

September 24, 2019 Hartford County Minutes

Chairperson Darlene Burrell called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and thanked our hosts Anita and Karen for providing the Windsor Town Hall for our meetings. A draft of the new Pollworker Training manual was sent out to ROVs. It is still awaiting final approval by the certification committee, should be done by the Presidential Preference Primary.

Secretary Laura Wolfe, June 2019 minutes are being edited by Darlene.

Treasurer Sue Burnham reminded everyone she will be collecting money at our next meeting for the conference county basket - \$3 per Registrar.

Guest Speaker, Pat Tyre from CITI UConn was delayed, meeting will recess when she arrives.

Convention Committee report by Ann Clark. Generally, people were very happy with the September 2019 conference. Over 300 attended both days. Spring 2020 conference dates are May 6, 7 and 8 at the Marriott in Windsor, (right off the highway.) Short discussion of possible changes to shorten the conference, lengthen the day for those who are taking time off another job, avoid Fridays for traffic issues, and avoid Mondays for setup issues. Further discussion on how difficult it is to fit the annual meeting into a two-day conference and to hold any meetings or classes after 2 pm.

Education Committee report by Charlie Murray. As a new committee member I didn't expect to run a class, but working with Katie was excellent and I am glad I did it. The committee meetings are well attended, well run, generally under two hours - a very good group. Please send suggestions on what classes you would like at the conference to the education committee.

Legislative Committee - Peter Gostin and Mindy Lewis. We put together the survey that was at the fall conference, please if you haven't yet done it, please fill it out. It helps us establish the legislative agenda which we will try to collaborate with the Secretary of State for January. We will report the results hopefully at our January meeting. It will be a short session in 2020, but we will try to get our technical changes bill passed. This session is more structured, less bills and only prepared bills can go forward, so we are better able to react to whatever is proposed. Committee members are prepared to testify for and against bills as we have done in the past. Bills need to be in by January 28th. Our survey is key to deciding which bills we should push forward or oppose. It is very helpful if everyone works with the legislative committee and shares their thoughts before going to their legislators. We need to incorporate our viewpoints and then speak with one voice by March to have the best results.

Q. Which bills passed in 2019?

- A. Moderator Certification will now be for four years, instead of two years. The Constitutional amendment received enough votes to allow a second vote in this year's session. It will need to pass by a simple majority in both houses in this year's session before it can be a statewide ballot question for voters to decide in 2022.

Q. Will there be a bill to change the deadline for candidate changes, making the deadline earlier? There is a tremendous cost when the absentee ballots need to be resent, memory cards reprogrammed. Also, printers would like to be able to print all of the ballots at the same time, currently they are delaying printing the polling place ballots.

A. The SOTS and the legislative committee agree on this issue. We anticipate that the Secretary of State will submit the bill, and we plan to support it.

Q. Does ROVAC have a position on changing EDR to allow voting after 8 pm?

A. Based on last year's survey, Registrars are overwhelmingly opposed. However, we are being cautious, as being strident can be a mistake. We are dealing with the reality of the legislature, if they try to do this, we want to be included in the discussion. If it is going to happen, we want to be able ensure the best compromise that soften the blow. We need to clarify that this will require changing the timing of when results are due, and the deadline for declaring recanvass to be done. There is a domino effect, and we need to ensure they are aware of the consequences. This will have an extreme consequence for the cities who may have long lines for EDR at 8:00 pm.

Q. What about the required phone calls when someone votes using EDR in a new town? How can we expect to contact old towns after 8 pm?

A. The Secretary of State wants to eliminate the phone calls. This is another issue we have with this proposal. The phone calls are what made EDR work for us.

Q. We all need to have a good working relationship with our legislators. It is very helpful to discuss these issues with them. Invite them to your office, so they know what your roles are, and educate them on the practical aspects of these issues. In 2015 when many Registrars testified, this was an eye-opener for many legislators, and we made a huge difference.

Q. EDR is not by statute an official polling place so we are limited in what we can do, who can be there, and keeping EDR open past 8:00 pm will be a huge problem for cities. The Secretary of State is not answering our questions.

A. ROVAC is trying to address this. We understand there are a lot of ramifications. State statute requires unregistered people to not be allowed at the polls. If they make EDR a polling place they will have to change that. There are a lot of pitfalls, and we recognize they outweigh any positives. We need to help everyone see that. We cannot disenfranchise someone who is not franchised. They have 365 days to get registered and that is enough. That is our opinion, and it is shared by most of our organization.

Move to recess the meeting at 10:40 am

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GUEST SPEAKER Pat Tyre, Executive Director of CITI UConn (CT Information and Technology Institute) The certification program with UConn began in 2014. Pat initiated a survey to registrars to find out what they think of the current program and what they would like to see in the future. There was some very interesting feedback, not all of it good, and this is an opportunity to go forward and go up. The survey results were shared with the certification committee. Pat showed the information in graphs and charts for the committee. Access to online learning was a requested option. Pat reviewed the differences between an online learning program and webinars. For either alternative a computer and internet connection are needed. Both have technical hurdles that need to be set up. Neither alternative offers real time interaction with other students and teachers.

Going forward it will be up to the Secretary of State to determine if any part of the certification program can be done online. The Certification Committee has agreed to try a pilot of some continuing education classes online as posted in their minutes. Implementation will take time; they need to pick the right material and the content will need to be modified. Slides will need larger print, so you can see it and the instructors will need to be coached for filming. Once they have a pilot program then the certification committee will have to review the quiz material. Then communications will need to go out with the details for the pilot program, followed by a

review of the feedback to see if there are any technical failures that will need to be addressed. The technical requirements of the program will have to be decided, they will need to find compatible software to run the program.

Q. What type of quizzes will there be? Will we get open ended questions?

A. Multiple choice, you will need to learn the material, and we anticipate harder questions.

Q. Most online classes give the ability to ask questions of the instructor, are you saying we won't have that?

A. We don't have any design features yet. Longitudinal classes offered by Universities allow for questions, but for a short 2 to 4-hour class, we don't anticipate giving time for questions prior to the quiz.

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Q. Will the eight required Certification classes ever be offered online?

A. That has not been determined.

Q. In the corporate world, I took online classes that were offered and then you took a test. Why wouldn't you want that?

A. This is not my decision. I am here to present the logistics of online learning, but your certification committee and SOTS will have the final say in this. We brought this to the certification committee because our survey shows that this constituency wants online learning. The committee recognizes the pros and cons. They will tell us what they want and then we will implement it. Talk to the certification committee with your thoughts on this.

We are going to continue with our performed certification classes. Shannon and Rich are going to continue to teach. We have expanded the locations where classes are offered, in addition to Hartford, Stamford and Avery Point, we will have classes in Storrs, so we will have a bigger reach.

Q. Are you considering coming to the conference to teach a certification class?

A. We weren't organized for it this past year, but it is planned for the future if the certification committee agrees to it.

We are doubling up a few classes to make the process easier. Classes 4 and 5, and 7 and 8 will be offered together. We are open to any changes requested if they work for the space, the students and the teachers.

Q. Has anyone set a deadline for online classes to be available, such as January 2020 or 2021? This all sounds loose, very up in the air. A deadline is the only way to get this to happen.

A. This is all in discussion, but no, there are no implementation deadlines set yet. There is no agreement on what will be offered online. I am management focused, so I want a plan and a deadline, but that is not how it is rolling out right now. We have permission to put together a pilot, so that is what we are doing right now, but just for continuing education. This is in the certification committee minutes.

Q. So, it is up to us to pressure the committee to get this thing going.

Q. We need to know the details now, we are working on our budgets right now. It costs a lot of money to go to classes and conferences to take the continuing education. Is the online going to be an additional requirement?

A. No, the requirement is eight hours regardless of where you are doing the education. No changes are planned currently.

Q. You mentioned online is going to be a cost, will it be the same \$200 or \$300 per class?

- A. We haven't priced it; we are still in the pilot phase. We may find out it is financially prohibitive to offer. We don't know, there are a lot of unknowns. None of this will be free.

The certification committee has been meeting monthly on the second Wednesday. You need to advocate to them if you are interested in this. Anne Marie Mastroianni from Bethel is the chair of that committee.

Q. Scott Bates told us that the certification classes will not be cancelled if you don't meet the minimum of ten students. To your knowledge, has a new number been discussed?

- A. This is basically a financial decision for us. We must pay for the rooms and the instructors. We are trying to find the right balance. For example, Avery Point charges \$300 for the room and that is just one of the locations. The technology is getting stronger, so we have more spaces to choose from.

Q. This is what makes a webinar more attractive, you would not need to provide multiple locations and it would be easily accessible for everyone in the state.

- A. Distance learning does help for people in rural areas and for working people who can't spend the time to take a whole day off. There are a lot of ways that it fills in those gaps. Once the details have been resolved, I can come back and give you a detailed implementation plan. There are a lot of different technical steps to learn if you haven't taken online courses before.

Q. You are talking about online continuing education, but you aren't succeeding at offering it with the present program. Continuing education classes kept getting cancelled, and right now nothing is up on your website.

- A. I did not know that; I will look into that. Rich and Shannon, who are my go-to people for instructors, can teach those classes.

Q. Are the classes we are required to attend handicap accessible? Are you offering any help to get into the buildings and to the classes?

- A. All the UConn campuses are ADA approved. Stamford has spent millions of dollars to add ramps where they had a few steps.

Q. What about air quality? I am concerned as I have trouble breathing. It would be much safer if I could stay at home to take classes.

- A. I understand that people want to stay in a safe environment, a place that is comfortable. This is why online classes are so popular, students like staying in their dorms and homes. So, we are piloting the online option, but to be clear, it is not for everyone. This is not coming anytime soon. Once I get the go ahead, with decisions made, implementation will probably take six months. The discussions on specifics are what is taking time.

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Darlene thanked Pat and called the county meeting back to order at 11:17 am.

Technology Committee report by Lisbeth Becker and Anne Kilby. Next meeting is Thursday, September 26th at the Glastonbury Riverfront Community Center and all are welcome to attend. The agenda is primarily CITRIX. That is the virtual workstation and the target is to have everything in place by the end of January. Four towns have been testing this and are still in the process. We are working through some glitches on the rollout. The system is off right now, while they work this out.

Q. The team has been extremely responsive when we had issues.

- A. We are past the review phase. Two primary things are holding this up. The right computer system is needed to use this and a working printer system. Each town is set up their own way, and each town's IT department needs to be involved. There are individual town set up issues that need to be resolved.

The SOTS has been clear, each town needs to have Windows 10 setup as a basic requirement. Microsoft will no longer support Windows 7. For the first four towns the state used one router set, but to provide support for the whole state, they will need to put in place other ones. That is where the glitch is right now, so once that is done, they should be able to proceed with roll out. They will have a plan in place for deciding which towns they do next. They are hiring new people for the rollout, to meet this goal by the end of January.

Q. For those who haven't used it, this is simply a double log on. You log on to the virtual terminal before logging onto CVRS, the same as you do now. Other than that, it is similar to what we did before.

A. Click on the black and white icon on your computer screen, for CITRIX, enter your name and password. Then the next screen has the CVRS icon, and then it loads, and you log in as you do now.

Q. What is the reason to do it then?

A. This is all about security and two factor authentications. One of the things that must be addressed is that for two factor everyone needs to have a unique email address. Some towns sent in one address for two Registrars, they will need to correct this. If your town has set up one email for both Registrars, they need to have individual names attached to the accounts. This will apply to the EMS system as well. None of this will be in place for this November. The deadline will be by the end of January 2020.

Q. So, towns will be contacted before by somebody, to help us prepare for this?

A. SOTS will be working with your town's IT person, or if your town doesn't have a dedicated IT person, they will work with your town's subcontractor.

Q. You mentioned that you will need Windows 10 and a good computer for CITRIX, there are probably quite a few towns that don't have that. What is being done for those towns? Is the state providing them?

A. SOTS has gotten additional money through HAVA for election security. This roll out falls under that, but beyond that I don't know. That will be up to the SOTS to make sure that every town gets on this virtual desktop to use CVRS.

Q. What about the hardware? We have one router that was provided by SOTS, will this add to that?

A. No, you will have one router for your town. That is not changing. The CITRIX implementation is a software change. SOTS is adding additional hardware to their system to rollout this software change for your towns, so they can support all the people who will be working on it. The imprint of activity on your computer will be less because you will be using a virtual desktop that is at the SOTS. This will make the system more secure. There will no longer be an opportunity to mirror your workstation at a remote location, like your home. It has to be a direct connection to the router; you can't use the software at any other workstation.

Q. I had heard that a home workstation might be a possibility in the future.

A. No, not according to Tom Miano. This new system requires that they know where you are. It will defeat the security of the virtual desktop if you use it for multiple workstations.

There are some issues with people going to the DMV and having errors in party changes. They should not have to reaffirm their party status when they move. Ted is working with the DMV about the unintended changes and creating better documentation.

August 2020 is the goal to fix the DMV issue with 17 year olds who are not turning 18 before the Election. 80% of voters now have a DMV identification number attached to their voter registration.

The committee has asked to participate in reviewing the next generation of tabulators as our current machines are from 2007 and some are aging out.

EMS - the Election Management System is still being worked on. Hoping to see an upgrade that will allow for fewer entries to be repeated. Stuart Wells is still working on improving the reporting for the end of night numbers to align with the tapes. (For more information please go to the Technology Committee's website for detailed notes.)

Ways and Means report by Sue Burnham. The fall conference was a great success, baskets and raffles brought in \$1024. The monopoly games sales brought in another \$500. Committee members donated the materials for the basket.

Handbook Committee report by Darlene Burrell. The committee sent out the draft of the pollworker handbook, no updates to the Registrar manual recently. The committee is looking for feedback on the new handbook.

Audit Committee report by Anne Kilby. We are meeting in October to go over the books.

New Business: Our next meeting is on January 14th at 10 am in Windsor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am