion regarding the issue can be obtained from the County.
- Ms. Johnson replied that in this instance, the State Election Commission rules as to what is allowed for elections, not Richland County.
- Ms. Holley stated that various representatives should be able to observe the process, but cameras are not a feasible suggestion.
- Strategic Plan
  - Ms. Emerson questioned whether the State Election Commission has a strategic plan.
  - Ms. Johnson replied that the State Elections Commission's goals and objectives are listed on their webpage ([www.scvotes.org](http://www.scvotes.org)) and that the department's goals and objectives should be the same as the State Election Commission's goals and objectives.

**Director's Comments & Updates**

- Municipal Election Assessment
  - Mr. Selph thanked the department's staff for work performed during the recent elections.
  - Although they were small elections, both were basically carried out without glitches, and both elections were certified by the State Election Commission.
  - The run-off election experienced a situation with receiving the database from the State Election Commission that contained errors that had to be corrected.
  - Also during that election, only 3 machines were removed from service.
  - Mr. Selph informed the Board that the department will be responsible for conducting the Eastover election that will take place April 2016.
  - Ms. Johnson stated that the Board needs to build in a contingency plan to cover the department having to conduct unplanned elections in the future.

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- Quarterly Report

- Mr. Selph stated that the Director's Quarterly Report will be a combination of all the year's quarterly reports and will serve as the department's annual report.

**Executive Session re: Director's Evaluation & Staffing Assessments; Litigation Status**

- A motion was made to proceed into Executive Session to discuss the Director's Evaluation, Staff Assessments and Litigation Status. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- The Board entered into Executive Session at 4:56pm.
- A motion was made to come out of Executive Session at 6:23pm. Seconded. Approved 5-0.
- The Board indicated that the Director's Evaluation is a personnel matter and will not be discussed in open session and that no decisions were made and there were no actions to report from the Executive Session.

**Public Questions & Comments**

- None

**Adjournment**

- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

Recorded by: Amie Brunson