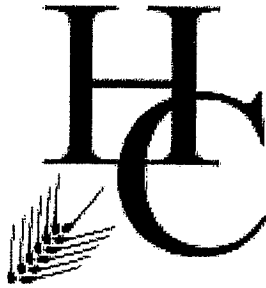


Sarah Rains,
Hodgeman County Clerk
Election Officer |PIO|FIO



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December 12, 2014

Dear Chairman Holmes & Members of the Special Committee on Ethics, Elections and Local Government,

Thank you for the opportunity for me to speak on behalf of Hodgeman County today. We truly appreciate this opportunity & hope that our information can help aid ongoing discussions.

There is no doubt that voter turnout is a serious concern for all counties. Just by looking at voting figures from previous years, it is obvious that the voter base is there, but simply does not seem to be participating in the smaller city/school elections.

A brief overview of data is provided below for the committee's consideration.

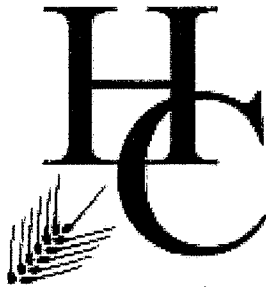
The Basics:

Hodgeman County is a primarily paper ballot based county with 1 paper ballot Accuvote Ballot Reader & at least 1-2 Electronic Voting machines (for ADA voters) at each voting location . Each polling place has multiple precincts voting at each location. Ballots are distributed based on precinct identification numbers within our poll books. All ballots (whether electronic or paper) are programmed by a third party company, Election Source. Ballot printing is also outsourced. The total numbers of ballots printed are based upon a formula comparing previous voter turnout records. Back up cards are programmed for each election in case of any issues during election day.

What makes Hodgeman County special?

- 5 Member Board of County Commissioners
- Total of 6 school districts, including our home school district
- Fairly "high" voter turnout for even year elections: 60-71%
- Low voter turn out for odd year elections: 25-35%

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Moving City/School Elections to Fall of Odd Years

This option has been proposed several times over the past few years and seems to be the most readily feasible. Historically, our local city/school races are usually uncontested or simply lack candidates which seem to correlate with our voter turnout. Having a mirrored schedule based on even year elections may help establish a routine for our local voters regardless if the races are contested/uncontested. Educating voters and candidates will prove to be an important factor for seeing numbers increase.

Moving Elections to Fall of Even Years

This is another proposed option for possibly increasing voter turnout. Mirrored election schedules and on going campaigning ads would continue to draw in the larger voter turn out but other key points to consider:

1. Number of Ballot Styles

Precinct lines create multiple ballot styles due to 5 Member Board of Commissioners & multiple school districts (6) in Hodgeman County.

Example: For the 2012 Primary Election, Hodgeman County had ³⁰~~38~~ ballot styles including non-partisan ballots for a city sales tax question. Should that exact election be combined with a City/School Election, the ballot styles would grow to 58. Out of the 58, 34 would be present in one voting location.

2. Costs

For Hodgeman County, encoding in house is not practical option at this time due to software costs and licensing fees. No matter the voting equipment utilized, costs are associated with each type of equipment.

Example: Using the 2012 Primary example above, Hodgeman County would pay for 58 paper ballot styles to be coded for our paper OS voting machines and 58 electronic ballot styles would be coded for our electronic TSX voting machines.

Basic testimony figures have been provided with comparative figures for the 2012 General, 2013 City/School, 2014 Primary, & 2014 General Election. Although this information outlines basic costs associated with these elections, it does not include annual ongoing costs for annual voting equipment maintenance, database maintenance by staff, general voting supply maintenance, and election staff salaries throughout the year.

Election Costs prepared for Senator Holmes - prepared 12/5/14

2012 PRESIDENTIAL General Election - November 6, 2012

BALLOTS & ENCODING	\$ 3,130.08
POSTAGE/ADVANCE	\$ 309.06
POLL WORKERS	\$ 2,275.50
SPACE RENTAL	\$ -
VOTING MACHINE SUPPLIES	\$ 110.55
TOTAL:	\$ 5,825.19
Total Ballots Cast	1079
Per Ballot Cost	\$ 5.40

2013 CITY/SCHOOL BOARD Election - April 2, 2013

BALLOTS & ENCODING	\$ 1,542.03
POSTAGE/ADVANCE	\$ 70.38
POLL WORKERS	\$ 1,248.50
SPACE RENTAL	\$ -
MACHINE SUPPLIES	\$ 44.50
TOTAL:	\$ 2,905.41
Total Ballots Cast	373
Per Ballot Cost	\$ 7.79

2014 PRIMARY Election - August 5, 2014

BALLOTS & ENCODING	\$ 7,213.60
POSTAGE/ADVANCE	\$ 73.44
POLL WORKERS	\$ 1,885.25
SPACE RENTAL	\$ -
MACHINE SUPPLIES	\$ 124.60
TOTAL:	\$ 9,296.89
Total Ballots Cast	408
Per Ballot Cost	\$ 22.79

2014 GENERAL Election - November 4, 2014

BALLOTS & ENCODING	\$ 4,036.55
POSTAGE/ADVANCE	\$ 201.96
POLL WORKERS	\$ 2,020.00
SPACE RENTAL	\$ -
MACHINE SUPPLIES	\$ 124.45
TOTAL:	\$ 6,382.96
Total Ballots Cast	883
Per Ballot Cost	\$ 7.23