

## Minutes – State Board of Elections Advisory Review Workgroup

December 5, 2022

### In-person attendees:

- Chair Lisa Koteen Gerchick
- Tram Nguyen
- Tammy Johnson Beard
- Barry Condrey
- Jason Corwin
- Wanda Taylor
- Katie Boyle

### Virtual attendees

- Kate Hanley (had technical difficulties and was not able to participate for most of the discussion of the draft report)
- Josette Bulova
- Kim Cummings

Chair Koteen Gerchick called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Members agreed to the participation of Brenda Cabrera, president of the Voter Registrars Association of Virginia, in the discussion to assist in representing the perspective of general registrars, as Allison Robbins and Walt Latham were unable to attend.

Minutes from the September 28, 2022, meeting were approved with one abstention (Kate Hanley).

Chair Koteen Gerchick explained that she will be presenting the final report at the January 18 State Board of Elections meeting. An updated draft will be circulated prior to the Advisory Group's next and final meeting, which was scheduled for January 11 at 10:00 a.m.

Chair Koteen Gerchick indicated that a final draft will include an executive summary and a conclusion, as well as appropriate statutory citations. She pointed out that the objective of the report is to recommend which aspects of a well-run election should be documented first, and suggested that the report avoid measures that require a long lead time to compile, as the delay would dilute the impact of a timely report evaluating whether a recent election was well-run.

Members discussed the draft report, which was circulated to members for review in advance.

In the introduction, members supported inclusion of a reference to funding for elections and suggested strengthening the proposed language. Members agreed to include notes throughout the report indicating where enhancements to certain aspects of election administration will require additional resources.

Item 1, Voter Registration – Members discussed the value of ELECT reporting the number of registered voters as a percentage of the voting-eligible population and whether this metric demonstrates the degree to which an election is successful; members opted to remove this metric but to retain the other two proposed recommendations (inclusion of same-day registration statistics and surveying eligible citizens as to whether they consider the voter registration form to be clear).

Item 2, Voter Turnout – Members had a similar discussion about the value of capturing voter turnout as a percentage of the voting-eligible population and decided to remove this recommendation.

Item 3, Website Utility and Voter Look-up Tools – Members agreed that the collection of input from the public on the quality of ELECT’s website should also include capturing information regarding the accessibility of the website for individuals with disabilities. Members agreed that the timely updating of information on the website should be a priority. Members agreed to delete the recommendation that the state provide standardized webpages that could be adapted for local use, given the need to prioritize improvements to the state’s own website.

Item 4, Communications and Voter Outreach and Education – Members discussed potential assistance from the state in providing localities with tools for outreach (such as website icons) since localities are now limited by law in their ability to accept donated resources from non-governmental entities. Members discussed revising the reference to ELECT orchestrating messaging to clarify that the state would continue to conduct public outreach campaigns promoting trust in elections, and localities would continue to be able to supplement the state’s efforts with their own communications.

Item 5, Election Management System Functionality – Members agreed to include minor edits to remove references to accuracy of data entry, as the election management system cannot remove the element of human error in data entry.

Item 6, Security – Members removed certain elements of local cybersecurity reporting that were proposed to be recorded by ELECT and agreed to incorporate the discussion of physical security into the discussion of compliance with standards for the security of voter registration system (which includes standards for physical security). Members agreed to relocate the paragraph discussing logic and accuracy testing and risk-limiting audits to the section dealing with outreach and education.

Item 7, Mail Voting – Members revised language regarding reasons why ballots were not counted to instead address the reasons for ballots being rejected, and revised the last sentence to reflect ELECT compiling data tracking the reasons why ballots are rejected.

Item 8, Processes and Procedures at Early Voting Sites and Polling Places – Chair Koteen Gerchick will circulate potential language regarding polling place accessibility.

Item 9, Counting Ballots – Members discussed the challenges posed by the recently-enacted requirement to allocate absentee ballots by precinct; this is a section where a reference to resource needs will be included.

Chair Koteen Gerchick encouraged members to submit additional comments in advance of the January 11 meeting; she will circulate a revised draft in advance of the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Katie Boyle

December 8, 2022