

General Registrar's & Electoral Board Workgroup

Minutes

The meeting was called to order on December 3, 2014, at 3:00PM by Co-Chair John Hager. Attending were Jean Jensen, Co-Chair; electoral board (EBs) members William Bell, Renee Andrews, Bill Thomas, and Robin Lind; general registrar's (GRs) Larry Haake, Tracy Howard, and Barbara Gunter. Representing SBE was Chairman Charles E. Judd and the Department of Elections (ELECT) was represented by ELECT Liaison Rose Mansfield and members of the public.

Co-Chair Jensen submitted the GREB Workgroup Minutes for approval from the November 18, 2014 meeting to the members. Additions and or deletions were noted to the Minutes and the GREB Workgroup Members unanimously approved the minutes.

The first order of business was a report from committee members. Co-Chair Hager stated that SBE received the report from the GREB Workgroup during their Board Meeting on November 24, 2014. SBE Board Members were provided with a copy of the resolution. The resolution was twofold in that it provided the recommendations to the general assembly and the extension of the workgroup through December 31, 2015. The presentation to the SBE Board Members included background information and results of the survey conducted by the GREB Workgroup. The recommendations of the workgroup were approved by SBE.

Co-Chair Hager directed the workgroup to review the resolution to determine future efforts. Chairman Judd noted that the resolution has been sent to the members of the Privileges and Elections committee. GREB Workgroup members discussed who would patron a bill in support of the workgroup recommendations. Co-Chair Jensen inquired if the proposed legislation had the support of the Voters Registrars' Association (VRAV) and the Virginia Electoral Board Association (VEBA). Mr. Haake stated that the proposed legislation was supported by the associations. Ms. Andrews stated that VEBA was in support of presenting a bill. Mr. Howard stated that he had received numerous communications in support of the workgroup efforts. Ms. Gunter reinforced those sentiments by stating that she also received comments about the approach the workgroup has taken and the feedback was that the efforts of the workgroup were extremely professional. Workgroup members discussed possible patrons and the approach to be utilized in presenting the legislation to both houses of the general assembly.

Co-Chair Hager stated that the request would include all aspects of the resolution approved by the SBE Board Members on November 24, 2014. The workgroup unanimously agreed. SBE Chairman Judd stated that the resolution would be sent to all Privileges and Elections Committee Members as a prelude to the request for a patron. Mr. Lind moved *that Co-Chair Hager contact Delegate Jackson Miller to ask if he would patron the bill*. Ms. Andrews seconded the motion and the workgroup unanimously agreed. Co-Chair Hager moved *that Mr. Lind contact Delegate Steven*

47 *Landes and Mr. Haake contact Delegate Riley Ingram. Ms. Andrews seconded the*
48 *motion and the workgroup unanimously agreed. Co-Chair Jenson moved that*
49 *Chairman Judd contact Senator Jill Vogel to ask if she would patron the bill. Ms.*
50 *Andrews seconded the motion and the workgroup unanimously agreed.*

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53 The next order of business was the GREB Workgroup Directives for 2015, as
54 outlined in the resolution. GREB Workgroup Members discussed the points of the
55 resolution as outlined:

- 56 1. Work with the appropriate authority in the implementation of the
57 recommendations contained herein;
- 58 2. Further evaluate the roles and responsibilities of Electoral Board members to
59 make certain their historically important role of checks and balances is
60 maintained and emphasized;
- 61 3. Examine and recommend state funding mechanisms for voter registration
62 and elections for the localities;
- 63 4. Evaluate staffing of the general registrar's offices;
- 64 5. Established standards for continuing education needs and recognition for
65 advanced studies; and
- 66 6. Analyze and review minimum funding and staffing levels of the Department
67 of Elections to ensure a robust, efficient and responsive agency capable of
68 conscientiously serving the more than 5 million voters in the Commonwealth
69 today.
- 70 7. Study other areas as deemed necessary.

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72 Co-Chair Jensen asked that these items be studied by VEBA during their annual
73 conference in the spring of 2015. Mr. Bell and Ms. Andrews agreed that would be a
74 doable commitment.

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76 Co-Chair Jensen inquired if there were additional reports and there were none. The
77 workgroup floor was opened to public discussion. Kevin Linehan, General Registrar
78 of Fairfax City stated that the electoral board members should be focused on policy
79 while the general registrars should be focused on the procedures. Mr. Linehan
80 offered to submit his comments via email to the group and stated that there was
81 interest in the findings of this workgroup.

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83 Eric Johnson, Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) stated that during the annual
84 conference members supported the funding commitments. Mr. Johnson stated that
85 in the past VACo would ask for increase funding for the localities but due to the
86 current economic atmosphere counties now ask for "maintenance funding" or to
87 meet the state current commitments. The members understand the increased
88 burdens placed on the general registrars and unfunded mandates. Mr. Johnson
89 inquired about the fiscal impact regarding the change in title from "General
90 Registrar" to "Director of Elections". Co-Chair Hager stated that the name change
91 would mirror the changes of the State Board of Elections and the Department of
92 Elections as well as clear any confusion about the meaning of "General Registrar".

93 Co-Chair Hager asked if there were any further comments and there were none. Mr.
94 Lind moved *that the workgroup adjourn*. Ms. Andrews seconded the motion and the
95 workgroup unanimously approved the motion.

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97 The next meeting of the GREB Workgroup is set for January 20, 2015 at 2:00 PM at
98 the Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, 815 East Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia.
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100 There being no further business, the GREB Workgroup adjourned at 5:20PM.

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Co-Chair Jean Jensen

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Co-Chair John Hager