

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 24, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

1122 Lady Street, 5th Floor
Columbia, SC 29201

Present: Hon. Dennis Shedd, Chairman; Ms. JoAnne Day; Mr. Clifford Edler; Ms. Linda McCall (via teleconference); Mr. Scott Moseley

Others Present: Howard Knapp, Executive Director; Shannan Woovis, Executive Assistant; Thomas Nicholson, General Counsel; Madelyn Chavis, Senior Paralegal

Chairman Shedd called the meeting to order. Director Knapp advised all notices of the meeting had been posted as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

COMMISSIONERS

HON. DENNIS SHEDD
Chairman

JOANNE DAY

CLIFFORD J. EDLER

LINDA MCCALL

SCOTT MOSELEY

Approval of Minutes

The first item of business was the approval of minutes for the March 20, 2024, State Election Commission (SEC) Meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Day to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Edler. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Ms. Day motioned to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2024, State Board of Canvassers (SBC) Meeting, followed by Mr. Edler. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

New Business

HOWARD M. KNAPP
Executive Director

The Voter Services division has been building the Statewide Primaries Ballot Databases for each county and will be delivering soon for proofing. The UOCAVA deadline is Saturday, April 27th.

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Suite 500
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Director Knapp explained the follow-up Audit of Berkeley County Board of Voter Registration and Elections. Of the initial 30 recommendations published on June 9, 2023, 22 were suggested to the county office, 7 to the Board and 1 to the Governor's office.

P.O. Box 5987
Columbia, SC 29250

The recommendations offered to the Board were related to FOIA issues:

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- No advance written public notice of its meetings.
- Not providing complete notices, specifically with agendas, for its special meetings.
- Not documenting minutes in written format.
- Not following requirement for entering and leaving executive session.
- Discussing items in a meeting not listed on the agenda.

The recommendation to the office were generally related to:

- Improving residents access to agendas, meetings, and minutes.
- Improving staff and poll worker training.

Ensuring poll worker completion of election paperwork and office retention of that paperwork.

The results of the follow-up review were based on efforts by the Board and county office between July 2023 and April 2024, including the county's November 7, 2023, election and the November 21, 2023, runoff election. Of the 7 recommendations to the Board, they have completed 6, with one pending and expected to be implemented the week of April 29, 2024. The office has implemented 16, 3 partially. There have been 4 suggestions not implemented and 2 which are pending.

The details of the 4 recommendations not implemented by Berkeley County include:

- Not training poll workers and paying them for working on an election day. On November 7, 2023, four individuals were paid to work without documentation of training or presence. Total cost \$640.
- Not ensuring watcher and observer logs are completed at the polling location.
- Not ensuring adequate training regarding the completion of watcher and observer logs.
- Not ensuring that polling location technicians obtain poll clerk signatures to document their present and effort at polling locations.

Significant improvement was apparent with the completion and reconciliation of ballot reconciliation worksheets. Poll workers practiced on the worksheets with number scenarios during poll clerk training. Poll managers were also trained on how to complete the worksheet as a backup to the poll clerk. Poll workers were supplied with calculators and asked to assist in the completion. Of the 36 worksheets for the two November elections, all were completed and reconciled, except 5. The five worksheets not reconciled; counts were off by no more than 3 ballots.

The third item discussed was the County early voting center selections for the upcoming June Primaries. There will be 106 early voting centers in South Carolina, with the highest counts in Greenville, Richland, Florence, and Lexington counties.

Old Business

There were two statewide primary workshops held this month, the first on April 8th, for County Directors and staff and April 15th, for the Board Members. The County Director and staff participated in a general session followed by rotating discussions of topics related to voting equipment, preparation, and post-elections audits. On April 15th, Board Members attended a single session discussing their roles and responsibilities, as well as hearing speakers talk about cyber security, election technology, and a legislative panel of democrat and republican Senators and House of Representatives.

Director Knapp gave an update on the FY 24-25 Agency Budget Request. The Senate granted the following:

\$326,200 recurring funds for recruitment and retention.

Poll Manager increase from \$75 to \$100 for working, and \$60 to \$70 for training.

County Board stipend increase from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per year.

SEC stipends increase from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per year.

\$300,000 in cyber security and list maintenance funding.

20% state match for the 2023 HAVA grant of \$216,977.

\$750,000 for an SEC Certified Poll Clerk Program.
Granted \$12.5M, of \$24.5M, for new scanners across the state.

Bill H.3734, still sitting in Senate Judiciary, originally required all Municipal Election Commissions to use statewide voting system for all elections. Under the current bill, Municipal Election Commissions would be dissolved. Additionally, this bill may be amended to allow the SEC audit paperwork to be exempt from FOIA.

The Senate is drafting a bill to allow county boards to combine precincts outside of emergency situations, with delegation approval. If the delegation cannot approve, then the Director of SEC will make the decision.

The SEC continues to work with it's federal, state and private security parnters to protect South Carolina's election infrastructure. In doing so, the agency has upgraded it's security ssystem and is meeting with state law enforcement to plan for responses to threats and harrassment of SEC staff.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Shedd asked for a motion to go into executive session to receive and discuss legal advice. Mr. Edler made said motion, seconded by Ms. Day. The motion passed unanimously.

No votes were taken during executive session. Mr. Moseley made a motion to exit executive session, seconded by Mr. Edler. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Shedd reminded the Commissioners the next SBC meeting would be Friday, June 5, at 3:00p.m. and the next SEC meeting would be Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at 10:00a.m. With no further business to discuss, Mr. Moseley made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Day. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannan Woovis