

State Board of Election Supervisors Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2021

The January 28, 2021 meeting of the State Board of Election Supervisors was held virtually and called to order at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Ardoin, called the meeting to order, and Patricia Daigle was acting secretary.

The following members were present: Kyle Ardoin, Secretary of State; Sherri Hadskey, Commissioner of Elections; Erin Day, Attorney General's Office; Shanika Olinde, Registrars of Voters Association; Robin Hooter, Clerks of Court Association; and Dr. Mark Leeper, appointee of the Governor.

Also in attendance were Merietta Norton, Lani Durio and Ray Wood from the Secretary of State's office.

Ms. Hadskey moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. Without objection, the January 22, 2020 meeting minutes were approved. The secretary called the roll to indicate that all members were present.

Lani Durio, Deputy Commissioner of Elections, Secretary of State's Office, presented the following numerated recommendations to the board.

NUMBER 1:

EXPLANATION: Provides that the registrar's office shall remain open on election day until 9:00 p.m. or until the precinct and absentee by mail and early voting results have been submitted to the clerk of court and the registrar of voters to allow the registrar to close his or her office before 9:00 p.m.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 1, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 1 was approved.

NUMBER 2:

EXPLANATION: Provides a deadline of twenty-one days for the registrar to challenge a voter who has failed to return an address confirmation card.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 2, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 1 was approved.

NUMBER 3:

EXPLANATION: Provides that the parish board shall be compensated for not more than eight days for a regularly scheduled congressional primary election to allow for the payment of an additional meeting for a regularly scheduled congressional primary election that is held in the years when there is no presidential election and the ballots are tabulated and counted in accordance with R.S. 18:1313.1.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 3, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 3 was approved.

NUMBER 4

EXPLANATION: Changes the deadline for candidates to file a list of watchers with the clerk of court to the seventh business day before the primary election to give the parish board more time to provide notification to the watchers and issue the commissions to the watchers.

Ms. Hadskey moved to item number 4, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 4 was approved.

NUMBER 5

EXPLANATION: Provides that the notice of candidacy shall provide that copies of the forms and pamphlets of explanation and instruction which are distributed by the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure are available via a link on the Secretary of State's website which makes it easier for the candidates to obtain the forms and pamphlets.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 5, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 5 was approved.

NUMBER 6

EXPLANATION: Provides that if qualifying reopens within thirty days of the election and the ballots have been printed, the election shall be rescheduled unless no additional candidates qualified. The proposed amendment addresses the issue that the Secretary of State cannot reprint ballots to add any additional candidates and meet the statutorily mandated ballot transit times for the reprinted ballots.

Ms. Lani Durio, staff attorney recommended an amendment to remove the words within 30 days from section 469.

Ms. Hadskey made a motion to amend item number 6, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion.

The secretary called the roll to ascertain a quorum was present. With no objections being heard from the board the amendment was approved.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 6 as amended, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 6 was approved.

NUMBER 7

EXPLANATION: Provides for a voter who is challenged on election day and completes an address confirmation card that the registrar shall change the voter's address for an in-parish change of address, transfer the voter to another parish for an out-of-parish change of address, or cancel the voter's registration for an out-of-state change of address. Currently, the statute only addresses a change or cancellation of a voter's address.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 7, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 7 was approved.

NUMBER 8

EXPLANATION: Moves the presidential preference primary election to the last Saturday in March and the opening of the qualifying period to the third Wednesday in December to address the conflict with early voting being held during the week of Easter in 2024.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 8, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 8 was approved.

NUMBER 9

EXPLANATION: Authorizes the Secretary of State to correct typographical errors in the proposition ballot language, if the ballots have not been printed, after the deadline for receipt of the notice from the State Bond Commission with the approval of the governing authority that called the proposition election. The proposed amendment would prevent the ballots from having typographical errors on the ballots.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 9, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 9 was approved.

NUMBER 10

EXPLANATION: Clarifies that the immediate family member of voters may drop off more than one absentee by mail ballot to the registrar per election.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 10, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 10 was approved.

NUMBER 11

EXPLANATION: Clarifies that registrars who have more than one branch office may designate multiple offices for early voting, as the statute only addresses one branch office per registrar.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 11, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 11 was approved.

NUMBER 12

EXPLANATION: Provides that the registrar shall post a sample ballot prepared by the Secretary of State instead of a certified screenshot of the sample ballot to reduce the size of the document that is required to be posted at the early voting location.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 12, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 12 was approved.

NUMBER 13

EXPLANATION: Provides that the registrar may fix the days of early voting at additional locations provided by R.S. 18:1309.2, with the approval of the Secretary of State, at least thirty days prior to a primary election and twenty-one days prior to a general election to make the provision consistent with the designation of the days of early voting at branch offices of the registrars.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 13, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 13 was approved.

NUMBER 14

EXPLANATION: Requires the registrar of voters to post adequate notice of the date, time and place for the preparation of the early voting machines to give the candidates additional notification of the preparation of the voting machines for early voting.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 14, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 14 was approved.

NUMBER 15

EXPLANATION: Makes the deadlines for requesting a recount of the ballots and the inspection of ballot envelope flaps the same as the deadlines provided in R.S. 18:1313.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 15, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 15 was approved.

NUMBER 16

EXPLANATION: Changes the deadline to four business days after the election for the parish board to notify the voters that their ballots have been rejected due to a challenge which gives the registrars more time to process the notifications of the rejections.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 16, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 16 was approved.

NUMBER 17

EXPLANATION: Provides that the parish custodian of voting machines shall make the request to the Secretary of State or notify the Secretary of State relating to the reduction or increase in the number of voting machines rather than the parish board since the parish custodian of voting machines is the appropriate election official to know the voting machine allocation that is necessary for the election.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 17, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 17 was approved.

NUMBER 18

EXPLANATION: Provides that the chronological table of procedures for the election that is given to the candidates by the qualifying official shall instruct the candidates to contact the registrar of voters for the time and place at which the preparation and testing of the early voting machines will be conducted and the appropriate election official for the time and place at which the preparation and testing of the election day machines will be conducted to give the candidates additional information relating to the preparation and testing of the voting machines.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 18, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 18 was approved.

NUMBER 19

EXPLANATION: Authorizes the Secretary of State to direct the clearing of the voting machines and any election result cartridges after all data from each voting machine and election result cartridge used in the contested election is copied to removable memory devices so the voting machines can be released to allow the Secretary of State to prepare the voting machines for the

next election.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 19, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 19 was approved.

NUMBER 20

EXPLANATION: Makes it an election offense to spoof the secretary of state's, clerk of court's or registrar of voters' telephone numbers or impersonate the secretary of state, clerk of court or registrar of voters in connection with their election duties.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 20, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 20 was approved.

MISCELLANEOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

NUMBER 21

EXPLANATION: Increases the number of commissioners for the presidential preference primary election from two to three or four, as additional commissioners are needed for the election due to the increased voter turnout and the additional work that is required for the commissioners to verify the voters' eligibility to vote in the closed primary election. The proposed amendment provides that the number of commissioners for the presidential preference election is provided in R.S. 18:425(A)(1)(a).

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 21, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 21 was approved.

NUMBER 22

EXPLANATION: Changes the age of a child who may accompany his or her parent or legal guardian into the voting machine to fifteen years of age or younger to allow older children to learn about elections and observe the process of voting.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 22, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 22 was approved.

NUMBER 23

EXPLANATION: Changes the deadline for a voter to submit an application to vote absentee by mail from the fourth day prior to the election to the fifteenth day prior to the election to allow for more transit time for the application to be received by the registrar and to follow the recommendation of the United States Postal Service. The change in the deadline does not apply to voters who are military, overseas, sequestered jurors and hospitalized.

Comments from the public were heard on this item.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 23, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 23 was approved.

NUMBER 24

EXPLANATION: Allows any parish, upon written approval of the secretary of state, to conduct the preparation and verification of absentee by mail ballots the day before election day to allow parishes that may have a large number of absentee by mail ballots to have additional time to process ballots and ensure that the ballots are counted on time.

An amendment was proposed to add in “up to four days”.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt the amendment, and Ms. Day seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, the amendment to item number 24 was approved.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 24 as amended, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 24 was approved.

NUMBER 25

EXPLANATION: Clarifies that actions objecting to the calling of a special election, objecting to candidacy, contesting the certification of a recall petition or contesting an election cannot be suspensively appealed to prevent delaying the election officials from performing their statutorily mandated duties relating to elections.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 25, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 25 was approved.

Ms. Day made an objection to the motion.

The board voted and there were 7 yays and 1 nay. Item number 25 was approved.

NUMBER 26

EXPLANATION: Clarifies the types of activities that are considered electioneering. Also provides that circulating or seeking handwritten signatures to any petition within 600 feet of the polling place is a violation of the statute to prohibit the interference with the voters who are entering and exiting the polling place.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 26, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 26 was approved.

NUMBER 27

EXPLANATION: Requires persons conducting exit polling within the campaign-free zone to register with the secretary of state to let the registrars and clerks know who has registered and put the Secretary of State on notice of the exit polling and provides penalties for failure to register with the Secretary of State.

Ms. Hadskey moved to adopt item number 27, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. With no objections being heard, item number 27 was approved.

Ms. Hadskey made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Hooter seconded the motion. The January 28, 2021 meeting of the State Board of Election Supervisors adjourned at 12:19 p.m.