

PRACTICAL TIPS ON ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

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Chris Hawkins, Newmarket Town and School District Moderator
Cordell Johnston, Henniker Town and School District Moderator

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Complete as many tasks as possible before election day or before the polls open: count ballots received (with appropriate notice); open absentee ballot outer envelopes (with appropriate notice); complete pre-election certificate.
- Advertise supervisor sessions for registration of new voters to limit the rush on election day.
- Have a written checklist, in a logical order, for the tasks involved in counting and reconciling ballots and votes after the polls close (e.g., counting uncast ballots, printing long tape, separating and counting ballots that did not go through tabulator, counting write-in votes, completing post-election certificate).

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Meet with the Town Clerk, Public Works, Superintendent of School, Police and other important stakeholders in advance to discuss any foreseeable issues – e.g., parking and traffic control; setting up and breaking down the polling place; who to contact in the event of problems; etc.
- Work with stakeholders to develop an emergency action plan in the event of unforeseen problems or emergencies. In Newmarket, we have a designated rally point for poll workers in the event the polling place needs to be evacuated, as well as a designated backup polling place.
- Communicate expectations to the voters through public meetings and social media.

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Read the listserv and consult fellow moderators.
- Read NHMA Materials and consult NHMA for the latest developments.
- Attend SOS Training to ensure you understand the latest changes to the rules.
- Train, train, and train the ballot clerks, Supervisors, greeters, etc.

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Use greeters to triage potential problems and keep voters moving.
- Get help. Utilize one or more assistant moderators to lighten your load and ask them to attend training. Don't ask people to help; tell them they are going to help.
- For example, consider utilizing an assistant Moderator trained and dedicated to processing absentee ballots and another assistant to watch the tally machine when you are called away.

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Presidential elections have high turnout and put increased pressure on all parts of the process. In future Presidential elections, consider utilizing assistant Moderators whose primary focus is to pull first-time registrants out of the line (so they don't have to stand in line twice) and to identify and assist elderly and other voters who may need special assistance.
- Consider the use of poll pads. At the last Presidential election, Newmarket had approximately 6,700 registered voters. We had five poll pads: three for checking in, one for the Supervisors, and one for absentee voters (which we rolled into the ordinary check-in process after the absentee ballots were checked in). We could have used three additional polls pads: two for the supervisors and an additional pad for checking in. We had wait times up to an hour based upon 90% turnout.

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Use less well-attended elections as an opportunity to train new poll workers. Try to train more poll workers than you strictly need to maintain a cadre of trained workers and then cherry-pick your best workers for Presidential elections.
- Utilize the SOS and AG's office. Consider a rule of thumb that if you cannot solve or effectively delegate a problem within five minutes, call the SOS hotline and ask for guidance or to send someone to address the issue. Experience suggests that a single problematic voter can divert attention for inordinate amounts of time.

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Practical Tips on Election Administration

- Time how long it takes for voters at given points in line to check in to vote. Ask your assistant moderators to periodically tell voters it should take X minutes from a given point to check in. This helps to inform the voters how long they can expect to wait and to control their expectations.

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