



DUVAL COUNTY ELECTION ADVISORY PANEL

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

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

December 17, 2025
3:00 p.m.

Don Davis Room
City Hall

Meeting convened: 3:00 pm.

Attendance: Panel Members Justin Gicalone, Carmen Martinez, Robert Maldonado, Lanelle Philmon, Gloria Einstein, Ray Pringle

Excused: Panel Members Austin Kwikkel and Donovan Bradley

Absent: None

Also: Colleen Hampsey and Brandon Russell – City Council Research Division

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the September 17, 2025, Election Advisory Panel meeting were approved unanimously.

Supervisor of Elections update

Justin Gicalone provided an update from the Supervisor of Elections' office. He stated that there were 636,885 registered and active voters, including 239,039 Democrats, 234,379 Republicans, and 163,467 registered as No Party Affiliation (NPA) or with other party affiliations. He said that 38,236 voters moved from active to inactive status in 2025, of which 15,963 were Democrats, 9,884 were Republicans, and 12,389 were NPAs or others. He said they have received 10,885 vote-by-mail requests as of December 1, 2025, including 5,928 from Democrats, 3,371 from Republicans, and 1,586 from NPAs and others.

He said that Election Center improvements were underway, that they were currently in the permitting phase, and that they hope to be complete by March 1st. He said the SOE office is working on initiative petitions with a February 1 processing deadline. He also stated that they have launched their new website and that more updates are coming. He encouraged the Panel to review the website and reach out with any feedback.

Mr. Gicalone said they will hold their countywide student registration drive in February 2026, visiting public and private schools and universities to conduct outreach and registration with students. He said the Election Center, the national association of election administration officials, will be in Jacksonville for a special workshop. He noted that the Duval County SOE office will receive an award for its Beyond

Conversion program, a redesign of the technology used to train poll workers.

Mr. Gicalone then reviewed the Association of Supervisors of Elections' legislative priorities, which were provided to the Duval Delegation. He stated that no bill currently pertains to election administration, but anticipates that one will be filed. He indicated that they did not know what the bill would address. Carmen Martinez asked who sets the Duval Delegation's legislative priorities. Mr. Gicalone stated that the SOE office does.

Mr. Gicalone reviewed Ordinance 2025-0765-E, which the City Council approved. He explained that the ordinance moved the first City election in 2027 from the twelfth Tuesday to the tenth Tuesday of the year. He said this was necessary due to overlapping requirements and that the new dates would allow the SOE to meet all legal requirements. The first election will be held on March 9, 2027, with the second election date unchanged.

Mr. Gicalone then stated that there would be temporary and permanent changes to polling locations, which would be finalized soon through legislation to be filed. He said one location change would be due to renovations to a polling site. He also said there would be precinct boundary changes due to the closure of a polling place with no current replacement. He said that for the 2026 and 2027 elections, there will be 24 early polling sites, adding two and removing two that were used in the general election. For the general election, he said they will not use the Maxville Library or the UF IFAS Extension. He said the replacement sites will be the Dallas Graham Library and the Jacksonville Beach Community Center.

Lanelle Philmon noted a trend of young people not obtaining driver's licenses and asked whether the SOE provides information on how to get a Florida ID when registering younger voters. Mr. Gicalone stated that they do not, but they do provide general information about what they need when they vote. Ms. Philmon asked whether the petition verification process involves sending correspondence to the Election Crimes and Security Division when a person denies signing a petition. Mr. Gicalone stated that the process was the same statewide. He explained that the SOE sends a notice to each person who signs a petition to verify that they did so. If the voter did not sign the petition, they would then return their notice to the Election Crimes and Security Division.

Ms. Einstein asked what would happen if there was no response. Mr. Gicalone stated that no action is taken if there is no response, as they have already validated the signatures before sending notices. She then asked if the SOE has power over the notice's appearance. He said they created notices similar to those in other counties, but not with the intent to make them identical. She requested that they review the notice because she believed it was not conspicuous enough to inform voters that they need not take any action if they had signed the petition, as verified by the local SOE. She then asked about the organization hosting the workshop in February. Mr. Gicalone reiterated that the Election Center is the national organization for election administration professionals. He added that the same organization issues CERA certifications to its staff. Ms. Einstein asked whether elected officials could obtain CERA certification. Mr. Gicalone said some do, but requirements vary by state. He added that Mr. Holland had his CERA certification.

Ms. Martinez asked who the people who run the Election Center were and why Mr. Holland's certification was grandfathered in. Mr. Gicalone explained that the organization is national and comprises election officials from across the country who gather to train, educate, and share best practices. He said that membership dues fund the organization. Ms. Martinez then asked about vendors and their role in the organization. Mr. Gicalone said they pay membership dues and obtain certifications. Ms. Martinez said it was suspicious and asked about their plans. Mr. Gicalone stated that state law governs elections in Florida, including which equipment and processes are used.

Mr. Maldonado asked for a quick update on poll workers. Mr. Gicalone said they are starting to reach out to poll workers to secure commitments for upcoming elections and will begin rostering them soon. He said

currently they have no vacancies.

Mr. Pringle said many people were asking about paper ballots. Mr. Gicalone said everyone in Florida receives a paper ballot as required by statute. He added that they have two marking methods: pen or digital, but both produce a paper ballot. He said that a marking device does not tabulate; tabulation occurs when the paper ballot is placed in another device. Ms. Einstein asked if the devices print barcodes or just voters' selections. Mr. Gicalone said they print out both.

Ms. Philmon asked if Mr. Gicalone expected any shift in the SOE budget next year. Mr. Gicalone said it is too early to tell, especially since they do not yet know what a potential state election bill will include. He noted that there will be three elections in the next budget year, so it is likely to increase.

Ms. Einstein suggested using risk-limiting audits. Mr. Gicalone stated that state law prescribes various types of audits, including manual and automated options. He added that they do hand counting. Ms. Einstein asked whether they perform risk-limiting auditing during the hand count. Mr. Gicalone said they must draw random samples within a given precinct based on the race for which a recount is needed.

Ms. Martinez said there needs to be a discussion about what to do if President Trump issues an executive order requiring hand counts. Mr. Gicalone noted that they comply with state election law. Mr. Maldonado added that the President is powerless to direct state election administration and that litigation would most likely ensue if an executive order were issued.

Old Business

Mr. Maldonado requested an update on board membership, noting that some seats will become vacant soon. Collen Hampsey, Council Research, said they are always accepting applications and noted that the Mayor currently has a vacancy on the Panel. She said that Mr. Maldonado's term ends in April and that Ms. Martinez's and Ms. Philmon's terms have ended, but they can continue to serve until they are replaced or reappointed. Mr. Pringle noted that he knew someone interested, and Ms. Hampsey encouraged him to send their information to her. Mr. Maldonado asked whether Ms. Martinez and Ms. Philmon could continue serving, given that it was their first term; Ms. Hampsey confirmed they could.

Mr. Russell provided an overview of the draft annual report, noting that meeting dates from the end of 2024 were included because they were not included in the last annual report. He also explained that, since the December 2025 meeting had not yet occurred, they could approve the annual report on the condition that the December minutes be added once the meeting was completed. Mr. Maldonado asked if the report was usually done in the Summer. Mr. Russell stated that he was unsure of the usual completion date for the report. He was new to the department but explained that earlier dates were included in this year's report because of this. Mr. Maldonado asked whether the SOE presentation documents could be added to the report to make it more comprehensive.

Approval of the annual report was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

New Business

The Panel discussed electing new Panel leadership. The Panel decided to wait until the next meeting to elect new leadership, when more members were present.

Ms. Philmon asked about the meeting dates for 2026. Mr. Russell stated that the next meeting would be on March 18, 2026, and that future dates would be publicly noticed and forwarded to the panel. Mr. Maldonado asked whether it was customary to hold more meetings in election years. Ms. Hampsey stated that this has occurred in the past and that the Panel could schedule additional meetings if they deemed them necessary.

Ms. Hampsey then provided the 2026 dates: March 18, June 17, September 16, and December 9.

Mr. Maldonado suggested another meeting at the Election Center on Imeson Road, as they had done in the past, noting it was extremely helpful, especially with a new batch of Panel members. Mr. Gicalone said they would be more than welcome to hold their meeting on site. He requested that they meet in March at the Election Center, as they would be busier with election preparation later in the year.

Public Comment

None

Meeting Adjourned: 3:51 pm

Minutes: Brandon Russell, Council Research

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Posted: 1.2.26, 11:23 a.m.

