

Date Printed: 06/16/2009

JTS Box Number: IFES_76
Tab Number: 137
Document Title: Motor Voter News
Document Date: Summer 1999
Document Country: United States --
Virginia
Document Language: English
IFES ID: CE02550



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In Memoriam

*Louella
Crutchfield-Thaxton*

General Registrar,
City of Roanoke

January 23, 1946
June 28, 1999

Audrey S. Piatt

Deputy Secretary,
State Board of
Elections (ret.)

June 26, 1934
July 4, 1999

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Voter Registration Pilot Project A Success More than 7,000 Applications Processed

Registrars across Virginia now have the opportunity to serve citizens directly from Department of Motor Vehicle offices. The Virginia Beach voter registration pilot project has been a big success, allowing assistant registrars to electronically process more than 7,000 voter registration applications during a five-month period at two DMV customer service centers (CSCs). State and local officials celebrated the successful completion of the project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 27 at DMV's Virginia Beach - Buckner Blvd. CSC.

"I invite all Virginia registrars to partner with DMV as we begin modifying our CSCs to provide this new service to citizens," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb. "DMV strives to deliver the ultimate in customer service, and this new system certainly helps us achieve that goal."

The project allows assistant registrars to share space with a DMV employee at a CSC information counter. Registrars enter applications directly into SBE's computer, bypassing the manual collection

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State and local officials gathered on July 27 at DMV's Virginia Beach - Buckner Blvd. office to celebrate the successful completion of the voter registration pilot project. The officials are (l. to r.) DMV Manager Karen Y. McPeeks, Virginia Beach Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf, Secretary of Administration G. Bryan Slater, Secretary of Transportation Shirley J. Ybarra, DMV Coordinator Rita E. Starling, Virginia Beach Registrar Marlene Claya Hager, SBE Secretary Cameron P. Quinn, DMV District Manager John H. Payne, DMV/SBE Liaison Kathy C. Jarrell and DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb.

Registrars Can Now Access Residential Addresses

In response to a recent meeting with registrars, DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb approved the release of residential address information to registrars. Previously, registrars only had access to mailing addresses from DMV which were sometimes different from residential addresses.

"In the interest of improving service to citizens, we are making this new information available to registrars," said

Commissioner Holcomb. "Effective August 15, any registrar in Virginia with online capability can obtain this information directly from DMV."

Since voting precincts are determined by street address, the release of residential information will make precinct verification easier for registrars. "This decision by DMV is welcome news," said State Board of Elections Secretary

Cameron P. Quinn. "This is yet another example of inter-agency cooperation to streamline the voter registration process."

In addition to this service, DMV will soon provide SBE with an electronic tape of information on citizens who have moved outside of Virginia and have surrendered their Virginia driver's license.

DMV, SBE Chiefs Visit Registrars

DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb and SBE Secretary Cameron P. Quinn recently visited registrars and officials from several Northern Virginia localities to review the success of the Virginia Beach voter registration pilot project. "We have been encouraging registrars to partner with DMV as this new opportunity becomes available across Virginia," said Commissioner Holcomb. "Not only does the system improve the voter registration process, it also provides better service to citizens."

The new system allows assistant registrars to efficiently process voter registration applications directly from DMV offices. The applications are entered into SBE's computer, and applicants are usually registered to vote on the spot (see story on p. 1).

Commissioner Holcomb and Secretary Quinn will be glad to present the benefits of this opportunity to registrars and local officials. To arrange for a visit, call (804) 367-6606 or e-mail the Commissioner at commish@dmv.state.va.us.

DMV Customers Now Notified Twice About Voter Registration

DMV customer service representatives recently began asking their customers not once but twice if they would like to apply to register to vote. This change is just one more step that DMV is taking to ensure that customers take advantage of the opportunity to apply to register to vote when they visit a DMV office.

When customers enter a DMV customer service center (CSC), they are directed to the customer service information counter. If the customer wants to apply for a driver's license or ID card, the DMV representative provides an application

(DL1M or DSA12) and adds "you may also apply to register to vote by completing and signing Section B." Customers sit comfortably in the waiting area completing the application form while they wait for the next available service representative.

As a DMV employee processes the customer's transaction, a new message on the computer screen tells the employee to remind the customer again about the opportunity to apply to register to vote. Signed voter registration applications are torn off and forwarded to SBE for processing, while

unsigned and under 17 applications are shredded at the CSC.

"This process doubly ensures that DMV customers know they have the opportunity to apply to register to vote," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb. "Since wait times at CSCs are often very short, customers don't always have time to complete the application before being called to the service window. This process allows them additional time to review their application and make a decision."

DMV Mobile Units To Register Voters

Thanks to an idea proposed by New Kent County General Registrar Gwen Ellyson, registrars around the state will soon have the opportunity to take their services on the road, accompanying DMV employees on the agency's four mobile customer service centers (MCSCs).

Literally a DMV office on wheels, these mobile units offer all DMV services including road tests. These customized RVs regularly visit 52 sites across Virginia, delivering DMV services to remote areas of the state as well as to areas with heavy concentrations of employment.

Ellyson proposed her novel idea at a Virginia State Board

of Elections committee meeting in April. She and her staff will begin piloting the idea on August 17.

The Richmond MCSC will be the first unit modified for use by registrars with the other three following soon.



Registrars working from the mobile units will be able to access SBE records and process voter registration applications on the spot.

"This pilot takes the idea of having registrars in DMV offices a step further by including them on our mobile units," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb. "We invite every registrar in Virginia to 'go for a ride' with us. This is a wonderful opportunity to reach even more potential voters, citizens who otherwise might not have easy access to the application process."

Registrars interested in participating in this program can find out more by contacting Commissioner Holcomb by telephone at (804) 367-6606 or e-mail at commish@dmv.state.va.us. MCSC schedules can be viewed on DMV's website at www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/mcsc.

SBE Project Checks Felon Voting Status

The State Board of Elections has been busy checking the status of felons on voter rolls. "The purpose of this project is to make sure that everyone on the voter rolls is legally eligible to vote," said Kathy Jarrell, DMV/SBE Liaison. "We are verifying the restoration of felons' voting rights and plan to check the system on a regular basis."

Jarrell and SBE staff members began retrieving restoration-of-rights documents from the Library of Virginia in late winter. As the documents are retrieved, they are matched up with names of felons that were found on the voter rolls by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) review, conducted in December, 1998.

So far, SBE has retrieved approximately 4,300 restoration-of-rights documents from the library's archives. Of those, 968 were found on the JLARC list.

"Once we check the JLARC list, we then inquire on the Virginia Voter Registration System (VVRS) to see where the citizen is registered to vote. We send a copy of the restoration document to the registrar in that locality to verify the person's right to vote," said Jarrell.

SBE also receives information from the Virginia State Police on citizens whose felony convictions were reduced, dismissed or entered in error. More than 200 persons within this category have been found to date on the JLARC list. As with the others, SBE staff members check these names on VVRS to see where the citizen is registered to vote. A copy of the appropriate documentation is sent to the registrar of that locality.

All restoration-of-rights and related documents will be permanently filed at SBE. Registrars who wish to retrieve a file can contact Jarrell by phone at (804) 692-3068 or by e-mail at kjarrell@sbe.state.va.us.

(Voter Registration continued from page 1)

and distribution process. In most cases, customers can be registered to vote before they leave the DMV office.

DMV provides counter space, a state-of-the-art PC and printer, telephones and fax/copier machines for the assistant registrars. Initiated March 1 at DMV's Virginia Beach - Hilltop CSC, the project allows the General Registrar's office to process voter registration applications faster and more efficiently, reduces the number of incomplete or duplicate applications, and provides better service to DMV customers and voter registration applicants. The project was expanded to DMV's Virginia Beach - Buckner Blvd. CSC on May 3.

"This program has enhanced our operations," said Dr. Marlene Claya Hager, Virginia Beach General Registrar. "It also has allowed us to provide extra services to citizens, such as absentee ballot applications, legislator information and tourism materials." The program has been well received — customer response

has been positive and registrar workloads have been streamlined, added Hager.

In addition to the 7,000 voter registration applications processed by the registrars at DMV offices, thousands of duplicate applications or denials were prevented from entering the SBE system — saving both unnecessary work and the cost of mailing a denial. Applications received in the two pilot offices for other localities were either sent to SBE or forwarded to the specific localities.

"We plan to rollout this new opportunity in stages, expanding to between six and 10 DMV CSCs each time," said SBE Secretary Cameron P. Quinn. "I look forward to working with all interested jurisdictions and DMV as we implement this improved system across Virginia."

For more information on the program, contact Commissioner Holcomb by telephone at (804) 367-6606 or e-mail at commish@dmv.state.va.us.

Key Dates

October 4 - Voter registration deadline for the November general election

October 8 - Registrars must complete all voter registration input by 5 p.m.

November 2 - General election for all General Assembly members and other local offices

Motor Voter News

Motor Voter News is a publication produced by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Virginia State Board of Elections.

Richard D. Holcomb, DMV Commissioner

Cameron P. Quinn, SBE Secretary

Brian Matt, Editor

Motor Voter News
P.O. Box 27412
Richmond, VA 23269-0001
Telephone: (804) 367-6623
E-mail:
dmvbcn@dmv.state.va.us



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Richmond, VA 23269-0001

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"The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter."

Dwight D. Eisenhower

International Foundation for
Election Systems
1101 15th Street, NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20005

