

Hartford County ROVAC Minutes - March 8, 2016

Chairperson Darlene Burrell called the meeting to order at 9:30 am, and thanked our hosts, Marie Fox and Linda Cultrera for providing us with a central meeting space.

The agenda was distributed, and on the back were some helpful hints received by the Handbook Committee. Please be sure to pass along any helpful hints that make our jobs a little easier.

Secretary Report by Laura Wolfe - The September minutes were sent to the chair yesterday, 16 pages, they still need to be edited by Darlene before sending them out.

There will be a Secretary of State's Conference Day, separate from our conference, on March 28th. We do not have any details on what will be covered. No SOTS classes are anticipated at the Spring Conference.

Treasurer's Report by Sue Burnham - We are collecting money today for the Spring ROVAC Conference Hartford County Raffle Basket. The tentative plan is for flowers, spring theme, with some wine. We welcome suggestions.

Audit Committee Report by Chairperson Lizbeth Becker - We have met and reviewed the books FY 2015, and we will be doing another audit for the next six months. (Numerical details were distributed with Spring Conference materials.)

Convention Committee by Ann Clark. The Spring Convention is on April 13, 14 and 15. The classes have been set up, registration materials have been sent, sign-up has begun online. There will be classes on Wednesday morning, a guest speaker for lunch and roundtable discussion groups after lunch. On Thursday, ROVAC annual meeting bylaws in the morning, and budget in the afternoon. On Friday, more classes in the morning, a guest speaker for lunch and we will probably out of there early. No banquet planned. Shortening the conference was discussed, but ROVAC would lose so much money to cancel a day of the conference, that it was not possible. In the future we will probably go to two day conferences.

Q. At the last board meeting this was discussed, and Darlene requested to cut down to two days and the board voted to keep three days going forward. Hartford County has been asking for years to cut it down to two days, but the majority voted against two day conferences. The idea is that SOTS might come back for the extra day. Also guest speakers might need the extra day.

Q. What about the Fall 2016?

A. Southbury September 22 and 23 in the fall. Groton will be three days in Spring April 19, 20, 21, 2017.

Education Committee by Sharon Krawiecki - We will have Tom Hennick covering FOI, Kevin Ahern from SEEC on Wednesday. In the afternoon we will have "speed dating" roundtables. Thursday morning CVRS boot camp will be interactive and open to questions. Disability will be Thursday afternoon. There will be a class on EDR. Another reason for our three-day conference is to show the public and the legislature that we are a responsible organization, capable of teaching ourselves, even if SOTS drops out.

Q. Why did the SOTS staff ditch us?

A. We do not know specifically; we were just told during a meeting. Peggy Reeves told Melissa Russell in a phone call. The Town Clerks will be meeting the same three days, and SOTS will be going to their conference.

Q. At the Town Clerks Conference most of the education comes directly from the Secretary of State's office and vendors, they don't teach their own classes. Why not ours too?

A. We don't know.

Q. There are certain towns that never seem to pull matches from the CVRS database when they register new voters. Why would they do it for EDR?

A. Wishfully, because they are in their office and that is the job.

Q. Will we get in advance the schedule of classes, before the conference, so we can choose which days to attend?

A. Absolutely.

Legislative Committee by Pete Gostin, Lisbeth Becker and Chairperson Sue Larson - ROVAC day at the capitol will be March 30th from 1:00 to 3:00 pm and will again be an ice cream social in the same location. The legislative short session ends on May 4th. It is early this year because of the primary, our conference and a short session. We know that the Judicial committee will be meeting that day, we aren't sure yet who else will be. It is important to get the ROVAC name is put forward.

Q. Can we get extra chocolate sauce and less strawberry? As one of the ice cream scoopers and we don't want to run out.

A. Sure.

SB 250 is our ROVAC proposal to try to address/clarify some of the logistic issues with EDR. At the public hearing we discussed having an absolute cut off of 8:00 pm for putting into CVRS - no exceptions. We had originally proposed a 7:00 pm cut off, to allow time for phone calls before the close of polls. Another idea would be to allow everyone in line at 8:00 pm to proceed, but your phone calls would be done the next day, and anyone who voted twice would be referred to the SEEC for fraud. Lots of ideas were proposed; it is still being drafted.

SB 251 is our ROVAC bill to have the same reporting system for Municipal and State Elections. Use the EMS system for all elections and it would be a consistent process. We are also addressing the unknown in stages, by changing the name to unassigned to a party. This is a better definition for the public. Once we can get this done, we can work on changing the process.

HB 5390 is our ROVAC proposal requiring written instructions and opinions from the SOTS. She is opposed, saying this would take too much time and cost too much money. The GAE committee was most favorable about that because they don't see any reason why this can't be done, even if it is only done going forward, at least start getting it down in writing.

Other bills we are watching:

HB 5392 is a bill to provide training for what to look for on DMV licenses when doing registration by the SOTS. It would be a session to cover the differences in noncitizen driver's licenses. This was covered by an email sent by Peggy Reeves last fall. It will likely be an addition to Moderator training, to ensure checkers know what to look for.

There is an online registration bill to move the deadline to 7 days, instead of 14 days, to make it consistent with the postmark deadline and in person.

HB 5391 is a bill concerning the handling of voter affidavits (the form used if you forgot your id) would only allow the voter to receive a provisional ballot. This doesn't work with current definitions. We suggested instead, making the asterisk apply to all elections, not just Federal.

SB 255 is a bill that addresses the confusion of requiring 8 hours and/or 10 hours of annual training for Registrars. It will take out the statute that required the SOTS to set up a training unit, that provided 10 hours of training. Continuing education would be clarified to be 8 or 10 hours.

Another audit bill has been proposed, to extend the audit to cover all of the election and to require special equipment for transfer of materials. It would also require towns to send their materials to UConn for an additional audit.

HB 5392 is the SOTS bill which would require automatic voter registration when applying for a Driver's License. The idea is to save money and increase voter registration. The DMV commissioner said he doesn't have the time or personnel to implement this with the other updates already in progress. Originally proposed to begin July 1, 2017, it may be delayed until 2020. It needs a cost analysis and formal plan of implementation.

Q. Has ROVAC counter proposed something in between, like sending Registrars in town moves, not just out of town moves? We could process those changes as we do now with out of town moves.

A. Their proposal is mechanized system like Delaware uses. It is unlikely that the SOTS will agree to a piecemeal approach.

Q. But an automatic for all approach has extreme costs to towns. What about all of the additional equipment and extra ballots we will need to provide for registering people who don't vote?

A. The SOTS focused on the cost savings to the state. Melissa did bring up the huge costs that will be passed on to the towns.

A. I watched the hearing. The DMV commissioner is not going to do this piecemeal. He was very clear that it needs to be done as a whole. He is considering the third phase of it. Melissa was very clear that this plan was passing the cost onto municipalities. This is a huge cost, especially to cities, to process all of these voters. Melissa did a good job presenting.

Q. Any chance that the Saturday sessions will be eliminated?

A. Yes, the GAE understands the online voter registration takes away the need for the Saturday sessions.

Q. Is the last day to Register from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm going to be a part of it?

A. No, the last day will likely stay in place.

Q. Can you send us a copy of Melissa's testimony? The legislative committee has done such an important job for all of us, you represent us very well. You put in a lot of hours, you act very professionally and you are a big plus to us.

A. Thank you. The testimony is available on the web.

Q. When does the session end?

A. May 4th and all of the bills should be out of committee by March 21st.

Q. What is happening with the updated bill tracking from our lobbyist? We have only received one so far.

A. Only one has been sent, then you will receive them every Friday once things get going.

Nominating Committee by Bob Sherman. We are hibernating, we will start up again in the fall.

Anyone who is interested in taking a county position, we will be voting on them at June's county meeting. Send your information to Bob if you are interested on any of the positions.

Technology Committee by Ann Kilby and Lizbeth Becker. We have a meeting scheduled with Ted Bromley for March 17th at the Glastonbury Town Hall to talk about CVRS, electronic poll books and end of night reporting. We have been trying to have a meeting since January, the last one was postponed, as Ted had to go to a funeral. We have been taking the initiative to get a meeting, some of the committee members did not feel they needed a meeting.

Q. Are you working with Steve Mason, or any of the new IT staff?

A. No, not yet. No meetings yet, we have asked Matt.

Q. Are the meetings open to any ROVAC members?

A. Yes, it is open. Previous meetings were closed but we pushed for an open meeting.

Q. Ted Bromley and Matt Waggner sent a form recently concerning duplicate voters, but it wasn't from your committee? So is Matt not pushing a role for ROVAC technology committee in this?

A. He attends the meetings. We have had to push for a meeting.

Q. Is there any chance the committee could focus on providing Registrars with practical tips on how to do things? Some tasks take an hour to figure out, and simple directions would be helpful. The CVRS manual isn't really easy to use. Also could we get a report on a timetable for the delivery of the electronic poll books? Can you try to nail them down on that? Also the new IVS training? Memory cards?

A. Yes, please send us your suggestions. LHS has received a huge shipment of the new memory cards, thousands. They are to be distributed and all towns will be able to use them.

Q. How did you find this out?

A. I was talking to Paul at LHS, about a problem with my old cards during a training class. He shared that I would be able to get a new one, since they just got the shipment.

Q. We had 44 cards on order from LHS, that we had budgeted for, but they could not give them all to us because they only had eleven in stock. Any idea if we will be asked to purchase, the additional 33? If we don't spend this money, we lose it at the end of the fiscal year.

A. It sounded like they were providing towns with replacements, that they will be given. They have a large number of cards, it sounded like no one will be getting their money back for previous purchases but that they will be providing replacements for all of the cards.

Q. Has the tech committee talked about the ERIC report? It just came out last week and it is the same horrible format as last year. They promised they would fix that this year.

A. We have not talked about it yet. We are aware of how difficult it is to work with and how difficult it is to get it into a printable format. We can put that on the agenda.

- Q. Regarding the new memory cards, will they be ready for the April primary?
- A. Paul said he will need to get the go ahead from the SOTS, but they definitely have them. It is possible when you place your order for the April primary that you will automatically get the new cards, replacing your old ones.
- Q. Why were NCOA out of state moves in the ERIC report included, isn't that already a part of our canvass? Can we act on it now, and if not, why were they included?
- A. You are to treat this information just like you do the rest of your canvass of voters. You can send your letters for within immediately, but for out of town moves you have to wait until the primary to mail the letters.
- Q. So won't there be lots of duplicates? We only send one letter.
- A. Yes, you just send the one letter until after the primary. You can keep your letters in alphabetical order, so that if you remove any voters (DMV, reregistration, etc.) you can pull those letters.
- Q. Ted mentioned that April 27th was the day you can send the letters, is it April 26th or 27th?
- A. It does state you can print April 26th on the letters, but yes, Ted said mail on the 27th.
- Q. Our ERIC report included an NCOA list from December or January.
- A. Duplicates do not need to be sent twice.
- Q. Why can't we mail after May 1st, as long as we get a response by June 1st?
- A. The thing you can't do is move voter's status to inactive after June 1st. June 1st is definitely the last date to make voters inactive. You can send a CVR if you have an acceptance letter bounce back at any time. In towns can be done now as well.
- Q. If we include IVS for our Referendums, and we have the budget fail, so we are voting again in two weeks, can IVS react quickly to update their information?
- A. Talk to Tammy. The information directly from Kentucky is very good. New equipment is now available to allow the same ballot to be used for a handicap accessible machine which will have a mouthpiece for those who prefer it.
- Q. Can towns use their own handicap accessible equipment for Referendums or does it have to be state approved and certified?
- A. The justice department has asked about this; we will research if the current equipment is ADA compliant. If not, if towns can choose to buy their own, as everyone got sued.

Ways and Means Committee Report by Sue Burnham. We met in February, a small turnout, because of a snowstorm but we have another meeting scheduled this month. We will be selling tickets; counties will provide baskets for the raffle. Tolland and Windham counties will be doing gift certificates instead of baskets.

- Q. What is happening with the online store?
- A. No news yet, but still under discussion. We have not resolved what to do with the ROVAC logo. The board did not approve any of the new designs submitted.

Handbook Committee Report by Darlene Burrell and Sharon Krawiecki - We have sent out the changes for the duplicate voter and the helpful hints since the last time we sent it out.

Old Business - none reported.

New Business -

All 169 towns should have received a complaint from the Justice Department concerning voting equipment for local election events. 125 towns have banded together to address the complaint, with one attorney working with the town attorneys, to respond to the letter sent. We are all using the state certified equipment and following state statutes, as approved by the Secretary of State and the Attorney General so it is confusing to be addressing this town by town. Individual towns are still expected to respond individually to 4 or 5 procedural questions. Some Registrars are answering this directly, some are involved partly and others have not been contacted. These letters went directly to the mayor or first selectman or town manager - not to the Registrars. We all received a 30-day extension to answer the letter. Some town attorneys advised to not join the group action. How much information to give is confusing, but some items like the handicap parking spaces, accessibility of the entrance, etc should be included. Please have your town attorney check over anything you plan to send in. The letter reference both local referendums and elections.

Q. What was wrong with Ted's letter? He responded for the Secretary of State with a multi page letter and a copy was emailed to our town.

A. Please forward a copy so I can send it out to everyone. Ted sent a response to towns letting them know about the investigation.

Q. Usually a referendum is part of an adjourned town meeting, so it is not considered an election. Why is it subject to election standards for accessibility?

A. The Justice Department does not understand this. On a conference call with the towns they were going to go back and define what they want from us, because they did not understand the difference between a referendum, a primary and an election. There is confusion about the terms. IVS needs to be defined as well.

A. The whole problem is that there aren't any mandates on Referenda and many towns took that to mean that they didn't have to use the IVS machine. We got the Attorney General who sent us his opinion in 2008 that federal guidelines did not apply to local Referenda.

A. It was also clear that the terms are confusing the DOJ. We need to use the word voters when talking about a Referendum, as you do not have to be registered as an elector to participate. And during the conference call the DOJ stated that Federal law trumps state statutes.

Labor law applies to paid poll workers. We have a 16 year old who would like to work all day on the Presidential Preference Primary. In addition to getting permission from the school and their guardian, both to work and to miss a day of school, it is 6 hours max if school is in session and 8 hours max if school is not in session. I asked Peggy and Ted if there are any exemptions for elections, they did not find any. (This law does not apply to adults.) Community service and volunteers do not have any restrictions, as labor laws do not apply. Previously paid poll workers were treated as contractors, but now they all have become town employees which means all state labor laws apply. You have to be very careful if you hire a town employee, because labor laws will require you to pay their current town pay rate, and if over 40 hours, overtime. Also be aware that the current minimum wage is \$9.60 but it is

going up to \$10.10 in January 2017. So if you are using a flat rate, you still need to ensure you pay at least the minimum.

March 28th at 8:30 am is the training conference by the SOTS at the Aquaturf in Southington, CT.

Please plan to attend, it is important that we show they we are willing to learn, and we are professionals.

The High School Voter Registration Session is recommended to be done before the Presidential Preference primary, as 17 year old's are eligible to vote if they enroll in a major party.

Q: For these mandatory petition sessions, the statute reads in person, but for this primary UPS delivered a big envelope to the library, not certified, not signed for, and was not marked urgent or contains petitions. We received it Monday morning and were told to accept them. Has this always been true, that you can mail petition signatures? Has anyone previously received mailed in petitions?

A. No, but we also received petitions by mail and were told to accept them. The package had a different person who sent them and multiple people who circulated the petitions.

Q. Are there going to be Presidential Ballots this November?

A. Yes, for very limited cases of out of state residents coming back to vote because they missed their new state registration deadline. No longer is at option to not register and vote for President, so be prepared for those who do not want to register being unhappy.

Motion to adjourn at 11:02 am, seconded and passed unanimously.

Next County Meeting is June 14th at 9:30 am in Newington, CT