

**Meeting Minutes**  
**United States Election Assistance Commission**  
**Public Roundtable**  
**Wednesday, March 15, 2023**  
**VIA ZOOM**

The following are the Minutes of the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Public Roundtable held March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m. EDT and adjourned at 2:38 p.m. EDT.

**Call to Order**

EAC Chairwoman Christy McCormick called the Public Roundtable to order at 1:00 p.m. EDT.

**Roll Call**

Chairwoman McCormick calls roll to establish a quorum. Chairwoman McCormick, Vice Chair Benjamin Hovland, Commissioner Donald Palmer, and Commissioner Thomas Hicks are all recorded as present. Chairwoman McCormick declares that a quorum is established.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Chairwoman McCormick calls for a motion to approve the meeting agenda as submitted. The motion is properly moved and seconded. All are in favor and the agenda is approved.

**Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chairwoman McCormick calls for a motion to adopt the minutes from the February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Public Meeting. The motion is properly moved and seconded. All are in favor and the minutes are approved.

**Opening Remarks**

Chairwoman McCormick begins her remarks by stating that voter registration list maintenance is critically important to the integrity of American elections. She explains how the EAC supports state and local election officials in their efforts to ensure accurate and secure elections and work to improve list maintenance practices. Chairwoman McCormick concludes her opening remarks by looking forward to the 2024 election and the many steps election officials are or should be taking to keep voter rolls up to date.

Vice Chair Hovland recognizes the importance of registration list maintenance and acknowledges the painstaking work election officials undertake to keep their lists current and follow legal requirements. He adds that list maintenance programs can help to ensure accuracy and integrity in our elections, as well as improve the voting experience in the polling place for voters.

Commissioner Donald Palmer emphasizes the importance of accurate voting lists. He adds that having a robust list maintenance program is in the financial interests of election officials.

Commissioner Hicks echoed the importance of maintaining accurate voter lists, while adding that protections built into federal legislation affects how states manage voter lists. He also explains how provisional ballot improvements can result in costs savings and streamlined efficiencies in the voting process.

### **List Maintenance Best Practices**

Chairwoman McCormick introduces the first panel of participants, which include: The Honorable Michael G. Adams, Kentucky Secretary of State; Monica Evans, Executive Director, District of Columbia Board of Elections; Neal Kelley, Former Registrar of Voters, Orange County, California; and Shane Hamlin, Executive Director, Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).

Secretary Adams notes that maintaining accurate voter rolls is a nonpartisan issue and provides background information on development of the NVRA. Secretary Adams highlights the importance of maintaining accurate government records, especially in the context of voter rolls.

Ms. Evans notes that even though it is a stated goal, voter rolls can never be 100% accurate. She also describes the District of Columbia's biannual voter roll maintenance list canvass program, which helps to confirm eligible voters. Ms. Evans adds that the exchange of information from other states, as well as ERIC, is helpful to the maintenance of voter rolls. Finally, Ms. Evans recommends an aggressive outreach and education campaign to help correct existing errors in voter rolls.

Mr. Kelley notes that voter rolls are one of the few local government databases that do not compel citizens to update their information. Mr. Kelley adds that clean voter rolls enhance voter experience while also enhancing election security.

Mr. Hamlin shares information about how ERIC helps its members improve and maintain accurate voter rolls, register eligible citizens to vote, improve efficiencies, and reduce costs in the voting process. Mr. Hamlin adds that ERIC is a non-profit organization that is comprised of election officials that help maintain the accuracy of America's voter rolls and improve efficiencies across the voting process.

Chairwoman McCormick asks the panelists to explain why accurate voter rolls are so vital. Secretary Adams responds that it is important to maintain accurate voter rolls to deter voter fraud and ensure public confidence in the integrity of the voting process. Ms. Evans responds that accurate voter rolls boost confidence in the election process and help to ensure elections offices can make efficient and proper use of available resources. Mr. Kelley responds that effective maintenance of the voter registration database is crucial to enabling voter participation and maintaining election security. Mr. Kelley adds that accurate voter lists reduce the ability of ineligible voters from participating. Mr. Hamlin responds that state voter registration rolls are the foundation of free, fair, accurate, secure elections. Mr. Hamlin adds that states which are not subject to the NVRA have list maintenance laws in place aimed at keeping records up to date.

Vice Chair Hovland asks Mr. Hamlin to discuss why election officials created ERIC and its origins, as well as any messages for states that may consider joining ERIC. Mr. Hamlin responds

with the history of ERIC and identifies the growing number of states that have adopted electronic voting systems such as online voter registration, which reduces costs and improves efficiencies. Mr. Hamlin says his message to states interested in joining ERIC is that the organization works in achieving its mission of maintaining accurate lists and voter registration data.

Commissioner Palmer asks Mr. Kelley to offer advice that other jurisdictions can use to help identify voters who have moved. Mr. Kelley responds with how his office has used third-party credit agencies to help identify voters who have moved, which saves money and improves efficiency. Commissioner Palmer adds that this information also helps states identify when a new voter has moved into another jurisdiction, to which Mr. Kelley agrees.

Commissioner Hicks asks all panelists what challenges election officials face when attempting to keep their voter rolls accurate and up to date. Secretary Adams responds that the biggest challenge is locating and identifying voters who have been removed from the voter rolls because they have moved, deceased, committed a felony, or judged mentally incompetent. Ms. Evans responds that the biggest challenge is getting voters involved in the process by updating their information with the board of elections when they move, especially in highly transient areas. Mr. Kelley responds that detection of duplicate ballots in heavy mail-in ballot jurisdictions is a time-consuming challenge that results in unnecessary frustration. Mr. Hamlin responds that the utility and efficacy of the NCOA is declining due to changes in how and when voters report the status of their latest move. Mr. Hamlin adds that NVRA procedures may need to be updated to take advantage of modern-day changes in technology.

Chairwoman McCormick asks the panelists for insight on whether the NVRA needs updating, and to describe any success stories panelists can share in finding new unregistered voters. Secretary Adams responds that the NVRA could be updated and modernized. Secretary Adams adds that Veterans Affairs stations have been designated as voter registration sites to increase voter outreach. Ms. Evans responds that it is always helpful to revisit current practices and legislation. Ms. Evans adds that voter registration efforts have proven successful in registering special populations of eligible voters in the District of Columbia. Mr. Kelley responds that one specific portion of NVRA he would suggest altering is the provision of how information is updated and the requirement that election mailers be sent. Mr. Kelley adds that although it is important to capture eligible voters who have not registered to vote, doing so is a significant challenge. Mr. Kelley states that since 2012, an estimated sixty million people have been identified as eligible to vote, but not registered. Chairwoman McCormick then asks what kind of follow up data collection ERIC engages in for purposes of records maintenance, and if ERIC uses data to clean its rolls of bad registrations. Mr. Hamlin responds that members are required to certify with ERIC within 90 days when an action is completed for list maintenance purposes.

Vice Chair Hovland asks about steps the panelists have taken to improve the voter experience at the polling place regarding list maintenance. Secretary Adams responds that actuating voter rolls is a multilayered process requiring input from state agencies, courts, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and ERIC. Cleaning up voter rolls has contributed to decreased wait times at polling places on election day. Ms. Evans responds that the District of Columbia no longer employs precinct-based voting, and together with same day voter registration, these efforts contribute to improving the overall experience. Mr. Hamlin responds with a detailed explanation of the

different types of list reports ERIC provides that can be a valuable resource for state election officials to improve efficiencies while also feeding into voter enfranchisement.

Commissioner Palmer asks about the desire of local election officials to maintain accurate lists and data. Ms. Evans responds that it is especially important to maintain accurate lists in the District of Columbia, where all registered voters are required to receive mail ballots for all elections administered. Secretary Adams responds that close elections bring heightened scrutiny to the diligent work of local election officials, which is why every month his office releases and explains the number of registered voters removed from the rolls. Mr. Hamlin responds that accurate voter rolls are just as important as voter education and outreach.

Commissioner Hicks asks what tools or policies could be utilized to improve the way election officials currently conduct their voter list maintenance programs. Mr. Hamlin responds that necessary elements of good list maintenance include reasonably accurate data sources, frequent maintenance of voter files, public outreach, and cooperation with mobile voting populations. Ms. Evans responds that the District of Columbia Board of Elections borrows heavily from the lessons offered by other jurisdictions and works closely with local colleges and universities on returning election mail to registered student voters. Secretary Adams responds that there are two parts of list maintenance: identification and removal. Secretary Adams continues that the challenge for ERIC states is removing inactive voters from the rolls subject to current law requirements.

Chairwoman McCormick thanks the panelists for spending time to discuss this important issue and notes that Mr. Kelley had to leave early.

### **EAC Resources Feature: Best Practices Voter List Maintenance**

Chairwoman McCormick introduces Sara Brady, Senior Election Subject Matter Expert at the EAC, to discuss new resources for election officials.

Ms. Brady spotlights a recent report of best practices on voter list maintenance, which includes overviews of federal laws governing voter registration and voter list maintenance. Ms. Brady explains that voter list maintenance requires year-round resource needs with staffing adjustments during peak times, which is why voter registration databases must be maintained and secured.

Chairwoman McCormick asks about how election officials engage with public outreach. Ms. Brady responds that social media postings reminding voters about upcoming registration deadlines are effective, as well as other forms of public communication, such as preelection mailers.

Vice Chair Hovland asks how students may be impacted by voter registration list maintenance. Ms. Brady responds that college students are more mobile and thus more impacted by voter registration list maintenance concerns, which is why it is important for students to check their voter registration status prior to an upcoming election.

Commissioner Palmer asks to describe how the practices document addresses the national change of address service with USPS or commercial data in a jurisdiction's list maintenance

program, as well as practices specific to military and overseas voters addressed in the document. Ms. Brady responds that national change of address data from USPS helps election officials to notify voters that their registration also requires updating. Ms. Brady adds that regarding military and overseas ballots, many are processed electronically, necessitating valid voter email addresses be kept on file.

Commissioner Hicks asks what type of information provided by the document has been most helpful to election officials that choose to include voting list activities on their websites. Ms. Brady responds that formatting voter list maintenance information into frequently asked questions helps make content more digestible for voters.

### **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

Chairwoman McCormick thanks all panel participants and reaffirms the importance of list maintenance programs, adding that these programs touch every aspect of the election process.

Chairwoman McCormick calls for a motion to adjourn the public meeting. The motion properly is moved and seconded. All are in favor and the public meeting is adjourned.

**The Virtual Public Hearing of the United States Election Assistance adjourned at 2:38 p.m.**