

## General Registrar's & Electoral Board Workgroup

1 Minutes

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4 The meeting was called to order on June 30, 2015, at 10:00AM by Co-Chair Jean  
5 Jensen and Co-Chair John Hager. Attending were electoral board (EBs) members  
6 William Bell, Bill Thomas, and Robin Lind; general registrar's (GRs) Tracy Howard,  
7 Larry Haake, and Barbara Gunter. Representing SBE was Vice Chair Clara Belle  
8 Wheeler. Charles E. Judd, Ex-Officio was present and the Department of Elections  
9 (ELECT) was represented by Rose Mansfield, ELECT Board Liaison and Martha  
10 Brissette, ELECT Policy Analyst; and members of the public. Mr. Judd arrived at the  
11 meeting at 10:05AM and Mr. Thomas departed the meeting at 12:20PM.

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13 Co-Chair Jensen submitted the GREB Workgroup Minutes for approval from the May  
14 12, 2015 meeting to the members. The changes requested were noted by the Clerk.  
15 Co-Chair Jensen *moved that the Minutes be approved as corrected.* Co-Chair Hager  
16 seconded the motion and the GREB Workgroup Members unanimously approved  
17 the Minutes.

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19 The first order of old business was the "Interim Report to SBE" presented by Tracy  
20 Howard and Barbara Gunter. Mr. Howard stated that a draft presentation was  
21 submitted to workgroup members and provided a review. The interim report is due  
22 to SBE at their board meeting on July 28, 2015. The workgroup members provided  
23 input and suggested changes. Mr. Howard thanked Mr. Haake for his input on the  
24 draft report. Mr. Howard stated that utilizing the approved workgroup Minutes a  
25 draft report was created. The goals of the workgroup were reviewed with pertinent  
26 details defined and outlined in preparation for the presentation to SBE Board  
27 Members.

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29 Mr. Howard stated that a letter will be delivered to the Commissioner of ELECT  
30 covering budgetary concerns as they relate to the workgroup's findings. Co-Chair  
31 Jensen directed Ms. Brissette to research (i) what role SBE has in directing financial  
32 reimbursements and (ii) does an action taken by a previous board carry to the next  
33 sitting board or will there be a need to take an official action. Workgroup members  
34 discussed the issues addressed by localities that are not funded with a full-time  
35 registrar. Co-Chair Jensen stated that a concern is that a locality could fail during an  
36 election because of limited personnel resources that were driven by financial  
37 constraints [...making note that there are 16 localities with part-time registrars].  
38 Workgroup members discussed how general registrars and electoral board  
39 members have assisted localities during a personnel shortage, noting that they have  
40 limitations, by *Code*, to conduct particular functions outside of their assigned  
41 localities. Mr. Howard stated that Virginia is posed to litigation on the grounds of  
42 equal access.

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44 Mr. Howard discussed the changes in legislation that have occurred and how those  
45 changes impacted the workload of the general registrar. Mr. Howard stated that the  
46 localities must consider a replacement schedule for voting equipment similar with

47 other equipment in their inventory, i.e. fire trucks or computers. Mr. Haake stated  
48 that his locality is proactive with the replacement of equipment which is beneficial  
49 to the voters. Mr. Judd stated that the latest legislative session provided the  
50 workgroup with momentum and the group should continue with the introduction of  
51 new legislation to support the recommendations developed by the workgroup. Mr.  
52 Judd stated that a “manpower” impact statement should be produced when new  
53 legislation is introduced.

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55 Mr. Howard stated that the interim report contains the recommendation that the  
56 education and certification of election officials occur at the local level. Mr. Howard  
57 stated that the use of technology should be incorporated into the training of general  
58 registrars and electoral board members. Co-Chair Jensen stated that this interim  
59 report item should be listed as an item that requires continued research. Co-Chair  
60 Hager stated that the general registrars training, their evaluations, and their  
61 compensations should be tied together to create a strong election system.

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63 Ms. Gunter asked if the job description of the electoral board members should be  
64 included in the interim report or held for the final report in December, 2015. The  
65 workgroup members agreed that due to the amount of information being presented  
66 with the interim report the information should go in the final report. Ms. Gunter  
67 provided a worksheet to the workgroup members regarding their responsibilities  
68 and assignments based on the resolution SBE unanimously accepted at their  
69 November 24, 2014 meeting. The workgroup members reviewed the individual  
70 points of the worksheet provided.

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72 Ms. Gunter stated that continuing education is a priority and the general registrars  
73 are not compensated for receiving certification or rewarded for that achievement  
74 unlike others who hold positions in their localities of equal responsibility, i.e. the  
75 treasurer. Ms. Gunter stated the workgroup should analyze and review minimum  
76 funding and staffing levels of ELECT to ensure an efficient and responsive agency.  
77 Mr. Howard stated that he and Ms. Gunter would collaborate and blend the two  
78 documents in preparation for the presentation to SBE on July 28, 2015.

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80 The next order of old business was the Survey Charts presented by Larry Haake. Mr.  
81 Haake stated that the *Code* sections associated to the survey are inserted on the  
82 handout pertaining to electoral board member responsibilities. Ms. Gunter stated  
83 that the recommendation is that the *Code* sections be updated to reflect that either  
84 the general registrar or the electoral board member could complete the task as  
85 required by *Code*. Vice Chair Wheeler asked that the group review the charts before  
86 acting and moved *that the workgroup table the agenda item until its next regularly*  
87 *scheduled meeting*. The workgroup discussed the problematic situation of waiting to  
88 the next meeting to discuss the survey charts as related to the *Code of Virginia*. Mr.  
89 Haake moved *that the Code should be amended to reflect the changes to the general*  
90 *registrars and electoral board shared duties as identified in the survey charts*. Mr.  
91 Lind seconded the motion and without public comment the workgroup unanimously  
92 approved the motion.

93 Co-Chair Hager inquired if there were additional reports and there were none. The  
94 workgroup floor was opened to public discussion. Mr. Eric Johnson, Virginia  
95 Association of Counties (VACO) approached the podium.  
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97 Mr. Johnson stated that the information and research conducted by the workgroup  
98 has been beneficial in understanding the responsibilities of the general registrars  
99 and electoral board members. Mr. Johnson stated that VACO would be concerned  
100 with unfunded mandates to the localities and would oppose those mandates. The  
101 localities have experienced budget constraints as a result of years of budget  
102 reductions. VACO would however; find common ground in implementing efficient  
103 methods of handling the mandates in partnership with SBE. Mr. Johnson stated that  
104 future workgroup membership compositions would benefit by including members  
105 who have experience in budget implementation at the local level. Co-Chair Hager  
106 thanked Mr. Johnson for his comments and asked if there were additional  
107 comments. Mary Jo Fields, Virginia Municipal League (VML) approached the  
108 podium.  
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110 Ms. Fields stated it would important to educate legislators on the changes that have  
111 occurred with the general registrars and the electoral board members duties and  
112 the rational of funding issues and responsibilities between the same office  
113 conducting elections for federal, state, and local offices. Ms. Fields stated that the  
114 funding for training of election officials and the registrars offices should come from  
115 the state. Ms. Fields stated that the work of Mr. Howard on registration centers  
116 located on college campuses was featured in the VML magazine. All attendees and  
117 members applauded Mr. Howard on his efforts and dedication to the registration  
118 process on college campuses. Co-Chair Hager thanked Ms. Fields for her comments  
119 and asked if there were additional comments. Therese Martin, Virginia League of  
120 Voters approached the podium.  
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122 Ms. Martin stated thanked the workgroup for the development of an action plan and  
123 the preparation that has been conducted for the presentation of the interim report  
124 to SBE at their next meeting. Ms. Martin stated that the league extends its support  
125 and offered assistance towards workgroup directives. Co-Chair Hager thanked Ms.  
126 Martin for her comments and asked if there were additional comments and there  
127 were none.  
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129 Co-Chair Jensen asked if there were any further comments and there were none. Mr.  
130 Lind moved *that the workgroup adjourn*. Mr. Bell seconded the motion and the  
131 workgroup unanimously approved the motion.  
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133 The next meeting of the GREB Workgroup is set for July 27, 2015 at 2:00 PM in the  
134 Double Tree by Hilton, 1021 Koger Center Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23235.  
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136 There being no further business, the GREB Workgroup adjourned at 1:20PM.  
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140	Co-Chair Jean Jensen
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146	Co-Chair John Hager