

DAVIDSON COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

“SPECIAL CALLED” MEETING

JUNE 3, 2015

The Davidson County Election Commission (DCEC) met on June 3, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Bordeaux Conference Room at Metro Southeast. Commissioners Ron Buchanan, Jennifer Lawson, Jim DeLanis, Tricia Herzfeld and AJ Starling were present. DCEC staff members present included Administrator of Elections (AOE) Kent Wall, Joan Nixon, Bill Hyden, Reid Lovell, Bobby Medley, Courtney Mott, Nancy DeKalb, Jeremy Greene and Kelley Harrison. Nicki Eke of the Metropolitan Department of Law was also in attendance.

Chairman Buchanan convened the meeting.

Discussion of FY’16 Budget Reductions and the Impact on Election Operations and Review of Previously Adopted Early Voting Locations

AOE Wall reported that the Mayor’s Budget proposal, if not addressed by the Metro Council, would represent a 23% reduction in the DCEC Budget Request or \$869,000. Under the Mayor’s Budget Proposal, the DCEC Budget Request for “Elections” was fully funded as was the poll official pay increase. DCEC also received \$97,000 to make up the difference in compensation for the two (2) recruiter positions.

The reductions in the Mayor’s Budget Proposal were primarily in three (3) areas:

1. Twelve (12) existing staff positions or 38% of the operating staff
2. Rental of one hundred (100) electronic poll books from ES & S
3. Four (4) full-time staff positions (multiyear request)

A summary of the FY’16 Budget Modification Report (recurring and non-recurring) was presented to the board including the DCEC funding requests and the Mayor’s reductions.

AOE Wall, at the request of Chairman Buchanan, sent a memorandum to Councilman Bill Pridemore (Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee) explaining the impact of this reduction on our operations and pointing out that the only variable part of the DCEC Budget was Early Voting. The DCEC’s Early Voting plan and budget for FY’16 as presented by the DCEC to the Mayor’s Office and the Council mirrored the formula that was developed for the November 2014 election.

Chairman Buchanan informed the board of his introductory remarks to the Council at the Budget Hearing on May 20, 2015 in which he outlined three (3) alternatives:

1. Take what funding is given and do the best we can;
2. Take monies from other areas or spend the money in hopes of receiving a supplement budget in the Spring;
3. Litigation

Discussion ensued among the board.

Motion Stated: Chairman Buchanan made a motion to eliminate all Early Voting sites except the State Statute mandated one (1) Early Voting site for fourteen (14) days if the Metro Council approves the Mayor’s recommended budget for the DCEC.

Seconded by: Commissioner DeLanis

Discussion of the motion ensued among the board.

Motion Stated: Commissioner Herzfeld made a motion to table the previously stated motion.

Seconded by: Commissioner Starling

Outcome of motion: Failed 3-2

(No – Chairman Buchanan, Commissioner Lawson, Commissioner DeLanis)

(Yes – Commissioner Herzfeld, Commissioner Starling)

Commissioner DeLanis requested to add prefatory language to the motion so that, as amended, it would read:

In view of the duty of the Commission to hold fair and legal elections and to fulfill its statutory and constitutional obligations, the Commission shall eliminate all Early Voting sites except the one (1) site for fourteen (14) days mandated by statute if the Council approves the Mayor's recommended budget for the Election Commission.

Outcome of motion: Passed 3-2

(Yes- Chairman Buchanan, Commissioner Lawson, Commissioner DeLanis)

(No- Commissioner Herzfeld, Commissioner Starling)

Motion Stated: With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Herzfeld made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by: Commissioner Lawson

Outcome of motion: Passed unanimously

Tricia Herzfeld, Secretary