



STATE OF DELAWARE
OFFICE OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER

ELAINE MANLOVE, STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Title 15 Taskforce Meeting
February 19, 2014
Minutes

Taskforce Members in Attendance: Sen. Margaret Rose Henry, Sen. Colin Bonini, Rep. Earl Jaques, Andrew Lippstone, Ann Woolfolk, Elaine Manlove,

Taskforce Members Not in Attendance: Rep. Deborah Hudson

Invited Parties in Attendance: Elizabeth Maron, Richard Forsten, Richard Dillard

Invited Parties Not In Attendance: William Bush

Public in Attendance: Sandy Spence, LWV; Janice Orlando, LWV; Sue Claire Hayes, LWV Sussex County; Judy Currie, private citizen; Ken Currie, 9-12 Patriots; Sen. Lawson; Douglas Greig, Kent County Elections; and other guests who did not sign in.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:15 pm. The topics on the agenda were: a rewrite of Sections 7101 and 3306 (Old Business) and Review Recommendations from previous meetings for report to the Legislature (New Business).

Public Comment

It was decided to accept public comment first so that it could be considered during the process of writing the report to the Legislature.

- Elaine Manlove read a copy of a letter from Frank Calio (copy attached) to be included in the record.
- Mr. Ken Currie presented a memo (attached) with his comments. The next day he emailed updated comments (also attached).

- Sandy Spence asked if there would be campaign finance reform and if the taskforce would be expanded. Elaine Manlove stated that Rep. Hudson indicated she planned to introduce legislation for either an expansion of the Title 15 Taskforce or a separate Campaign Finance Taskforce.
- Sandy Spence also indicated that the League of Women Voters support no-excuse absentee voting.

Old Business

- Rewrite of Title 15 Sections 7101 and 3306 will be discussed at a later meeting.

New Business

Elaine Manlove brought up each item that had been discussed at every Taskforce Meeting so that the group could vote on issues to be included in the recommendations to the Legislature.

- Governance – There was a motion from Rep Jaques and a second from Sen. Henry to eliminate the three County Boards of Election and to create a single State Board of Elections. The motion carried. There was discussion on the number of members for the state board but that decision will be held for a later meeting.
- Ballot Access – the current threshold for parties to receive ballot access is 1/10th of 1% of the number of registered voters at the end of the year prior to election year. No one was in favor of changing that threshold.
- All were in agreement not to mandate that municipalities use the statewide voter registration system. The decision should be left to the municipality.
- There was an earlier recommendation to mandate that filing fees be set no earlier than January 1 and no later than February 1 of election year. All were in agreement with this mandate.
- There was an earlier discussion to change the Primary Election date to the second Tuesday in August. That decision will be held for a later meeting.
- There were earlier discussions to rewrite sections 3306 and 7101 for clarity. That decision will be held for a later meeting.
- There was an earlier discussion to remove the Commissioner from the appeal process on municipal elections in favor of going directly to Superior Court. That decision will be held for a later meeting.
- There was an earlier discussion regarding changes to the Municipal Election Law e.g.: if amended, it would mandate that a complaint regarding an alleged violation of Sections 7551, 7553, 7554, 7555 or 7557(h) be submitted no later than 14 days prior to the day of the election giving the citizens one week from the beginning of the posting process to

notify the municipality of a violation allowing the municipality time to correct it. That decision will be held for a later meeting.

- There was an earlier discussion regarding removal of the mandate for notarization of absentee ballot affidavits. Rep. Jaques made a recommendation to remove the notarization mandate, seconded by Andrew Lippstone. There were 3 Yes votes; 1 No vote; 1 abstention.
- There were earlier discussions of both Early Voting and No Excuse Absentee Voting. Both issues will be held for a later meeting.
- There was discussion regarding the elimination of fines from the restoration of felon voting rights. More information is needed and this will be held for a later meeting.
- There was earlier discussion regarding background checks for candidates for office. There was agreement not to require background checks.
- It was decided to hold discussion on campaign finance pending the outcome of legislation by Rep. Hudson.

**NEXT MEETING
MARCH 12, 2014
OFFICE OF THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER
10:00 AM**

- Elaine Manlove

Frank B. Calio

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RECEIVED
COMM. OF ELECTIONS

2014 JAN 23 P 2:43

January 17, 2014

To: Election Law Task Force

Dear Commissioner Manlove,

You and I can agree for the need in Delaware for Election Reform, so I applaud the formation of the Election Law Task Force.

However as professional and creditable as the members of the Task Force are, the committee lacks members who have first hand knowledge of the internal workings of Elections especially Campaign Finance.

I note there are no members on the committee representing Sussex County or from each of the county Board of Elections, and especially from your Campaign Finance Supervisor Paul, who probably is more knowledgeable in Campaign Finance Law than anyone in the state.

I also note some who have worked with Elections in the past are not members of the committee; League of Women Voters, Common Cause, ACLU, etc. Although some of these groups are in attendance at your meetings, they will not be involved in the final draft of your recommendations to the legislature.

The committee should be enlarged to include some of these groups.

As a former State Election Commissioner I fail to understand the committee's recommendation to eliminate the 3 Boards of Election for each County as a cost saving solution. The total costs of the state's 22 members

is \$44,000 a year; what is the cost per day to pay for legislator staffers to sit around all day waiting to go in session while legislators roam the halls attending committee meetings?

The current Election Board system, "ain't broke, why fix it"? An 8 or 12 member state-wide board is not going to have the same positive impact as does the current system.

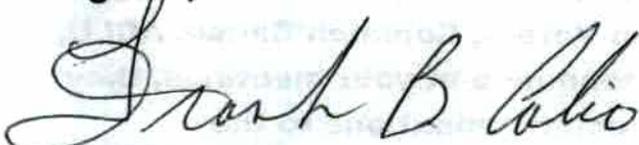
As you are aware Elaine, the current board arrangement has been very helpful and supportive of the 3 County Board of Elections especially during the Election cycle; they know the area they serve, the problems that may occur and they work those areas Election Day, taking a load of problems off the Election employees.

A state-wide system would not be as efficient as the current system. Delaware has one of the best voting records in the country, and I attribute a lot of that to the efforts of the local boards. Change sometimes can be good, but not in this instance.

If there is a problem with our Elections it is in the area of Campaign Finance and that is where this committee should focus if they want change. As you are aware Delaware receives failing grades from non-profit organizations that grade states on Campaign Finance reporting.

Please my comments onto the Task Force. Thank you.

Regards,



Frank B. Calio

Synopsis: For the Election Commission to offer training, require registration and provide reporting of all civic groups that plan or conduct voter registration activities in Delaware. The Training in laws and procedures would be *optional*, formally offered to the leadership and membership of all civic groups, both existing and newly formed, regardless of whether any voter registration activity was current.

Registration would be *required* for the group itself, not individual members, by the assignment of a unique number to be placed on all forms, paper and digital, to be used for individual voter registration. The Commission would *publish* the Registry of these civic groups once a year, showing those that had been trained and the number of individual registrations filed by the group, digitally and in paper.

Rationale: Protecting the integrity of the voting process is fundamental to America's government. The public needs to have confidence they can identify those civic groups assisting voters, judge their competence and assess their influence/impact on the Registration Rolls. In short, it holds the groups publically accountable for their registration activities.

Respectfully submitted:

Ken Currie
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Synopsis: The Election Commission require registration and provide reporting of all civic groups that plan or conduct voter registration activities in Delaware

Registration would be *required* for the group itself, not individual members. The requirement applies to groups based in-state and out-of-state that have in the past, are now or will conduct some form of voter registration activity. The formal group name as well as .or other names commonly used to identify the group must be listed, such as aliases and Doing-Business-As. The group's contact information as well as that of the leadership must be recorded. Each group will be assigned a unique number. A place for that number will be made on the state registration forms, paper and digital, used for individual voter registration.

As currently done now, the Election Commission will offer the *option* of training in the election laws and procedures of Delaware both to existing and newly formed groups, regardless of whether any voter registration activity was current. The Commission's Registry would show training offered and received, including the names of the group's individuals so trained.

The Commission would publish the Registry of these civic groups regularly, showing the number and summary descriptions of the individual state-form registrations assisted/filed by the group, digitally and in paper.

Rationale: Protecting the integrity of the voting process is fundamental to America's government. The public needs to have confidence they can identify those civic groups assisting voters, judge their competence and assess their influence/impact on the Registration Rolls. In short, it holds the groups publically accountable for their voter registration activities.

Respectfully submitted:

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Registered Lobbyist, 9/12 Delaware Patriots