



DUVAL COUNTY ELECTION ADVISORY PANEL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 28, 2017

TO: Dr. Cheryl L. Brown
Director/Council Secretary

FROM: Jeff Clements, Chief
City Council Research Division

RE: DUVAL COUNTY ELECTION ADVISORY PANEL ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016-17

Membership

9 members: 3 members of the general public appointed by the Council President; 3 members of the general public appointed by the Mayor; 2 members appointed by the Supervisor of Elections; 1 employee of the Supervisor of Elections Office appointed by the Supervisor. All members must be registered Duval County voters. The panel's membership is completely filled at present. As of June 2017, four members are continuing to serve beyond the end of their expired terms: Mayoral appointees Toni Alfred, Ingrid Montgomery and Karen Nuland (all eligible for reappointment to additional terms) and Supervisor of Elections' appointee Justin Portlock (eligible for reappointment to an additional term).

Meetings

The Election Advisory Panel has typically met on a monthly basis except for the one year in every four-year cycle (such as 2017) when there are no regularly scheduled elections. The panel met monthly from July through December of 2016 and in 2017, meeting on a quarterly basis, the panel has met in March and June. No meetings have been affected by lack of a quorum.

Sampling of topics discussed and recommendations made in 2016-2017

- 2016 election preparations and post-election debriefing: before each election the EAP is briefed by its SOE representative on election preparations, changes in precinct boundaries and polling locations, poll worker training, voter registration trends, expected voter turnout, early voting locations and hours, etc. After the elections the EAP receives a debriefing covering voter turnout, any problems encountered (faulty equipment, power outages, insufficient personnel, etc.), uncounted votes, spoiled ballots and the like.
- Voter demographics: Hispanic voter registration in Jacksonville is gradually increasing over time, from 15,201 in 2006 to 27,390 in 2016. Jacksonville is still below the threshold for requiring electoral materials and instructions in Spanish, but may be reaching that status after the next Census as the city's Hispanic registration increases. Eventually the SOE will have to deal with the differences in

Spanish dialects spoken by immigrants from various Spanish-speaking countries. The SOE has been meeting with Hispanic activists in Jacksonville on the subject.

- Voter registration and educational efforts: the EAP recommended to the SOE that private high schools be included in the voter registration efforts. Supervisor of Elections Mike Hogan responded that his office already engages with private high schools, if allowed.
- Assisted voting: the EAP reviewed the list of the assisted living/nursing home locations contacted by the SOE's office to make available on-site assisted voting and suggested several sites for addition to the contact list.
- Voters' Election Day experience: the EAP discussed several allegations of poll worker misconduct during the 2016 primary election with the panel's SOE employee. The allegations involved of poll workers/poll managers/SOE rovers violating the standards of conduct regarding wearing candidate-specific apparel, reportedly attempting to influence a voter to change their party affiliation, and taking a photograph inside a polling place. The Supervisor's Office investigated each of the allegations and responded to the panel with explanations of the actions taken in each case.
- Poll worker demographics, recruitment and training: the EAP is frequently apprised of the ongoing efforts to recruit and train new poll workers and poll managers to replace workers leaving due to age, interest or relocation. See the attached handout for Duval County's poll worker demographics – the median age at the time of the 2016 Presidential preference primary was 63.2 and only 20.2% were age 50 or younger. The SOE has been actively recruiting for poll workers at area colleges and even high schools, and has found that pairing young, computer-savvy workers with experienced veterans makes for a good combination that helps the precincts run smoothly.
- Several members of the Election Advisory Panel attended poll worker training to experience the material and training methods first-hand.
- Election law changes: the EAP is kept apprised by the SOE of proposed changes to state law regarding elections, including vote by mail standards, acceptable forms of identification, and early voting times and locations, and restoration of civil rights to felons upon completion of their sentences. The 2017 Florida Legislature passed a law providing for a "cure" process for a vote-by-mail ballot that is rejected for a non-matching signature. The details of how the law will be implemented will be discussed at the statewide supervisors of elections' conference in Orlando in June 2017.
- The EAP was informed at each meeting about the progress of the legal challenges affecting Florida House member Reggie Fullwood's and Congresswoman Corrine Brown's districts.
- The Supervisor of Elections' employee representative reported that the Supervisor of Elections Office has never had a standard policy for providing election support and charging costs for those activities to private non-governmental organizations (i.e. unions, churches, sororities, public schools, etc.), but developing such manual is a task for 2017.
- The EAP was educated about the security systems that protect the integrity of the voter registration and vote tabulation and reporting processes and discussed the reports of attempted hacking of American voting systems by foreign powers during the 2016 Presidential election. In 2016 the EAP sent a letter to the Election Canvassing Board requesting the during the logic and accuracy (L&A) testing before each election at least two early voting sites be tested, that all machines at each selected early voting site be tested, and that at least one voting machine in each of the 14 City Council districts be tested. Supervisor Hogan responded that his office tests every tabulator before each election; that the number of tabulators tested in the logic and accuracy test is outlined by Florida Statutes, which his office already exceeds; and that the testing of at least one voting machine in each City Council district is already standard practice.