DUVAL COUNTY ELECTION ADVISORY PANEL

PRELIMINARY MINUTES
*(These minutes are unofficial until reviewed and approved by the
Election Advisory Panel at a future meeting.)*

September 17, 2025
3:00 p.m.

Don Davis Room
City Hall

Meeting convened: 3:00 pm.

Attendance: Panel Members Donvan Bradley, Gloria Einstein, Justin Gicalone, Austin Kwikkel, Robert Maldonado, Carmen Martinez, Lanelle Phillmon, and Jerry Holland, Supervisor of Elections

Excused: None

Absent: Ray Pringle

Also: Brandon Russell – City Council Research Division

<u>Approval of Minutes</u>

The minutes of the March 19, 2025, meeting of the Election Advisory Panel were moved for approval.

Motion/2ⁿᵈ (Kwikkel/Bradley) approve the March 19, 2025, minutes—**approved unanimously via a voice vote.**

<u>Supervisor of Elections update</u>

Jerry Holland, Supervisor of Elections, provided the panel with printed materials created by his office and invited Jennifer Casey, Director of Education and Community Outreach, to the podium to give updates. Ms. Casey stated her division has hosted 113 events, 10 tours of the Election Center, and 24 events with community and minority groups. She indicated her division also conducted nine naturalization ceremonies and registered 501 new citizens. She stated that 1787 students had been registered across 31 events at public and private high schools, along with 121 newly registered voters from a tour of senior centers around Jacksonville. She also explained that of the 113 events, roughly half were equipment demonstrations. She noted that they had collected 2,471 applications, with 170 being updates and 2,301 being renewals. Of those, 13 percent were registered as Democrats, 17 percent were registered as Republicans, and the remaining 70 percent were for other parties or had no party affiliation.

She added that new flyers were created for registering to vote, updating signatures, express voting for voters with disabilities, changes to driver's license numbers, and poll worker recruitment. She also detailed the new activity book created by the division. She explained the student election conducted at LaVilla, where

927 middle school students cast their votes. She stated that SOE had accounts on Instagram, Facebook, and X, which together had garnered 150,000 views so far this year.

Ms. Casey also provided updates on poll workers. During the summer, 800 poll workers responded to a survey, which was then used to make improvements regarding training poll workers. She also stated that her office has instituted performance tiers for poll workers based on experience and past performance. She also described a new policy that prohibits immediate family members who are poll workers from signing a form, such as a chain of custody form, to increase transparency and trust.

To increase recruitment efforts for poll workers, Ms. Casey stated that poll workers were invited to bring a friend to the Election Center, resulting in 22 recruits. Her office has also been posting fliers for recruitment in local establishments and actively recruiting bilingual poll workers. She stated they currently have 60 bilingual poll workers who represent 12 different languages. She also noted that a question about veteran status was added to the poll worker application.

She continued, stating that her division did not have standard operating procedures, so they had spent the year developing those procedures for areas such as staffing, payroll, outreach, and communications.

Mr. Maldonado asked if the tiers created by poll workers relied only on years of service. Ms. Casey stated that the tiers take into account the number of elections worked and whether a poll worker has any notes from leadership in their file. Mr. Maldonado asked for the rationale for the tiers. Ms. Casey stated they will use it to utilize their most experienced workers effectively, especially on busy days.

Mr. Kwikkel asked if the level of outreach this year was normal or due to the absence of any elections. Mr. Holland affirmed that, with no elections, they were able to engage in more outreach work.

Ms. Phillmon asked if they were sharing their work and collaborating with other election offices across the state. Mr. Holland confirmed that there were many instances where their work was being showcased and explained that there was a network that allowed for sharing ideas. Mr. Holland stated that a Duval County elections museum should be online around the beginning of next year.

Justin Gicalone provided an update on voter registration and list maintenance statistics. The total number of registered voters currently stands at 652,479, comprising 246,478 Democrats, 238,191 Republicans, and 167,710 NPAs and other party affiliations. He stated that the number of voters moving from active to inactive since January 2025 is 20,208, with 8,172 being Democrats, 5,321 being Republicans, and 6,735 being NPAs and other party affiliations. Regarding vote-by-mail, Mr. Gicalone stated that there are currently 9,632 vote-by-mail requests, comprising 5,139 Democrats, 3,113 Republicans, and approximately 1,400 NPA and other party affiliations.

Mr. Gicalone announced that the SOE website will be redesigned, with the change expected to occur in November of this year. Regarding the budget, Mr. Gicalone stated that if passed as is, the SOE's budget for the coming fiscal year will be $9,409,337. He noted these funds are roughly split evenly between registration and elections. He stated that they anticipate returning approximately $300,000 of unspent funds.

Mr. Gicalone stated that they have renewed the 10-year lease for the election center, which will begin in October of this year. He also noted that improvements will be made to the facility to enhance security, as well as to their training facilities. Regarding petitions, he stated that there were new requirements under state law, which have led to an increase in costs (now approximately $3 per initiative petition). He said that they will revise it to take into account the increased costs of postage and employee expenses, which have both risen.

Mr. Gicalone stated that the other divisions within SOE were developing standard operating procedures, as

Ms. Casey had alluded to in her presentation. He also noted that four employees within SOE completed their Certified Election Registration Administrator (CERA) certification.

Mr. Holland provided clarification on the process of moving active voters to inactive status, noting that they remain eligible to vote. He also detailed the process for verifying the addresses of those voters. He stated that if an inactive voter fails to vote in two federal elections, then they become ineligible and would need to re-register. He also reviewed the petition verification process for initiatives to amend the Florida Constitution, highlighting the additional steps that result in a higher cost per petition.

Carmen Martinez asked if the initiative petitions have to be applied for in each county. Mr. Holland clarified that petition signatures cannot all come from the same place, and each Congressional district must be adequately represented in the petition signatures. He added that each county is responsible for determining the costs associated with the petition process, which may result in variable costs across counties. He noted that the costs on average seem to range from $3 to $4. Ms. Martinez asked for a general overview of the law that introduced these requirements. Mr. Holland provided an overview of HB 1205, which added more requirements to the petition process to reduce instances of fraud. He also noted that some provisions are still being deliberated in court.

Lanelle Phillmon asked about the Mandarin Trace Voter Drive. Mr. Holland explained that this was simply a voter drive at an apartment complex, following a request submitted to the SOE office. Ms. Phillmon also raised concerns with driver's license numbers and voter information matching and asked if there were any outreach plans to address potential confusion among the public. Mr. Holland stated that a change in a driver's license number does not impact a person's ability to vote if they are already registered to vote and have not updated their license number with the SOE. He noted that citizens are impacted if they are updating their party or address or signing a petition, and the license number provided doesn't match what is on file.

Ms. Martinez asked what else the SOE is doing to verify information. Mr. Holland stated that they can only refer to data from a governmental agency. He noted that individuals may come in with records, which can trigger an investigation, but cannot lead to an update of a voter's information or status.

Old Business

None

New Business

Ms. Martinez inquired about the technology Eagle AI and whether the SOE planned to use it. Ms. Martinez provided a general overview of the technology, which utilizes an algorithm to detect voting irregularities. She claimed the technology was being used in Hillsborough, Brevard, and Broward Counties in Florida. Ms. Einstein expressed concern about the technology due to the biases inherent in the algorithms it uses and viewed the technology as a private, partisan effort.

Mr. Kwikkel asked if the SOE had considered the role of AI in administering elections generally, noting that instances of fraud were relatively low due to current safeguards. Mr. Gicalone stated that any AI tools would have to be compatible with the City's firewalls. Mr. Holland added that the integration of AI tools will depend on what technology is allowed by the State. Ms. Martinez stated that the technology was not AI, despite being referred to as Eagle AI. Ms. Phillmon pointed out that the name of the technology is potentially inspired by Operation Eagle Eye, which was used to disenfranchise minority voters in the past. She also noted that the State used to be a part of ERIC, which allowed collaboration across states to ensure proper list maintenance.

Mr. Maldonado asked how the lack of standard operating procedures was discovered. Mr. Gicalone explained that new directors and staff entering their roles had found that the procedures had not been adequately recorded. He noted that there were still many people on staff who had been in their roles for a long time, allowing them to begin memorializing their systems.

Brandon Russell notified the committee that they did have one public comment card and reminded the committee that the June meeting minutes still needed approval. The minutes of the March 19, 2025, meeting of the Election Advisory Panel were moved for approval.

Motion/2ⁿᵈ (Kwikkel/Einstein) approve the March 19, 2025, minutes—**approved unanimously via a voice vote.**

Mr. Maldonado asked how many non-citizens voted in the last election in Duval County. Mr. Holland stated that two non-citizens had voted in the previous election.

Ms. Martinez, citing the President's push to hand-count ballots, asked Mr. Holland for his view on the matter. He stated that hand-counting ballots would not be quicker or cheaper due to the number of ballot styles, labor costs, and the time required to hand-count. The panel requested information regarding the vacant seat to be appointed by the mayor, as well as details about the final report and the dates for 2026.

Public Comment

John Nooney expressed concern over how his comments were represented in meeting minutes from various other public meetings, showing the panel examples from prior meeting minutes where he provided public comment.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:19 pm

Minutes: Brandon Russell, Council Research

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Posted: 9:00 AM, September 24, 2025