

The Elections Advisory Committee met in a regular session on June 18, 2020. The meeting was held at 198 S. Main Street, Yuma, Arizona.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Committee members present were: Recorder Robyn Pouquette; Supervisor Darren Simmons; Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney Bill Kerekes and County Administrator Susan Thorpe. Supervisor Martin Porchas was excused. Others present were: Election Services Director Mary Fontes, Deputy County Administrator Ian McGaughey and Deputy Clerk/Executive Assistant Desarae Doten.
3. **Approve the minutes for the following meeting: April 8, 2020 Regular Session**

MOTION (SIMMONS/POUQUETTE): Approve as presented.

VOICE VOTE: The motion carried 4-0, with Supervisor Porchas excused.

4. **Yuma County Recorder and Elections Report**
  - a. **Elections Calendar and Upcoming Elections**

Ms. Fontes and Ms. Pouquette reviewed the Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> Primary Election schedule as follows:

- UOCAVA Ballots distributed - **Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>**
- Logic & Accuracy Testing – SOS - **Friday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>**
- Last Day to Register to Vote is **Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>**
- **Vote Center Approval – BOS - Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>**
- Early Voting Begins **Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>**
- Request Mailed Ballot by **Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>**
- Vote Early in Person by **Friday, July 31<sup>st</sup>**

Discussion ensued regarding optional voting center locations.

The General Election is scheduled for Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- b. **Primary 2020 / General 2020 Preparations and Considerations**
  - i. **COVID-19**
  - ii. **Security**
  - iii. **Communications**

Ms. Pouquette reported that staff is making preparations and could use the empty room where the proposed Board of Supervisors Auditorium would be located at 197 Main Street; however there is not adequate lighting, network ports or a Certificate of Occupancy. She noted that whatever the reopening plan is for Yuma County the July 8<sup>th</sup> date needs to be taken into account. Ms. Pouquette shared with the committee that the County Treasurer does not want to open to public and made the suggestion to move off site for the election. Discussions have taken place about ways that the Treasurer's Office could conduct business safely, such as blocking off their doors and having one entrance and one exit to the building. Ms. Pouquette stated she has expressed her frustrations and concerns that she would not be able to meet the need of voters and also assist people coming in to pay their taxes. She hopes this issue will be resolved next week during a meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding the following:

- The need to have a more visible security presence.
- Recognition that if face masks and social distancing are required someone may not want to comply and would still need to be allowed the ability to vote.
- Some voting centers will be difficult to set up for social distancing since they will not allow tape on floors, etc.
- Eligible voters in jail

Ms. Thorpe reported that Chairman Reyes just issued a proclamation requiring that face coverings be worn to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 so there will be signage available. Mr. Kerekes noted that under the Emergency Act there is a statute with relation to the proclamation which can be used to issue a citation.

Ms. Pouquette and Mr. Kerekes provided details about concerns related to the Hospital District. Three (3) people have filed Statements of Interest, however the district has advised that there are only two (2) positions available.

Supervisor Simmons questioned how individuals in the hospital or nursing homes will vote. Ms. Pouquette explained this will first be addressed by sending mail. Next a special board consisting of two (2) individuals who would handle this task, however finding persons to do this may be difficult during these times.

Information was provided about requests made to the Health Department for one time use face masks and touchless sanitizer stations. The Secretary of State will be shipping contents, however at this time staff is unaware of what is going to be provided.

In closing, Ms. Pouquette reviewed the 2020 official primary election candidates and reported the deadline for Special District candidate filings for the General Election is July 6<sup>th</sup>.

**c. Voter Registration Statistics**

Ms. Pouquette reviewed the active and inactive totals.

**d. Budget Updates and HAVA Security Grants**

Ms. Pouquette reported that a second grant in the amount of \$154,000 was just received and discussion ensued regarding what these funds will be used for such as signature training by a Forensic Expert.

Ms. Thorpe asked how they are doing with recruiting poll workers. Ms. Fontes stated they are doing okay and staff has been receiving phone calls.

Ms. Pouquette reported they would like to utilize the Board of Supervisors Auditorium for early boards.

**e. Internal Operations and Procedures Update**

Ms. Pouquette reported she is making sure that procedures are in place which include an outline of security measures and talking points related to voter relations to ensure that staff are conveying the same message.

**f. Voter Outreach Information / Election Correspondence**

Ms. Pouquette stated that notices to permanent early voters have been mailed and she would like to buckle down on social media and public service announcements. She will speak with Communications Director Kevin Tunell or Ms. Thorpe for assistance.

A sample of the affidavit envelope was distributed as a handout. They contain a privacy tab that can be torn off which vendors do not see as an issue when they are ran through the machine.

**g. Administrative Policy – Fee Schedule**

Ms. Fontes provided a draft administrative policy and reported the overall increase of poll worker pay would average at 15%. This item will go before the Board of Supervisors during a meeting in July.

Ms. Pouquette reported that the City of Yuma Mayor Doug Nicholls reached out to her asking why Yuma County charges them for using the Civic Center as a voting site. He indicated he would like to discuss offsetting this cost.

**h. Report Requests**

The committee agreed they will meet again in September.

Ms. Thorpe noted it would be interesting to track the number of new registrations as the year goes on. Ms. Fontes noted this number has increased by a few thousand in the last few months.

#### **5. Elections Director Performance Evaluation**

Ms. Pouquette reported she is done with the evaluation with the exception of one piece related to Strategic Planning. She will email the form to the committee tomorrow or Monday and asked that she be contacted with any concerns. Ms. Pouquette explained she is trying to encourage Ms. Fontes to provide more support to staff, especially the new hire. She suggested courses be taken which are offered by Human Resources regarding supervision.

#### **6. Discussion of future agenda items**

Ms. Pouquette will provide information regarding new voter registration statistics.

Ms. Thorpe stated she will speak to Human Resources about the Security Officer and get back to Ms. Pouquette on public service announcements.

#### **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:38 p.m.

Adopted this 30th day of September, 2020.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan K. Thorpe, Chairman