

Meeting Minutes
Risk-Limiting Audit (RLA) Work Group
August 23, 2022
Washington Building
1100 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Members Present: Brenda Cabrera, John Nunnally, Anne Marie Middlesworth, Ravi Udeshi, Jennifer Maynard, and Roger Omwake.

ELECT Staff: Rachel Lawless, Confidential Policy Advisor, Karen Hoyt-Stewart, Locality Security Program Manager, Max Berckmueller, ELECT Inters.

Public: Four members of the public.

Welcome:

The meeting started at 1:05 PM. Rachel Lawless opened the meeting, welcomed everyone in attendance, and thanked them for making it. Introductions were then held for a five minutes. Agenda was discussed by Rachel.

Presentation:

Rachel began going through the slides and described the purpose of the work group. She talked about what we had already been brought before the State Board and discussed within the Department of Elections. The presentation was used to guide the group discussion and covered the following: Timeline, SBE Methods of Choosing Races, and RLA Manual Revision.

Discussion:

Timeline

We then went to the calendar and discussed the pros and cons of using different dates.

- The 16th SBE meeting was agreed upon for which race should be examined.
- The 14th would be when things are due to request having a personal audit.
- The ballot manifest upload date should be moved up to Thursday the 17th.
- These changes were made to hopefully allow GRs and their offices to not have to audit elections during the week of Thanksgiving, 23-25.
 - It was offered that anyone who wants to can do their audits so long as they have them in by the 29th at 3:00 PM to allow them to prepare for the possibility of another audit the next year.
 - The conversation was reopened as it was determined that the department of elections is responsible for determining when the audit will be started.

- It was proposed that the department could provide a range for when localities could start their audit to allow localities to start their audits when they want to.
 - Rather than encouraging people to start on a specific day for their audit, we should encourage them to be done by a certain day.
- It was proposed that it should be added to the RLA manual what options exist for simpler ballot collection methods.

How SBE will choose election:

- It was discussed that the process should be kept the same as it was done in the past, i.e. doing it with some sort of drawing.
 - There is a visual and physical appeal to this option.
- Another option was that we might use a google random number generator.
 - This was seen as not as appealing because of the concern that citizens might be concerned that a website such as Google would not be desirable to prevent potential fraud.

The RLA Manual:

- It was discussed that the RLA manual could replace the GREB section about Risk Limiting Audits.
- Detailed timelines should be added to the manual.
- There was also a discussion around whether we might add some sort of process for pulling out a certain number of ballots from a machine.
 - It was offered that the current definition in the law was that the ballot machine can only be empty once it was full, which is of course an interpretable definition.
 - The attending members agreed there should be generally more clarity around this issue in the manual.
- What there is to be done about confusion around ballot manifests was then brought up.
 - The workshops are one place where they can be discussed.
 - A screenshot around differences between early voting ballots versus election day ballots, etc.
 - That you could have multiple boxes that comprise a box should be communicated to GRs
 - There should also be guidance for how often early voting voting machines should be emptied.
 - That there should be a form one has to complete when you pull; ballots out of the ballot box was offered.
 - The current log found in the manual could be updated to fill this purpose.
 - There could be a best practices section written on where you might store your ballots and hold your venue to have an audit.

- There could also be a best practices section written about how if two localities share a court then they need to work out who goes where.

Public Comment:

Chris Marston offered that we should have ballot accounting occur in localities to encourage a greater paper trail to increase transparency and reliability in our election.

Meeting Adjournment:

Rachel then closed out the meeting by agreeing that we might just put the revisions which were discussed on paper and have the workgroup review them before they were sent out to the SBE. The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 PM.