Hart County Board of Registrars

January 17, 2014

11:05 A.M.

The following is a summary of the subjects discussed during the January 17, 2014 meeting:

Registrar John Stercho presided with Registrars Jane Kay, Ronda Starks and Deputy Registrar/Clerk Mary Stephens in attendance.

1. Approve Minutes of previous board

Registrar Ronda Starks moved to approve the meeting minutes from the board meeting of November 21, 2013. Registrar Kay seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

1. Office staffing and personnel workloads

A general discussion amongst the registrars and clerk ensued, regarding the Grand Jury convening in February 2014. Its impact on the board due to Registrar Starks’ “interim” status was noted. Registrar Stercho mentioned that he had already inquired with Clerk of the Court Gray about the Grand Jury, as for meeting date and what process occurred from that point. Registrar Starks indicated she had already submitted her letter of interest to remain on the board.

Registrar Stercho asked how work day assignments stood. Registrar Kay and Starks both indicted they were satisfied with the arrangement, and that cross-training and office coverage was running smoothly.

1. Statistical Data Review

Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens provided copies of the latest numbers of active voters for Precinct 2 that were currently available via the SOS’s eNet system. This to provide the board a better picture of the magnitude of potential workload demand for the upcoming Special Election. She further indicated Election Superintendent Smith noted the county will use three ballot styles and estimated a low turnout.

Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens also explained that the statistical presentation noted from prior Board of Registrar’s meetings was no longer available due to the SOS’s transition from the old Legacy system to the new eNet system. She did indicate certain reports were available, and that she would provide such data later in the meeting. Further note, she intimated the state might develop statistical analysis reports in the future.

1. Absentee & Advanced Voting details

Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens informed the board that HB310 was progressing through the General Assembly unobstructed. It will move to merge both the state and federal election calendars into one coordinated schedule. That there did not appear to be any movement to ADD initiatives or offices for the March election date.

Based upon the County Commissioners vehement demand for three (3) registrars only to work early voting, the board entertained ideas on how to arrange the office to handle voter turnout for the early voting of the March Special Election.

A new sign-in/reception desk has been situated in the voting room. This in anticipation of the three registrars and their duty assignments for daily operations during the early voting process. Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens made mention of a wireless router for the office.

Registrar Stercho said he would work on a schedule to assign two registrars per voting day and place it on a rotating basis. The board made note that the Clerk would need to be in the office for the entire early voting time frame, due to her knowledge and familiarity with the eNet data entry and SOS reporting requirements. She submitted a request for additional work days to prepare for early voting and also post-election wrap up.

Registrar Stercho indicated he would submit draft schedules to the board members for them to arrange their schedules accordingly, and/or to provide feedback/adjustments if needed to the schedule. Once the calendar was established, Registrar Stercho indicated that he would approach Commissioner Myers who had previously offered to sit with the board to construct its budget request for this early voting session.

1. Regional Mini-meeting

Registrar Stercho made note of an e-mail the board received from the Madison County Election Superintendent, inviting surrounding boards to attend an informal meeting in Danielsville on January 29th. Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens commented that the previous Chief Registrar had attended a similar gathering and did not gain anything of value to the board. The invitation still stands, although Registrars Kay and Starks indicated no interest in attending at that time.

1. Hart County High School Career Day

Registrar Stercho read an open invitation letter from the Hart County HS principal to all businesses and organizations in the area to set up booths for the school’s career day. Board members inquired as to the intent of the event, and Registrar Stercho read the specifics so noted from the letter, “the various employment… opportunities at their specific businesses…” Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens noted that she had attended such an event in prior years and had only received three inquiries; that the event included more students than just Seniors already of age to qualify to register. It was also noted that any time committed would have to be voluntary. The board agreed to send a letter of regret with explanation. Registrar Stercho agreed to compose such response.

1. Open Discussion

Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens had copied and prepared for each board member several packets of useful reports and documents in anticipation of election inquiries into the board office.

For candidates, she captured and printed from the SOS website voters’ list order forms and pricing sheets.

For clarification on voter requests, she created exhibits for comparison what the official registration card, the precinct card, and the voter identification card looked like along with an explanation of the purpose/role for each. This due to the apparent confusion by numerous voters calling in or stopping by to inquire where there “voting card” was. Deputy Registrar/Clerk Stephens explained that a vast majority of such requests/inquires regarded the precinct card; that it was a reference item only, not usable as legal identification for voting; further, that such cards were generated by the SOS’s office in Atlanta and mailed out to the various counties throughout the year. That there was no way to give a voter a definitive on where their card might be in processing, or when it would be mailed out – all dependent on the SOS’s office.

1. Adjournment

Registrar Starks moved to adjourn the meeting. Registrar Kay seconded the motion. Motion carried.