

Hartford County ROVAC Minutes - Tuesday, January 10th, 2017

By Laura Wolfe

Chairperson Darlene Burrell called the meeting to order at 9:30 am

Chairs Report by Darlene Burrell - thanked our hosts Linda Cultrera and Marie Fox for providing a central meeting place. Darlene asked for a moment of silence in recognition of the passing of Doug Hamilton, Windsor Lock's ROV. Darlene sent a card to Doug's family from the group. An attendance sheet was sent around the room, with a request to correct town contact information. Corrections are shared with ROVAC Secretary, who regularly updates the ROVAC website spreadsheet.

Canvass Info. – The SOTS IT Dept will be sending Lorton Data the statewide voter list. Lorton will again provide the NCOA report for any Connecticut towns who would like to use their services. ROAST will also be available for providing us NCOA reports. Their order form is available on their website. Lortondata has not changed their form, and it has been emailed to all of Hartford county ROVAC members.

Vice Chair, Sharon Krawiecki welcomed new Registrars: Judith Geldhouser – East Granby; Lucian Pawlak - New Britain; Gail Crockett - West Hartford, Evan Parker - Deputy South Windsor; Christine Schiller - Deputy Glastonbury; Beth Ryan - Deputy West Hartford; Tracy Beland - Deputy Bristol who were present at the meeting. Giselle "Gigi" Feliciano - Hartford; Susan Abram - Plainville; Thomas Janik – Southington and John Ferrari - Windsor Locks were mentioned but not present at the meeting.

Secretary's Report by Laura Wolfe - The last two meeting minutes that were sent out have already been approved, September 2016 minutes were not done yet, only on page 10. Question and answer details in the last minutes sent out are a great reference tool for new Registrars.

Treasurer's Report by Sue Burnham - We will be collecting \$6 per town at the March county meeting for the spring conference raffle basket. Sue asked if anyone would like to create the Hartford county raffle basket, she will do it again if she no one else volunteers.

Audit Committee by Lisbeth Becker - The audit is complete for FY 2016, and the committee just received the documents to do the half year audit. There are only two members on the committee.

Convention Committee by Ann Clark - The dates are set for April 19,20 and 21 at the Groton Marriott. The committee hasn't met yet, but Ann expects to hear from Chris Prue, the committee chair soon.

Education Committee by Sharon Krawiecki - We are meeting this Thursday and the chair has asked for suggestions from all of the counties. Class suggestions are welcome.

Q. Can you cover the new IVS system?

A. Good suggestion.

Q. Could the certification exam be held in a class slot?

A. That would need approval of certification committee, SOTS and CITI

Q. Can we not repeat ballot access again?

A. SOTS has made this decision based on the most asked questions of the SOTS. They are reacting to numerous questions received and violations in the past.

Guest Speaker Lew Button (Secretary of the States Attorney, Elections Division) joins us.

SOTS Certification Committee report by Lew Button and Carol Hurley – Due to the number of certification classes that have been cancelled registrars are concerned that they may not make the July 1st deadline. An extension of the July 1st deadline needs legislative approval. Any Registrar who is actively completing the coursework is unlikely to lose their jobs, because of their courses being cancelled. Darlene advised everyone to keep a list of their cancelled classes. We now have a lot more instructors, so we are offering more classes. Initially the program had just one instructor, so the classes were geared around her limited schedule. We know

those limitations were making it difficult to take the classes, these new changes should make it easier for everyone.

Q. For those with test anxiety can you tell us anything about the exam? Will the test take into account that these classes covered a great deal of material and were taught very differently with the last instructor? How will the test be run? 200 questions or 10?

A. No final test has been written at this point, but it is the next focus for the committee.

Q. So for those with test anxiety, can you take the final exam multiple times? Is it open book?

A. We cannot commit to any details, it is already under discussion right now. No decisions have been made.

Q. We are concerned that the classes offered last year had a handout of roughly 25 pages, but that same class is now being taught with 140 pages. How can you create a test from two different manuals, when the two teachers are teaching completely different classes? Unit 1 is completely different.

A. Presentation may be different, but the outline is very specific, and the basic material should be the same. Unfortunately, the first instructor did not give all the material in the handout, but it was covered in her class.

Q. Can we at least get copies of the new handouts, for those who attended the first classes?

A. We should be able to since the new instructors are sending them to all their students.

Q. Another problem is that the materials are not sent until a few days before the class, making it very difficult to read through before attending. In fact, for one class I never got a handout before attending the class. Could ROVAC put the handouts on their website so we can have an opportunity to print and read these materials?

A. I don't see why we can't but I don't think that you are expected to read the PowerPoint presentation prior to taking the class. Shannon will go through her presentation page by page at a reasonable pace. She just started teaching this, so it is all new.

Q. I had to go into my office on Monday, when we are normally closed, because our course materials for a Tuesday class weren't sent until Sunday night at 6:45 pm. The class was for Section 2 and it was 264 pages.

A. For those who can, I would suggest to plan to just download the presentation onto an Ipad or laptop and bring that to the class. There are plugs at every desk in the classrooms. Karen sent a condensed version, not the whole power point. Shannon is sending you everything based on requests for that. Hopefully it can be put on the ROVAC website. There was an issue previously because the instructor was treating her presentation as proprietary information. Shannon will probably not be doing all eight sections, Mike Kozac is teaching Section four. Lots of changes this year, going forward we will try to address these problems.

Q. As a new Registrar, I just attended my first class with Shannon and I would like to comment that she was very good. She speaks in plain English. The handout was 196 pages. I did not get it before class but I did take time to read the whole thing after attending the class. It was very thorough and complete. And going forward I will be using it as a tool book. It was impossible to listen to Shannon and write down copious notes of all the material but afterwards I was very happy to have the full presentation to refer to. Shannon did such a good job of presenting that the two other classrooms on satellite didn't have any questions.

A. I am sorry you didn't get it before class, apparently, Shannon didn't have your correct email address. I attended that class and could put it on my IPad, so the notes I took were only a page and half long - as she follows the PowerPoint very closely.

Q. I did notice, having looked at the materials for the same class from both instructors, that particularly at the end they asked different questions and some of the material was changed between the two instructors. Comparing the two different handouts, it is very helpful to have the full presentation. Will all the classes going forward have detailed handouts?

A. It will depend upon the instructor as to what is provided. All the instructors must follow the outline that is the same.

Q. To clarify, will we going forward receive full presentations, instead of the short handout where you must take a million notes to follow the presentation?

A. That will depend upon the instructor. Those of us on the committee are not teachers, it is not our specialty. UConn does, so we are letting them handle the administration of the course. They seem to

prefer to let each teacher decide what works best for them. All of the instructors must use the same framework.

Q. It seems like Shannon's style is to be very thorough. Could those of us who have already taken Karen's classes get Shannon's PowerPoint, as it seems like it would be a very useful tool? When taking the same course, we expect to receive the same textbook, which appears to be what Shannon has created.

A. We will try to make this available.

Q. There is a June 30, 2017 deadline in statute to be certified, so do we have to pass the exam by that date?

A. As of now, yes, you need to pass the exam by that date.

Q. The State has had more than a year to figure this out, and from what we are hearing no details have been finalized: what will be on the test, how it will be done, when and where will it be available?

A. It is in statute that the deadline is June 30, 2017 but it could be changed in this legislative session. We had some unexpected problems. We had to overcome hiring hurdles to set up new teachers. To be clear, the new instructors will be preparing the exam. We wanted all the instructors who will be creating that exam to have some experience working with Registrars before they create the final. Going forward the new instructors and new materials seem to be working much better, and there will be many more opportunities to take the classes. Keep in mind, that none of us created this statutory requirement, or imposed the two-year deadline on it. Our original program was for an optional certification program, that is what we put together, our outlines and plan was geared to that.

Q. So given all of this, will the Secretary of State, working with ROVAC, be pursuing a legislative amendment to extend the deadline during this session? It seems rather urgent given the short timeline to introduce legislation.

A. I (Lew Button) have asked for a legislative amendment to extend the deadline, but the Secretary of State has not shared her legislative packet for this session. There is a division of labor between the Secretary's staff and the permanent people in the office. The permanent attorneys work on the day to day operations and might be requested to help draft legislation, but the Secretary's staff handles legislative agenda.

Q. I have taught at the University of Connecticut. Tests require that it be reliable, valid and verifiable. If you don't do that and people lose their jobs over them, you will be sued. So I strongly recommend that you find a way to get this June 30 date extended because you can't put people in this position (to lose their jobs), particularly if you are going to let the teachers create the exam. I have taken 7 classes already with Karen, I will only be taking Section 8 with this new teacher. It is not verifiable, valid and reliable to ask the new teachers to create this test, not when it will be the basis of keeping someone's job.

A. This is why the certification committee is not writing the test, because the committee doesn't have the educational ability to handle this. We will leave it up to the University of Connecticut to determine what kind of test is going to be administered under their auspices.

Q. How do these new instructors, who are not Registrars, learn our job? Do you just hand them the Title 9 of the CT state statutes and say read this?

A. Largely, they are given all the information that you have, including all of the election calendars and SOTS handouts. We gave them a framework that each class should include, with some very specific material to cover.

Q. I noticed a few errors in class presentations, where the instructor used outdated information. Why can't the classes be taped as they do for the Town Clerks? That way the material would be consistent and any errors could be corrected.

A. It is important to share any errors found with the instructor, SOTS and ROVAC, so that we can correct the information for all.

Q. I have had Section 4 cancelled on me four times already. It would be extremely helpful if I could just watch a taping of the class.

A. UConn wants their instructors to be communicating with their students directly as they cover the material. There isn't an oversight option, this is a UConn thing.

Q. Budgets are very tight. What happens with all the money that UConn holds when courses get cancelled? Do they get interest on it?

A. UConn holds the money and you get credited for it when you take the class.

Chairperson Darlene Burrell recessed our county meeting at 10:15 am for our guest speaker, **Lew Button, Attorney with Secretary of State.**

Q. How did the November Election go for the SOTS? How did the new IVS equipment roll out? What about the EMS program?

A. Everything went quite well. Any time you have new systems there are going to be bugs and bumps but there wasn't a collapse. It was particularly hard for Heather and Shirley who were working with the Election Management System and to a lesser extent the people at IVS. Overall things seemed to have worked well and the information got in. The biggest problems were with EMS, some password issues - but those were resolved. Heather has requested that EMS not be required to be used for the Municipal Election this year. That is because unlike the pre-entered system you got this past year, Municipal ballots need to be printed up at the local level, mostly for the Town Clerks to do. There is a sense that the system is not ready for statewide use this year, but a final decision has not been made. Denise is considering whether to mandate its use or to make it optional for this year. From our office's perspective, overall this past Election went pretty well, without any major catastrophes. Our biggest concern was the implementation of EDR, and more about lines than about technology. This was the first time that we had EDR for a Presidential Election, no one knew how it was going to work. It will remain the law and next time it will be easier to do. The technology went relatively okay.

Q. Did you hear about any complaints being filed with the SEEC? About people registering to vote on Election Day who didn't currently live in the town they voted in but had used an invalid, perhaps an old identification? I know they are getting quite a few of them. Will they actually be processing these complaints?

A. Of course, I would hope that they are processing any complaints received.

Q. We are a small town, and we actually put six in. I got a letter back from the SEEC stating that they received them, but they may not be investigating all of these cases further. So, they do pick and choose and don't investigate all of them. I have heard from various towns that there were a number of people who came back to their old towns to vote because they had not changed their ID. Not voting other places, they just used an old identification with their old town on it. We for example had two people who live in Massachusetts who came back to vote. They did not vote in Massachusetts and they still had their Connecticut Driver's Licenses. It is illegal to do that.

A. I have not heard about that, so thank you for sharing that. Part of the reason is that the SEEC has a certain amount of confidentiality. Especially if there is a possibility of an ongoing investigation. Until the case is dismissed or concluded or whatever they do with it, they aren't supposed to chat about it with us. What they can do, from time to time, is to ask a question of us generically, about the ongoing case. They take out the specifics: names and locations, and just give us the details needed to determine if it is acceptable. We have not gotten a question on this issue yet, but they only bring a question to us if there is a question of law, of what does the law mean. My office determines what the law means - how to interpret as best we can before a judge interprets it. The SEEC really is there to answer questions of facts. If there is no question of law, we will just receive their opinion at the end.

Q. I know that Wilton found several cases. Our towns are checking all of the time. We know because of our property transfer lists that two-people moved in September out of town, yet came back in November to vote. Because there is no tool for us to remove them from the list (in September), it is not canvass time and they did not tell us about their move. We now know they were able to come back and vote. We asked Ted if there is a law that states that someone cannot vote in a town they do not live in. There is no law that specifies that. The law is that the person should not be in your voter registry if they do not live in your town. It is a fine line.

Q. Returning to the Election Management System discussion, you just said that from your office's perspective you thought this went well. I can't speak for all of the other towns but this is our third time trying to use this system. I was locked out of it. There were miscalculations with our unknown votes. The calculate button didn't save. We had problems with our Election results because we used the Election Management System. I think there were significant problems. After the election, the spreadsheet didn't work. Our CVRS data that we

entered did not match the spreadsheet, because it miscounted. We ended up handing in a paper return for our Head Moderator's return.

A. Did you report the problems to the Secretary of State, so that they are aware of them?

Q. Yes, we reported them. These comments are posted in the ROVAC technology committee minutes.

A. This technology committee meeting was attended by Ted and Shirley. We did have a full and complete discussion about these issues. Heather is requesting to not use the system this year is so that all of these issues can be specifically addressed (before it is used again).

Q. So the SOTS staff are aware of the spreadsheet and calculation issues?

A. Yes, this was all discussed at that meeting. We spent a lot of time on the Election Management System issues. From our perspective, yes there were problems, but the system didn't collapse. This is the first step. We have all seen times where the system went down and it could not be used at all, and this time that did not happen. So now it is a matter of working out the bugs.

Q. So is it possible to work out the bugs for the Municipal Election?

A. I hate to speculate on how long it will take to get the bugs worked out, I am not an IT guy. I communicate with them and they try to work on things and sometimes what I think is a small issue ends up being big issue, and what looks like a big issue gets cleaned up relatively quickly. I don't understand this, but I want to see all of the problems getting smaller and smaller, and more isolated and fewer in number - which is progress. Sometimes a fix can break something else that was working. I hope it can be done this year, but will we be able to use it this year - I just don't know. My concern is that we won't be able to get everyone to be able to use the front end of this system, putting in all that data that Heather and Shirley did last year, at the local level. We would need the resources to do a full court instructional press, like we did last year. We will need numerous trainings in computer labs throughout the state, intensive training, hours long. Is the money there to do that? It doesn't sound good. Without that, can it be done? I am suspicious.

Q. Most of the work is done by the Town Clerk's, setting up Municipal ballots. Are you getting push back from the Town Clerks?

A. I have not heard of any, Heather hasn't told me of any, and she is pretty vocal on this issue. But I see a real concern in terms of getting them ready, and how much it is going to cost to train them to get them ready, and whether that money is going to be there.

Q. Will you certify electronic poll books for this Election?

A. We had a procedure to get poll books certified. Vendors were asked to send their poll books to the Computer Science Department, and Dr. Alex Schwartzman, at UConn. He was to rip them apart and find out what the advantages, and disadvantages of each system are, in order to recommend them for certification. He determined that none of them are close to being ready. Some vendors are still working with him, he has told the vendors what problems need to be addressed, and some are continuing to work on their products to get them ready. It is possible that one could be certified by this November, but I am not optimistic. I am not even hopeful at this point, and I think it is unlikely that one will be ready to be certified for statewide use without a paper backup. It is not impossible.

Q. Dr. Schwartzman has publicly written that if you think you have found a system that works, you have not looked carefully enough. None of them, that are available today, should be used and can be trusted. Is that the block? And what about all of the poll books currently used in other states?

A. Not to his standards.

Q. Why is one person allowed to roadblock a basic technology that the half of the country currently uses? Why is he the only arbiter of what technology can be used in our state? He is one person in one department. We are using 30-year-old tabulators and paper lists and pen cross offs.

A. It is not just him, he is the head of the department, with a string of professors. The point is to have someone who can truly understand the dangers that you can step into when you open these things. What we don't want, and what we have been safe guarded from, is one of the kabloolie disasters. If one of his Doomsday scenarios happens to a system that is being used what will you do?

Q. You switch back to paper. You are required to have paper back up.

A. But if we as a state switch to electronic poll books, then you won't have paper back up.

Q. Doesn't the law that passed already specify that you must have printed paper back up when you use the electronic poll books? You don't have to do the cross off on paper if the poll book is certified, but you are required to keep a printed list, just in case. If the poll books collapse during an election, then you would switch to the old paper system.

A. But you would not have the data from the beginning of the Election if there is a failure midway.

Q. Even if it is certified?

A. No, not if it is certified. Right now, you have paper backup from the beginning because we need to preserve the entire election.

Q. So, because we don't have any poll books that are certified currently, we are still required to do a paper cross off, no matter what. But once they are certified, yes, we will still have a printed list at the polls, but will we still have to do the paper cross off?

A. But that is the problem, if there aren't any machines that can be trusted to not be hackable or corrupted, then if we don't have a paper list from the beginning of the Election, how do we know who has voted and who hasn't? That is the scary part.

Q. Can we read these reports with these doomsday scenarios? Is there something written that we can all read?

A. Yes, you are welcome to read the evaluations by UConn. The problem is while it is written in English, it is not easy to read or understand.

Q. Can't the technical people who create the evaluations write a summary review in terms that everyone can understand? We would like to see the evidence on why we can't use the currently available electronic poll books. We use alongside of the list and people love them. They are quick and they are helpful when you are trying to find a person, especially someone who may not be in the right polling place. Can we get something that we can understand from UConn?

A. You are welcome to read the report we received. I don't know if it will be helpful. They just are charged with writing things in layman's terms. They are written in extraordinarily specific in IT speak, so for example they won't use the word hack, it will talk about internal and external portals which will make sense to Computer Science graduates.

Q. Where are the evaluations and reports available?

A. They were available on the SOTS website. If they aren't still there, we can send you a copy.

Q. Aren't there two separate issues here, hardware and software? Any of us could have a closed system, using a simple spreadsheet, with no internet involved, that would check people in quickly. But until the Secretary certifies a system to do that, we can't speed up our process of checking people in. UConn is objecting to anything that uses the internet, isn't the timely transfer of data creating this huge objection? It isn't a specific piece of equipment, it is the internet threat. If the Secretary could approve a system where we can check people in quickly, that would be huge bonus for everybody.

A. No, any workstation set up could crash. He is thinking of every alternative, and that is his job. So if your PC hardware crashes, how are you going to backup or retrieve the who voted data? What happens to your Excel spreadsheet?

Q. But we know how Excel spreadsheets work, you could require a battery backup, isn't that extreme to say it won't work?

A. He is examining the extreme situations. It could happen, and you will have to make the decision of how you are going to handle it. The bottom line is that it doesn't look likely that the Secretary of State will be approving any electronic poll books in the immediate future.

Q. We received an email from SOTS after the election about the new retention schedule changes which asked us to save the unused blank ballots, as well as any incorrectly printed ballots, for 22 months. This is ridiculous. Can you go back and get Secretary Merrill to stop these changes in the retention schedule? It is an unfair burden to place on towns where storage space is limited.

A. The State Librarian is in charge of the retention schedule.

Q. Didn't Peggy Reeves tell us at the last conference that the Secretary of State issued this change in the retention schedule?

A. I did not hear that, this is unclear, we will have to get back to you on this. In the meantime, you will need to keep unused ballots.

Q. Are you talking with the Department of Justice about their visits to Registrar offices? Did they call you about their visit to Newington or any other towns?

A. No, no one talked to me. I cannot say if they are still pursuing their investigation into voter accessibility

Q. Party attorneys were visiting the EDR polls during this past election, did they contact you? Is that allowed?

A. No, party attorneys cannot be at the polls as observers. Our office did send some nonpartisan attorneys to observe, who are allowed to come in on the SOTS authority to observe a situation that has come to our attention for a very limited purpose. They are required to have identification papers from our office. Nobody who is from a party, on the authority of that party has the right to go in unless they are party runners, official poll workers and unofficial checkers has the right to be in the polls. There are very specific guidelines that let you know who these people are. They are not there to talk or to report, they are there to conduct certain and specific business.

Q. So are there any female attorneys who were from your office who could have been sent?

A. I am not aware of any being sent out on Election Day. If a complaint had been filed, that may have merit, we can send someone to investigate.

Q. Would the Registrars be notified if there was a complaint?

A. Not necessarily, but they will have a piece of paper from SOTS identifying them and their purpose. If someone doesn't have that, then they should not be allowed in the door of any polling place, including EDR.

Q. We had the Department of Justice visit our same day registration site at 7:15 am, and I was very glad they came during a quiet time, with no voters waiting.

A. Yes, the DOJ is a little different, but they will have credentials and they will explain their purpose.

Q. They introduced themselves to us, showed their materials. They were very pleasant and they asked a lot of questions. They were investigating how we were setup. They weren't persecuting us. Their questions were to see if we were set up. During a previous election one of our polling places failed to set up properly, so they were checking based on that complaint.

A. Specifically, they were interested in the accessible equipment?

Q. Yes, they checked our same day registration site and our town used the new IVS there. We have a large community of over a hundred people who are trying to lead independent lives. Many of them are in wheelchairs and they are very pleased with the new system. They felt that they were voting kind of like everyone else. They got to make their own ballot and place it in the ballot box made a real difference to them. They were being treated the way they wanted to be treated. They did not like the fax system which they avoided, instead they would let an aide help them cast a ballot.

A. In Suffield voters avoided that fax machine, attempted to use it, and switched back to getting assistance to cast a ballot. This time we had 50 people use the new system, and we had a special machine with a jelly bean button for a severely handicapped voter so that he could be able to vote privately and independently. It was a significant event to let someone who could never vote before, be able to vote by their self with a flick of the thumb.

Q. Since Suffield had success with the special machine, will it be available for other towns who may need it?

A. No, it probably won't be provided by the state. Suffield had to request for, and pay an additional cost, to get this equipment. It was an experiment, it needed extra software and it did not work perfectly. Out of 6 people who attempted to use it worked 4 times, but we had the backup IVS machine when it froze. It is unlikely to be required statewide. We had received a request from this voter over a year ago, and contacted IVS for help.

There was a change legislated for the audit this year and I have an update to share with you about the new auditing equipment. First the legislation passed last session so that only 5 % of polling places will be called upon to do an audit, which will mean fewer towns will be called upon. Secondly there is a new auditing machine available which can replace hand counting ballots. It will allow your town to run all of your ballots through the machine quickly, and it can isolate any questionable ballots for your audit team to check. By questionable I mean any stray marks that may have been made by the voter, but were potentially not read correctly by the optical scanner.

South Windsor was the first town to use this equipment. Aside from some slight, slight bugs in the beginning, but it worked beautifully. We thought it was wonderful, our results were right on. Instead of a manual count, you just feed the ballots through this machine.

Q. Is this something your town is buying or did the state provide it?

A. No, we were randomly chosen to test it.

Q. So, is this something that will be available for future Elections? Will it be mandatory or optional?

A. No, I would not expect it to be mandated that you use this new machine. It will make the audit a lot easier for towns. You will likely still have the option to hand count. We expect this machine will be available to all towns in the future, as long as it continues to work well.

Q. How are we doing the audits - this is just one machine? Are we taking turns bringing the machine to our towns? Are we bringing our ballots to you?

A. We had the ballots brought to the Hartford SOTS offices this time. We need to see how this works. For the test, we had people from our office, from the town and from UConn participate. This is Alex's machine, and it is UConn's system. As the ballots are scanned to be counted, you can see a picture of each ballot on a screen. It will show a digital mark - a little dot, when the mark doesn't meet the differential requirement that means the oval was properly marked and counted. The questionable marks are isolated so that you can view them with your own eyes, so you can count them with your own eyes to determine voter intent.

Q. How many machines are there?

A. Right now, there are two machines. There could be more, but you are going to need people to run them. So, people from UConn helped set them up and run the ballots this time.

Q. So towns would need to set up an appointment to use these machines with the SOTS?

A. Yes, that is the basic idea.

Q. The only problem is that each town has to schlep the ballots into Hartford, mindful of the chain of custody of those ballots all the way in sealed, and out. If it is a large number of ballots you may need extra people to move them.

A. Yes, Chain of custody is still required.

Q. How many people did you need to hire for this first test?

A. None, just the two Registrars went in this time. But if you have a large number of ballots remember that this is instead of the massive number of poll workers required to hand count ballots.

Q. Any chance the SOTS will provide coffee in the morning?

A. Not in the budget.

Q. Our town was one of the pilot towns to try this equipment, and UConn came to our town to run the audit. It was wonderful.

A. For those of you who have had repeated audits, this is going to be a great resource.

Q. How did you carry the ballots for the test?

A. We were able to fit them in two sealed bags.

Q. When is the new Deputy Secretary of State starting?

A. I believe January 23rd, his name is Scott Bates and is currently with the Port Authority. He is a former Secretary of State in Virginia but that was very different than Connecticut. That was an appointed position, by the Governor, not elected. Also, it had nothing to do with Elections, but a lot to do with the commercial recording division - which incorporates all of the businesses. That is by far the biggest division of the Secretary of the State, the one more people have contact with.

Q. Do you think we could invite him to our March meeting?

A. Yes, I think that would be a good idea to ask.

Q. Question on the new legislative session, do you have a proactive plan in place, should this foolishness of early voting be suggested by the legislators? Any thoughts on how we would do it?

A. It will depend largely on what law comes out of it. First case scenario, some kind of broad amendment to the State's Constitution passes, then you have a situation where are is the law going to favor an early voting site for people to go to - like a polling place, or is it going to favor a no excuse absentee balloting situation? So, it will depend on whether it is passed as a question for the voters to decide, to open up the constitution, and then what kind of law gets passed once you have opened the Constitution.

Q. But it needs to be a Constitutional change to do any of it?

A. I believe so. The Constitution is very specific with reasons for voting on any day other than the Election, those include the absentee ballot rules. The Constitution states “absent all hours of the day” as a reason to qualify for an absentee ballot. There are some who do not believe that a Constitutional change is required. Their opinion is that if you leave town any time during the day, you should qualify for an absentee ballot. So, they think this can be done without a Constitutional amendment, but I don’t agree with them. There was an opinion from Blumenthal, when he was Attorney General of Connecticut, that absence from town on the day of Election really meant during all hours of polling. So leaving town for lunch or work or shopping did not qualify. Still there are some who think that disagrees.

Q. The fear we have heard is that if you open the Constitution up for one change, it is open to all sorts of changes. Once you open the door, all sorts of things that may not have even been discussed could be affected. Can you slide any sort of amendment in? Can this be used as a tool for other items, if you ask for a change on early voting?

A. That will depend on the language that comes out as to what you can do with it. Last time it was removing the reasons why you couldn’t vote absentee. It is important to see what is proposed and what actually passes this time. You are correct, this could open the door to other changes, but generally it doesn’t have to.

Q. If we are talking about amending the Constitution, what needs to happen?

A. To open the Constitution, one of three things needs to happen. The first thing is that every 20 years the voters get to automatically decide if there should be a Constitutional Convention, for any person. The voters will be asked, and if they say yes, then a Constitutional Convention will be held. (Voted no in 2008, so it won’t come up again until 2028.) The Second and Third way is through the Connecticut Legislature, which gets to say what they want to change and then the voters need to approve the change. The difference is that in the second way the legislature can pass the change by a majority vote of two separate General Assemblies -so if they get a win by a simple majority in 2017 or 2018, and after the Election in 2018 for the a new General Assembly, then they can again vote on the identical change in the new legislative session in 2019 or 2020 and again win with a simple majority in 2019 or 2020, then the change would go before the voters and if passed become law. The third option is for the change proposed to get a super majority vote of both houses, 75%, in which case the voters would get to vote on the change the following even numbered year in 2018.

Q. So if the Constitutional amendment that failed in 2014 is brought forward this year, with the exactly same language, then all they need is 51% in both houses to move that bill forward in 2018 onto the ballot?

A. No, they cannot. They need a super majority this year to bring it onto the ballot in 2018. There must be a second General Assembly on any bill brought forward this year that passes by over 51% (but is under 75%), so on the ballot to the voters in 2020 if they get a simple majority the next time.

Q. Is it your understanding, given the prevailing winds at the moment, that those who would like to see this change will be proposing the same change with the same language, hoping for a super majority this time. Or is more likely to expect a different angle, maybe look at a different part of the law to change to get around this?

A. It is hard to say. There are people in both camps. Some of the people who wanted it to pass last time think that the voters were just confused about early voting, so they might be looking for a ballot question that is simpler. The others think that there may be a groundswell and the voters have changed their minds on this, that the same language would pass if on the ballot in 2018. It could go either way.

Q. Last time did they get a super majority to put it on the ballot in 2014?

A. No, it was two simple majorities of the 2010 and 2012 General Assemblies.

Q. Was it a bipartisan vote?

A. No, it was largely a Democratic vote, not many Republicans supported it.

Q. Any more big changes coming?

A. No promises, but I don’t think so. There is so much focus on the budget that I don’t expect as many changes regarding Elections. A big part of that is changes often require money, and there is probably not going to be a lot of that around. I will be surprised if there is anything new coming out.

Q. Are more Moderator trainers coming forward? I understand there was a meeting.

A. There will be some more trainers. There are some people who have expressed interest. There was a general meeting, which I was not part of, but there will be another more formal meeting which I will probably be part of, but has not been set yet. There will be training through CREC, which is kind of train the trainer, educational system. At that point people who were interested would have to go through the process of observing moderator trainers with one or more current trainers. Then they would co-teach with the current trainers with one or more current trainers. At the next point, they would train under the guidance of one or more of the current instructors. So, there are more moderators coming, but they are not trainers yet.

Q. So just to clarify, all Registrars must become and maintain moderator certification every two years in order to be Certified Registrars. But if you are a town who has, let's say ten moderators, the acting moderator is certified they can moderate an Election, and but there is no need to fear and rush to maintain someone's certification, there is no problem if it lapsed, they still only need to recertify?

A. Yes, that is correct. Registrars must maintain their Certification but Moderators just need to be in good standing when they are the official for an Election.

Q. So if someone has let their certification lapse, they just need to take a recertification class to become certified again?

A. Correct.

Q. Can we be assured that the delay in certifying poll books will not result in losing the bonding money which was set aside to pay for the equipment for implementation?

A. No, I cannot presume the money will still be there if we delay. The money was authorized for this use, but it could be swept.

ROVAC County meeting was resumed at 11:20 am.

Legislative Committee report by Peter Gostin, Lisbeth Becker, with notes from Sue Larsen - Some of our issues have already been discussed but there was a discussion about extending the time for our Registrar Certification because of the cancelled classes. There was not a positive response, but Patti LeShane promised to look into it. She is our legislative lobbyist. The concern voiced was that even though it is in statute, it is unlikely that anyone will be coming out on July 1st, and discharging anyone from their jobs. There was discussion of asking for an extension for Registrars who are not able to commit to the timeframe in statute. Steve Casano is not returning, so we are losing a strong advocate for ROVAC. There are a lot of new people on the GAE committee. Other topics discussed involved the Town Clerks and the federal postcard registration and absentee ballot request forms. There was a question about whether the Town Clerks should be able to reactivate someone who submits these forms opposed to having to bring the form to the Registrars before processing the absentee ballot request. There was concern about the blurring of the lines of who was doing registrations if the Town Clerks started performing that function. There is some consolidation of some of the committees at the CGA - Connecticut General Assembly, to save money. Banking and Insurance is going to combine into a Financial Services Committee. Commerce and Economic development are going to be combined. We also discussed early voting. Sue Larson asked us to pass along that Patti LeShane, our lobbyists. We have a new person, Ryan Bingham, former First Selectman from Torrington, will be representing us. He is very well versed in all of what we do. Sue Larson and Tim DeCarlo met with Peggy Reeves and Shannon Wegele to present our ROVAC legislation agenda. It was fairly well received. SOTS felt that ROVAC can handle the bill to allow the multi-town Registrars be allowed to leave their offices and to go to polls to handle issues if needed, like the single polling place towns do. Right now, there are restrictions on towns that have multi-district areas - that they must stay in their offices. This has always been a contentious item, not well understood. This can be handled legislatively rather quickly, so SOTS will let ROVAC come up with the language for that. We are still requesting an online directory for all directives from SOTS. The budget seems to be an issue, so we are pushing for from this day forward, and not spend money on old, sometimes irrelevant, and potentially outdated, directives. We have all been concerned about the lack of information from the Secretary of State, this will information for everybody, rather than individual requests. We are requesting that all schools are required to be closed on Election Day. We will move to primaries once we can get Election days to pass. Since the term unassigned rather than unknown passed last session, we are trying to get it to pass both chambers this time. We

have requested they be relabeled to be clearer as to their meaning for the public. We are also requesting that towns be notified within 72 hours of the Election if they have been chosen for the audit. There doesn't seem to be any issue from SOTS with this change, so we will change the audit language to be specify the lottery be held with 72 hours. There was also amended an addition that big cities and towns be limited to 2 audits. E-pollbooks seem to be off the table, so nothing to discuss there. There were some challenges with the new IVS system and they will be looking at ways to protect the privacy of the vote as it comes out when towns use a two sided ballot. Many voters really appreciated creating and being able to cast their own ballot, but we need to go a step further to protect their privacy when it is being printed. Single sided ballots are a non-issue, as they come out printed side down. It may need to be legislative change, but not necessarily. It may need statutory language if voters express this need.

Q. Voters could put the privacy folder over the end of the printer, so that no one can see the ballot as it comes out.

A. This was discussed, but if there is a perception that the process lacks privacy it may need to be added as a mandate. Hopefully not.

Q. Was there any discussion of the EDR 8:00 pm deadline? To clarify what it means, or to move it?

A. This did come up, at our tech meeting. SOTS wants to sit down with Waterbury to find out what they did to very successfully manage a large number of voters at their EDR site. One of the ways they avoided long lines was to hire many people. But SOTS wants to look at what worked before discussing what the 8:00 pm deadline means. They had staff with three years of training. So perhaps we can take their training and bring it to the membership, because they were glowing in their praise of what occurred in Waterbury, over 700. That could be a very successful ROVAC class.

Q. In East Hartford, we had 429 but at the end of the day we had between 40 and 50 people had to be cut off. We had lots of signs, and told them, so they quietly left. A few people commented that I should have registered earlier. No incidents at all.

Q. We are a smaller town, we have 23,000 voters, we had 314 EDR. I was there from 7:00 to 8:00 pm to oversee the closing up and because we did everything online, voters had stations to fill their cards online, we were able to get them through quickly. Even one voter who cruised in at 5 minutes to 8:00 pm, got in and done by 8:00 pm and was able to vote. We had no problems because we were doing everything online.

A. We think this is why this is an issue with larger towns. It is why the SOTS will be investigating Waterbury's success before considering any legislation. The focus is to make sure no one is turned away.

Q. Did Waterbury fill out a report, with information like how many people they hired?

A. Yes, absolutely. I think they are trying to collect how this was managed.

Q. In New Britain we signed up 818 voters, we had roughly 19 people working various parts of it. The bottleneck that we thought was going to happen with the data entry, but it was the log in clerk who kept people waiting. At the end of the day we only had to turn away one person.

Q. Can you bring up the unused ballots, check if this needs legislative action?

A. Yes, we will check into it. We will also follow up on the extension for Certification.

Q. We are getting the lobbyist report are sent as spreadsheets last year, are you sending them?

A. Not yet, but we will.

Nominating Committee Report - Charlie Murray was sick, so no report. Bob Sherman clarified that the ROVAC officer positions would be voted on this Spring. Melissa Russell cannot run again, as there is a term limit for the President. Please let Charlie know if you are interested in serving.

Technology Report by Anne Kilby and Lisbeth Becker. The meeting minutes were emailed to all Hartford County members. We met on December 1st with Ted Bromley, Shirley Surgeon, Lew Button and Heather Auglieri. The primary focus was a review of the past Election, what the successes and problems were. End of the Night Reporting had problems. We all understood there was a problem with the numbers staying in the system and then it was reconfigured and it was back live on Wednesday. We focused on the data between the voting districts and the statistics page. Making sure that actually flows, as opposed to manually entering and calculating. Saving district information and saving the entire head moderator return. Making that very clear

how that has to be done. Calculating the unknown. One of the biggest problems was having incorrect data reported because of how the unknown data was entered into the system. You had to know to hit that calculation button after every time you entered data, otherwise it threw off the calculations. So they want to make that an automatic process. When you save data, the calculation is saved too. Unknown will be calculated automatically, no need to keep pressing the button. There was some confusion over entering the Military and Overseas data column as one example of how things are titled leading to confusion. They are looking at taking the statistical data aside, and keeping the votes separate. The Hartford County Town Clerks met with this group the day before to discuss the Election and they also weighed in on this. Especially the absentee ballot entry and how things are defined. They want to add a total number of active voters and that would be a calculated number, so that it ties back in. They want to change so that both Town Clerks, Registrars and Head Moderators can look at and print the grid information. SOTS wants to eliminate submitting by District, it is all or nothing. No more partial return reporting. They are looking at setting up districts with a dummy district so that it is easier to add in the centrally counted information. Absentee ballots counts were also discussed as a grey item, the Town Clerks have requested definition of rejections prior to Election Day, We have only three options for data entry: voted absentee, in person or not voted. If a rejected ballot doesn't go to the polls, are they still entered as voted by absentee? We would like to count it as voted absentee, but we need to be on the same page. If a ballot isn't sent to the polls then the numbers don't match, because there is no space to record rejections prior to Election Day. We want every person who files an absentee ballot to be counted as voted by absentee. But the rejection count would be off if you do that. We are asking that the rejections be added as voted in the accounting of who voted so that you balance your totals. There is another situation, where a voter votes in one town absentee and then moves before the Election. Or is someone dies before Election Day. You aren't allowed to count those absentee ballots, if they are not on the registry. Ted has requested best practices for daily work and separate that from system issues. We discussed having a class at the Spring Conference to talk about what are the best practices versus Secretary of State issues. It would also be good timing to share this with all of the new Registrars.

Q. Can you give an example of what you mean? Are you for example, talking about Registrars who didn't enter their EDR voters on Election Day?

A. Some of the issues are repetitive questions that the Secretary of State attorneys keep receiving. For example, on a within town move someone fills out a new card with their new address, and that is all, they left the party blank. What is the best practice, since the voter marked clearly that this is an address change? Ted discussed this at our last meeting, that best practice is to leave party affiliation alone in this case. But from another town, for a new voter who is just changing their address the situation changes and blank party space means unaffiliated. You need to have it in writing if they want to be in a party, so register them as unaffiliated. DMV automatically leaves the online new registration in the old town's party affiliation, so you need to actively change it. At our meeting Ted would not definitively state you has to be one way or the other, but this was his opinion. (There was some disagreement on this point. Last month Ted acknowledged that Registrars disagree on what to do when the party is left blank and if they can get the DMV system to require the voter to fill it out that would resolve this. The SOTS wants to reduce the number of procedural questions, like this, by having ROVAC create a best practice list.

Q. We need to be the police as ROVAC, so that we are all unified rather than waste our time bringing these questions to the state. Instead of just asking the same questions over and over, let's just come up with an answer ourselves - a decision that this is the way we are going to do it. So, the State is just trying to get us to resolve some of these things for ourselves, let's just do our own best practices rather than getting the State to commit to an answer that they can't give.

Q. But isn't this a technology update? The online system could be revised so that there is no question.

A. Yes, this is a technology issue that the State is encountering from us. Every two months we meet, and we invite Ted, Lew, and they are posted on the ROVAC website. So, you can see all of this information.

Q. But it still sounds like you are talking about getting us to all do this one way. Isn't what is needed is a change in CVRS to stop automatically filling in the party for out of town moves?

A. This would actually be a change in the DMV system and there are actually other things going on. For example, it a huge concern that voters are pulled incorrectly, using the whole online system. We have

asked for a button that gives a double check. With the DMV reporting, there is a problem with so many voters being marked as new, when they are already registered. We have requested a way for the DMV to alert the voter that they may already be registered when a duplicate record is being created.

Q. We raised this issue at the SOTS conference, held before this was launched, they knew this would happen. Why wasn't this addressed earlier?

A. So, we understand, and we are the hammer that keeps asking at every Technology meeting if we can get this fixed, to prevent these duplicates.

Q. But it isn't just duplicates. Everyone with the same last name and date of birth pops up, so towns are taking voters who are not the same, changing names, party and sex, disenfranchising a completely different person.

A. Well that is more human error, of rushing through when entering a new voter. We just started having a discussion about this. This was the problem with this past election when so many people were being added so quickly. If you didn't catch the error before Election Day, you disenfranchised a voter. If towns don't do a regular reconciliation process to find these errors, then a voter can be taken by mistake.

Q. Could we make reconciliation part of the best practice class? Please include this, it is very important.

A. Yes, we agree that is the best way to find these errors.

Q. Back to the duplicate voter issue, could the DMV just say if you are already registered you don't need to do this?

A. No, people do not remember, they just don't know if they are registered. The DMV system is very static.

Q. Could the automatic data search for duplicates just focus on names, not date of birth?

A. No, too many common names, we need date of birth.

Q. What about the pending voters? We have 25 sitting in limbo.

A. Right now, if you don't use a DMV ID or it doesn't match, then the online registration awaits the voter to print, sign, date and send in. We asked that there be a way to email or contact them to make sure these pending voters know what is needed to complete their registration. We were asked if it would be helpful to let them sit for 6 months instead of 3 months. We have also asked for a popup, when registering online, that it appears you are already registered when there is a match. To get them to verify if it is the same.

Q. Why when registering online do they have to pick a party or unaffiliated but not when registering with the DMV?

A. The DMV system is more static and completely different than CVRS. We are looking at work arounds. We don't have much flexibility, it is a whole different system that is 30 years old. There is no internet connection.

Q. So, is the state more concerned about our taking voters who are not duplicates or are they more concerned about our creating too many duplicates, or is it both?

A. Creating voters incorrectly is a big concern of the State. The duplicates are more of a Registrar issue, especially with this past Election. There were so many people that wanted to participate, and it takes so much time, paper and ink, to process all of those duplicates. When you think you have found a match, don't presume it is the same voter, take some time to study the record. For the online system, we could have a prescreen to determine if someone is already registered or a link to allow the voter to check. This would reduce the number of unnecessary registration processing. The requested popup would say you are already registered, do you want to make a change? We had asked for the online system to remain open after the cutoff deadline, they did not do that for this past Election. This change would facilitate the processing of EDR voters. We would like to thank everyone for doing the stress test. We found issues between the main frame and the server - that things were not being cleared, so things were building up and building up, slowing down processing. Ann Kilby spear headed pushed for this and problems were found and corrected.

Q. We were concerned about logging in on Election Day, and you worked with the Town Clerks to test for that as well, thanks to the stress test the limit of 16 was discovered.

A. Yes, both the Town Clerks Association and ROVAC worked to make sure that everyone could get logged in. We added connections from the previous limit of 16 per town. If this hadn't been done, then the larger towns would have crashed on Election Day. Some towns had to update their hardware to

accommodate more connections. We found that CVRS bogs down, blanking screens, if too many are trying to access from the same town. We need to do a stress test for every Election to find where the system is not clearing information and capacity limits. We also want to test the system when everyone is logged in. Tuesdays before the Election are the best day to test. Other technology improvements that we are working on include: Inputting Absentee ballots information that the Town Clerks have entered in CVRS into the Who Voted function, so it would only be entered once. Election History changes should be included in the Audit trail. This would also include it in the monthly change report. Deletions to be in the audit trail, so they are included in the monthly change report.

Q. What about entering the who voted - if you used a poll book, you still had to manually enter the EDR voters?

A. Correct, those voters weren't in your town's registry. All towns should have entered them and then added they voted on Election Day manually using the Maintain Voter History function. That would be a best practice. Some towns were misinformed and thought they could enter the EDRs the next day, best practice is to enter them all on Election Day. If they wait until later then they would have to correct their effective registration date before updating that they voted in person on Election Day. There were some towns who didn't enter their EDR voters for days.

Q. So if you get a call on Election Day from the new town, telling you that one of your voters has moved and is voting in their town, what is the best practice? I thought I had to move them to off, but they still have not been pulled by their new town.

A. Some towns don't realize the law requires them to enter the EDR voters on Election Day. Our suggestion is when you receive a call from another town on Election Day, highlight the voter on the Registry at the polls - so note this in the moderator's log. Take no other action. Another issue that Ted is investigating is missing voters from the voter list. Sometimes the street number doesn't print out correctly due to variations in how the numbers were entered, such as adding a space before the number. So, best practice, be consistent in how you enter the street and unit numbers.

Q. Has there been any discussion about how when you print your official list, you save the list so you can enter who has voted but when you do the data entry the list isn't the same? We find people don't appear who were on the original list, or they moved and new names appear who were not.

A. The Who Voted function is capturing a current version of the saved report, the data isn't static. If someone moves out of town, within town or from another town, those changes can appear on the saved list.

Q. But the list should not change, I saved it.

A. Records cannot be updated if the record is gone, in the case of moved out of town.

Q. I am not talking about that. If I type and save a letter it stays the same, why can't I save the list as it was?

A. It is not a static document, it is attached to the current data base.

Q. Why do some voters drop out when I go back to a saved list, and then appear at the bottom?

A. As it is getting late please send them the details, so we can figure this out. Please send any additional questions to the Technology Committee.

Ways & Means Report by Sue Burnham was previously covered, don't forget to bring \$6 next time.

AdHoc Committee Reports: Handbook Committee Sharon Krawiecki and Darlene Burrell. No update to report but there were some legislative changes that will be incorporated.

Your annual canvass can start anytime now - both Lorton data and ROAST are available to do your NCOA list.

Don't forget to do your permanent absentee ballot letters.

Q. We have a special Election in February, do we have to delay our canvass?

A. Check with the SOTS, probably. We had to for the Presidential Primary.

Next Meetings - Tues. March 14 and June 13, 2017

Motion to adjourn unanimously accepted at 12:20 pm.