

State of Wisconsin \ Government Accountability Board

212 East Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor
Post Office Box 7984
Madison, WI 53707-7984
Voice (608) 266-8005
Fax (608) 267-0500
E-mail: gab@wisconsin.gov
<http://gab.wi.gov>



JUDGE DAVID G. DEININGER
Chairperson

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

A Framework for Addressing Clerks' Concerns Regarding Election Administration Workload September 24, 2012

Background: On August 9, 2012, Green County Clerk Mike Doyle, State Representative Howard Marklein, and Wisconsin Counties Association's Executive Director Mark O'Connell met with G.A.B. Director Kennedy, G.A.B. Chairperson Judge David Deininger, and staff regarding concerns relating to clerks' election administration workload. During that meeting, Clerk Doyle presented a letter (copy attached) and survey results from the Executive Board of the Wisconsin County Clerks Association that expressed concerns and detailed the growing election administration challenges facing clerks.

G.A.B.'s Framework to Response to Clerks' Concerns: Director Kennedy asked the Elections Division Administrator to form an inter-organizational taskforce to address concerns raised by local election officials. Membership of the taskforce includes representatives from:

- Wisconsin County Clerks Association
- Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Association
- Wisconsin Counties Association
- Wisconsin Towns Association
- Wisconsin League of Municipalities
- Government Accountability Board

The taskforce comprised of representatives from the above six statewide organizations, will address county and municipal clerks' election-related workload, and how the following election administration burdens on clerks may be able to be reduced:

- Expansion of SVRS and WEDCS Services: What can be done to simplify/reduce these tasks?
- SVRS' Full Absentee Functionality: What needs to be done before across-the-board usage is required?
- GAB-190 Statistics/Cost of Elections: Revisit timetable and methodology for cost of election data.
- The Four-Year Voter Record Maintenance: How can this process be efficiently/effectively managed?
- Voter EDR Verification Postcards: How can this process be efficiently/effectively administered?
- The Provider-Relier Relationship: What needs to be done to enable municipalities to become Self-Providers?
- Other Matters identified that are strategic to improving the Clerk/G.A.B. Partnership.

Charge to the Inter-Organizational Taskforce: The Charge to the taskforce is to review and identify options and recommendations for addressing municipal and county clerks' election administration workloads:

1. Assess the statutory (legal) roles and requirements for clerks and the G.A.B. respectively;
2. Within the statutory requirements, explore options for reducing clerks' election administration duties;
3. Develop an action plan including a timetable for addressing above-referenced clerks' concerns;
4. Recommend legislative action designed to promote effective election administration; and,
5. Report as follows:
 - Preliminary Report Due: January 31, 2013
 - Final Report Due: February 28, 2013.

Organizational Meeting: Appointments to the taskforce are expected to be completed by the end of September 2012. An organizational meeting is expected to be convened by mid-October 2012.