

Ohio Association of Election Officials

Legislative Committee Meeting

January 11, 2017

The legislative committee of the Ohio Association of Election Officials met on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 1:00 PM at the Winter Elections Conference at the Downtown Hilton, 401 N. High St, Columbus, Ohio. Tim Ward and Susie Bloom presided. Aaron Ockerman, executive director of the Ohio Association of Election Officials was also present and assisted with the lead when asked.

Peggy Byers supplied a sheet for signing in today. Present were: Paul Adams, Susan Broom, Penny Brooks, Cheryle Browning, Jocelyn Bucaro, Peggy Byers, Judith Craig, Andrea Eastman, Amy Grubbe, Steve Harsman, Joyce Kale-Pesta, Sharon Locke, Lyn McCoy, Ross McDonald, Kathy Meyer, Carol Perry, Debbie Reiter, Luke Scott, Brian Sleeth, Stephanie Slifko, Michelle Wilcos, Kathy Wyenandt, Carolyn Adams, Stephanie Clase,, Karla Herron, Jan Kelley, Sarah Kneuss, Julie Leathers, Renae Lentz Faith Lyon, Debbie Quivey, Olga Thomas, Tim Ward, Lisa Welch and Kay Wick.

Guests today: Beth Ann Snyder, James Hartley, Dean Omspah, Dean Tamplin, Tom Gerrity, Jim Neubart, Shawn Stevens, Bill Rick, Rorg A. Allen, Jan Commers, Richard Salvage, Pam Miller, Tony McLaughlin, Brian Mead, Adam Sayre, Ed Zell, Paul Johnson

The minutes had been sent out by email. Amy Grubbe moved a motion the minutes be accepted. Julie Leathers seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The time was spent discussing several issues to add to our legislative agenda to be passed to the trustees. Aaron Ockerman had recapped the meeting this way:

Operational Efficiencies and Saving Taxpayer Dollars

- Pass SB 206 from the 131st GA allowing local candidates to file campaign finance forms electronically. This reduces paperwork at the local level and provides for greater transparency for the public.
- Pass SB 212 from the 131st GA allowing boards of elections to fully utilize modern technology by allowing boards of elections using electronic poll books to reduce poll workers at locations with more than one precinct.
- Pass SB 347/HB 591 from the 131st GA. These bills eliminate special congressional and other primaries where only one candidate appears on the ballot, saving taxpayer money on unnecessary elections.
- Allow boards of elections to take a “time out” from verifying petitions in the days leading up to an election. This will allow boards to more effectively utilize full-time and part-time staff to prepare for elections, but will not affect a petitioner’s ability to place an issue on the ballot for future elections.
- Pass legislation encouraging greater coordination between schools and board of elections with regard to using schools as polling places. This legislation will preserve the right of a board of elections to use schools as polling locations, while providing ample notice to schools, thus allowing them to make appropriate plans to address any safety concerns.
- Require the Secretary of State to approve local ballot language within 10 days of receiving it from board of elections. This will ensure that local boards have the necessary time to print ballots and mail them for absentee voting.
- Clean up the ORC to provide for uniform font and language on ballots for questions and issues.

Ensuring Ohio's Election Integrity Through Updated Equipment

- Building on the success of the state/local partnership for the purchase of electronic pollbooks, the state should create a similar cost-sharing program for tabulating equipment. This program will create efficiencies and cost saving for taxpayers through bulk purchasing, and provide counties of all means the opportunity to update their sorely outdated election equipment.

We did spend time discussing an online absentee application. The signature on this document was the sticking point. It is hoped that with further discussion with the state, we might be able to piggyback on the online registration that has already been worked out by the Secretary of State.

A permanent absentee application was also discussed extensively.

Changing the in-person absentee procedure so the application and envelope could be eliminated was another part of the discussion this afternoon.

Some counties would like to pursue multiple early voting sites. The challenges this might place on county information technology departments, the logistics involved, the security involved, the recent rash of lawsuits, etc. all led to an extensive discussion. Tim Ward and Jocelyn Bucaro are going to develop a task force to do some research to lead the study on these issues and bring some recommendations back to the group so the committee can make an educated decision about whether to pursue these matters.

Joyce Kale-Pesta made a motion that the group adjourn. Amy Grubbe seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Byers

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