

Minutes of the Public Meeting
United States Election Assistance Commission
Charlotte Convention Center
Room number 207D
Charlotte, NC 28202

The following are the Minutes of the Public Meeting of the United States Election Assistance Commission (“EAC”) held on July 19, 2007. The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m. EDT. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. EDT.

PUBLIC MEETING

Call to Order:

Chair Donetta Davidson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Introduction:

The Chair introduced Libby Ensley from IACREOT who offered a welcome to the EAC. Ms. Ensley presented the Commissioners with certificates of appreciation.

Former Commissioner Paul DeGregorio was also present and the Chair thanked him for coming.

Commissioner Hillman commented on the virtual meeting rooms that have been set up on the EAC website for use by the Standards Board and Board of Advisors, noting that the board members are able to review and comment on draft EAC documents through this format. Additionally, the public is able to view all of the comments and email us with comments as well. She encouraged people to visit the EAC website a few times a week to see what the commission is working on.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Davidson led all present in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

EAC Commissioners

EAC General Counsel Juliet Hodgkins called roll of the members of the Commission and found present: Chairwoman Donetta Davidson, Vice Chair Rosemary Rodriguez, Commissioner Caroline Hunter, and Commissioner Gracia Hillman. Four members were present for a quorum.

Senior Staff

Executive Director Thomas Wilkey and General Counsel Juliet Hodgkins

Adoption of the Agenda

Vice Chair Rodriguez presented a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunter. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Approval of the Minutes from the May 17, 2007 Public Meeting

Commissioner Hunter called for a motion to approve the minutes. Vice Chair Rodriguez seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hillman presented a request that the June and July minutes be made available as soon as possible in order that the Commissioners have ample time to review them before the next meeting.

EAC Activities Report by the Executive Director

For the current meeting, the Commission is considering the adoption of three reports which are posted on the EAC website. They are the College Poll Worker Manual, the Poll Worker Manual, and the Report of HAVA Expenditures by States. These reports are preliminary and the final reports will be posted on the website in the next few days.

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has been conducting audits of HAVA funds. Audits are currently under way in Rhode Island, Wyoming, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Missouri. The most recent posting was the Maryland audit findings. The OIG is also still reviewing the circumstances surrounding the election crimes studies.

The Technical Guidelines Development Committee has updated its meeting schedule and has posted the teleconference dates and information. Information is available at both www.eac.gov and www.vote.nist.gov.

The EAC Standards Board has selected new officers. The Chair is Sarah Ball Johnson, the Vice Chair is Louis Bernard, and the Secretary is Tony Bartholomew.

Recently the EAC provided more than 40,000 documents in response to Congressional requests. The Commission agreed to make the information public and created CDs which can be requested at 1-866-747-1471.

The EAC currently has 10 voting system manufacturers registered with the EAC's certification program and six have been submitted for testing. Currently 3 labs have been certified.

We are also working on a new set of quick start guides and will be released and will be finished. The next quick start guide on voting system certification is scheduled to come out this August.

Briefing: Successful practices for poll worker recruitment.

Panelists:

Karen Lynn-Dyson, Jennifer Collins Foley, Connie Schmidt, Susan Edman

Ms. Lynn Dyson:

As the Research Director for the EAC, Ms. Lynn Dyson recommends that the Commission accept the final report and guidebook which are being submitted. These two studies are very important as they assist election officials in the recruitment, training and retention of pollworkers and college poll workers.

Applied research methods were employed by the Poll Worker Institute and Cleveland State University to seek input into these guidebooks' development. This information was used to assist in the development of the State Compendium of Poll Worker Requirements.

Ms. Lynn Dyson thanked the practitioners and election officials who contributed to the project and participated in the study. These guidebooks have been anxiously awaited and will be very valuable tool.

Ms. Collins Foley:

The final product of a 17 month project resulted in the manual presented here. The team worked with many different groups to gather information. It was a multi faceted approach which began with a NACO survey. The survey proposed several types of questions regarding pollworkers and those questions helped lay the foundation for the study.

A working group was established with representation from both large and small jurisdictions. Language and accessibility advocacy groups were also represented. The League of Women Voters did a partner study and conducted 17 focus groups across the country and submitted their findings.

In order to decide what was going to be included in the manual, the team pulled together what is already being done in the field. The team also created criteria for inclusion in the manual. These included whether or not results could be measured, whether they were sustainable, and whether they were replicable.

Ms. Schmidt:

Ms. Schmidt went over the highlights of the book and the four main sections. The first section covered was the recruitment of poll workers. Some of the medium types were brochures, flyers, posters, web sites, email, mailings, and phone calls. Source tracking at the beginning is important since recruiting is a year round, continuous process. There are a lot of techniques and ways of gleaning different skill sets. The skill set of the poll workers is increasing. One needs a more tech savvy group in order to keep up with technological changes. That is one of the reasons why students and corporate employees are a great addition. Also, bilingual poll workers are needed and extremely important. Some challenges include split shifts or accessing hard to reach communities.

The next section is on training. The primary message is that “hands on training” is essential. It helps if it’s in a perfect polling place type of setting which is similar to how it will look on Election Day. Roll playing, videos, and equipment training are key elements.

The third section is on poll worker retention. It’s important to develop personal relationships with them and give them room to grow. Reward them for their good work. Communication and keeping them as a part of the team is really important. Saying “thank you” and paying promptly is also essential.

The last section is on management. Support systems are critical for doing troubleshooting. It helps to have call centers and phone support. Blend your teams and spread out the skill sets.

Ms. Edman:

Within the City of Milwaukee, Ms. Edman found that the biggest problem was the aging pool of poll workers. Many of them did not have the skill set or stamina to deal with current day elections. Some are aging and are easily intimidated by poll watchers.

The city needed to supplement the pool with young election workers so they reached out to city residents by the media. Ms. Edman was asked to participate in a project and was contacted by Connie Schmidt. Our poll workers have always been required to work really long hours and work till midnight. Many offer split shifts which creates more vacancies. Even though offering split shifts generates more administrative work for the city, they found that people were more willing to do the split shift so they can work the shorter hours.

Milwaukee also piloted the use of city managers. Rather than reporting to the office, they floated and were out at precincts offering support. The use of them did not affect their budget and the program was extremely successful.

Commissioner Hunter moved to adopt the “Successful Practices for Poll Worker Recruitment, Training and Retention”. Vice Chair Rodriguez seconded. With the motion on the table the Chair opened up the floor for questions. After the question and answer period, the Commission continued with the vote. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Chair called a break at 2:43, they returned at 2:53.

Briefing: “Successful Practices for Recruiting College Poll Workers”

Panelists:

Abigail Horn, Former Assistant Director, Center for Election Integrity, Cleveland State University; Mary "Terri" Hegarty, City Clerk, City of Grand Rapids, MI.

Ms. Horn:

Ms. Horn highlighted some of the reasons why college poll workers are a vital and integral part of the working pool. The most apparent reason is their comfort level with computers and technology. Additionally, they have flexible schedules and are physically more able to set up heavy equipment. It is also important to get young people engaged in the democratic process so they are more likely to vote and adopt a life long commitment to civic involvement.

The methodology for the college poll worker is very similar in design to the one for general poll workers. The guidebook contains a state statute compendium listing the different requirements for becoming a poll worker. This will assist election officials and legislators when looking for information regarding those requirements.

In many cases there were two main impediments to college students serving as poll workers. The first was the residency requirement. The other was the requirement of being registered in that particular state. Given the transitory nature of college students they were generally registered in their home state which is not necessarily the state in which they are enrolled for college.

Starting early is really important to recruiting students. You almost need 10 months to get the key events in the college year to plan around that. Another strategy is recommending an excused absence policy with the university. That will help minimize no-shows due to professors' lack of leniency with attendance. Another incentive is money or course credit.

Make training easy, accessible and interesting will help since most students will show up if they have been through training. Unfortunately, research showed that retention rates are generally low with students. Only about 30-50 percent of those who sign up actually show up. That is addressed on the section on sustainability. Generally interests peak for the general election and students may only be around for 4 years. The emphasis is developing a sustainable pool of students who bring the same skills year after year, rather than the same actual students.

Ms. Hegarty:

Voter turnout is lowest in the 18-24 age group. The research team met with the college representative and learned that they communicate a little differently than the mean population. They changed the application to include those factors, as well as the bilingual question. They also asked about their experience with computers.

Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan, but much smaller than Detroit. The pilot project in Grand Rapids was a great success. They wanted to have a laptop in every precinct to house the voter registration list. So, they downloaded the

registration lists on the laptops and utilized the college students for that particular job. They had them manage the registration list so voters no longer had to wait in long lines.

With recruitment they used media and newspapers to get the word out. They had 263 applications during the two week period and accepted 216.

All of the accepted applicants were invited to train. Training was held at City Hall a few blocks away from the school. They did the general training session and also received training on the laptop program. Out of the 89 students who showed up to train 82 were appointed.

These trained individuals became a part of the master list. The program was very successful at the community college since many of them are currently state residents and local to the area. The program also helped to raise voter turn out for those who participated.

Vice Chair Rodriguez presented the motion to adopt “A Guidebook for Recruiting College Poll Workers”. Commissioner Hillman seconded.

Discussion and questions commenced. At the conclusion of the discussion period, they continued with the vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Briefing: “Report to Congress on State Governments’ Expenditures of Help America Vote Act Funds”

Panelist:

Edgardo Cortes, U.S. Election Assistance Commission

This report represents expenditures from the \$3 billion which went out to the states under HAVA sections 101,102, and 251. In total the states have spent about \$1.78 Billion , which includes actual money spend but also any obligations allocated with long term contracts for voting systems. The states’ remaining funds are currently about \$1.3 Billion.

States are able to put funds in interest bearing accounts and may use the funds from interest accrued. Most of the states have used more than half of their money. Over 76 percent of funds have been used on voting systems and implementing the voter registration list. Approximately 16 percent was used on the improvement of the administration of federal elections. These activities include training, polling place accessibility, and the creation of state plans.

Mr. Cortes recommended that we make it an accessible PDF document with the revisions mentioned available on the EAC website. He also recommended that we should distribute copies to our Congressional oversight committees. Additionally, the Chair may choose to send letter to stakeholders including secretaries of state, state legislatures, state election directors and members of the public who may be interested.

Commissioner Hunter moved to adopt the “Report to congress on State Governments’ Expenditures of the Help America Vote Act Fund” while incorporating the changes in the appendices that Mr. Cortes mentioned. Vice Chair Rodriguez seconded. Commissioner Hillman offered a friendly amendment to have Mr. Cortes produce a trail of the changes which were made. Mr. Cortes agreed to give Elle Collver a copy of the changes to attach to the minutes so that they may be accurately reflected for the record.*

*Please see attached document which will be entered into the record as part of the minutes.

Motion carried by a quorum of three. Commissioner Hunter had to leave before a vote was taken.

Commissioner Hillman offered motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Rodriguez seconded. The motion passed with a quorum of three.

The Chair announced the next meeting would be held on June 14th at the EAC.
Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. EDT.