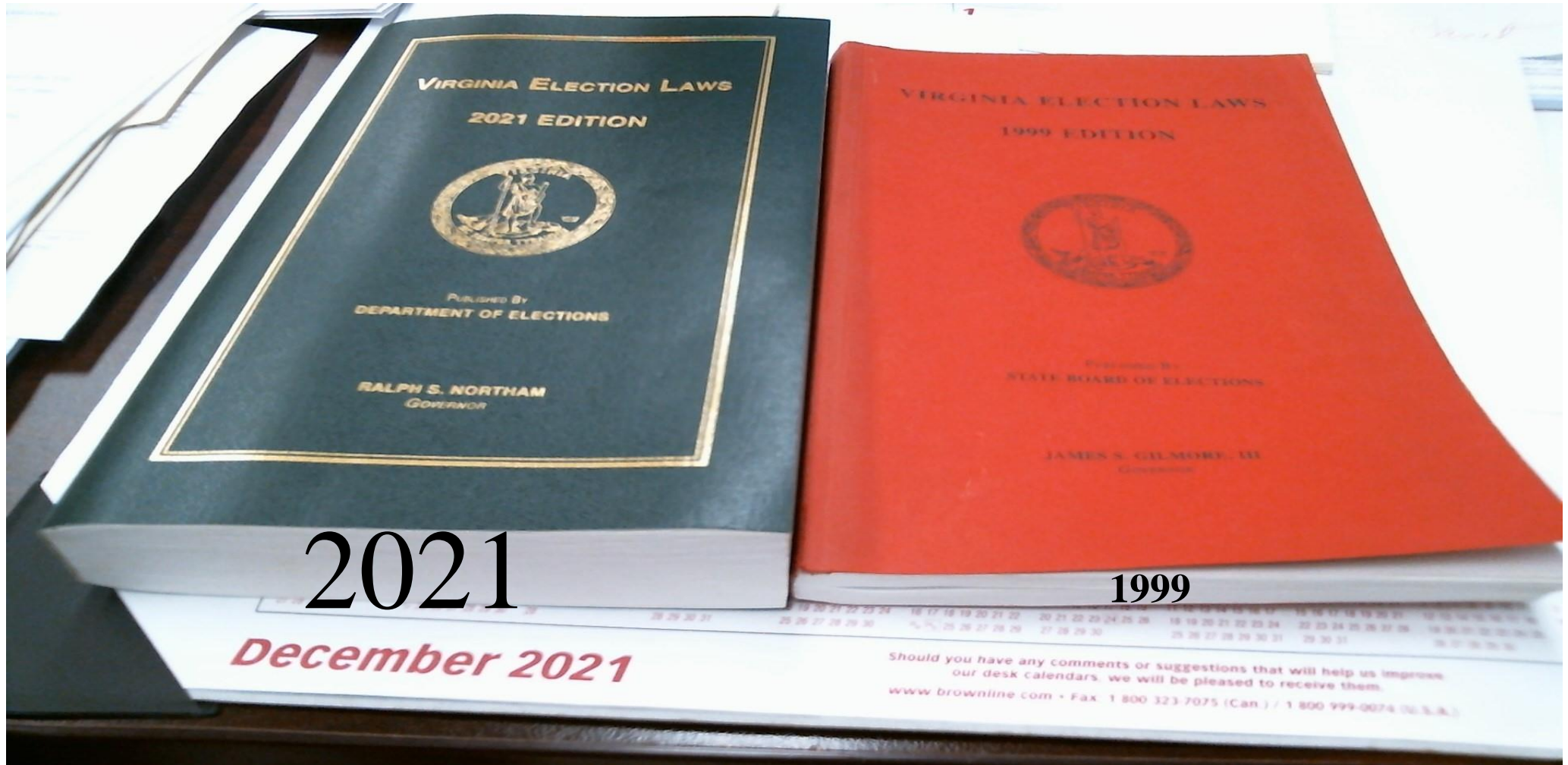




Franklin County Voter Registration and Elections

Then and Now

Substantial changes and additions to election law were made since 1999. The political climate has changed drastically over the years. The new Virginia Election Laws create *significant* changes every year for the operations of this office. In 2020 alone, there were 64 new laws, catapulting the Registrar and staff into meeting the law requirements and handling the workload to meet the required deadlines without additional resources.



Then and Now...

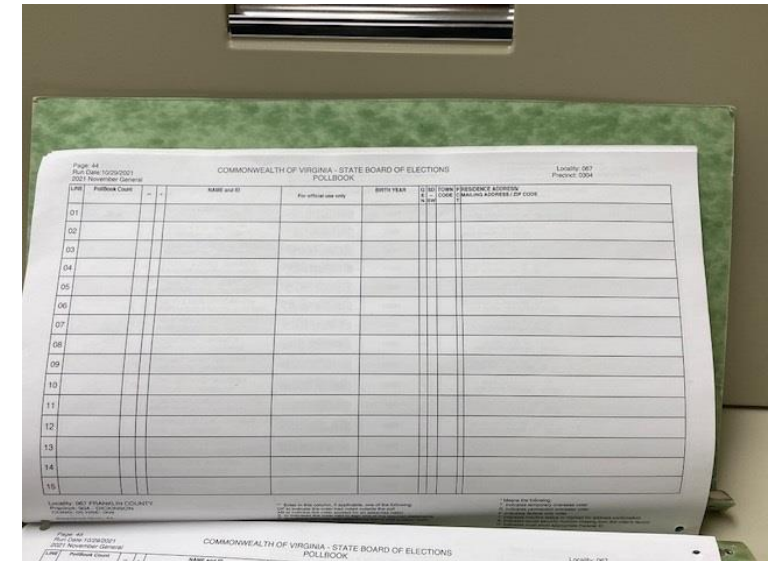


**R.F. Shoupe Lever
Voting Machine**

**Precinct Supply
Box 22"x 22"**



Paper Pollbooks

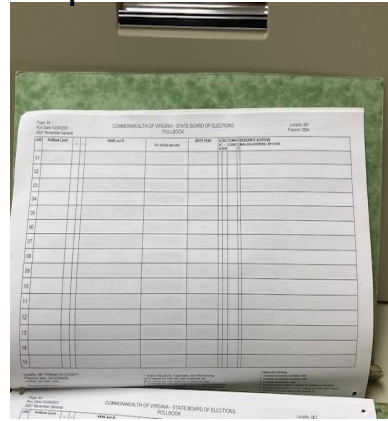


Then and Now...

Electronic Pollbooks



Emergency
Paper Pollbooks



PPE Supply Case



Provisional Ballot Case



Voting Machine



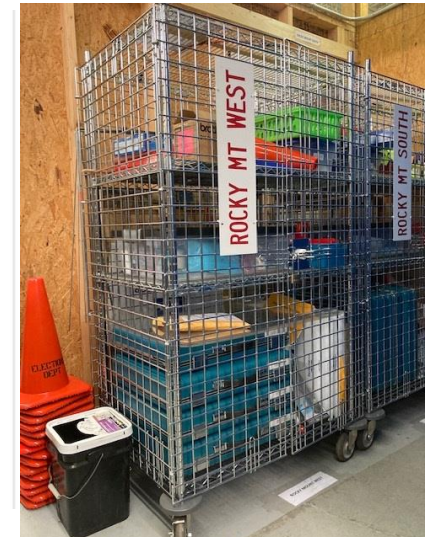
Absentee Ballot Drop-off
Bag (Precinct)



Voting Booths



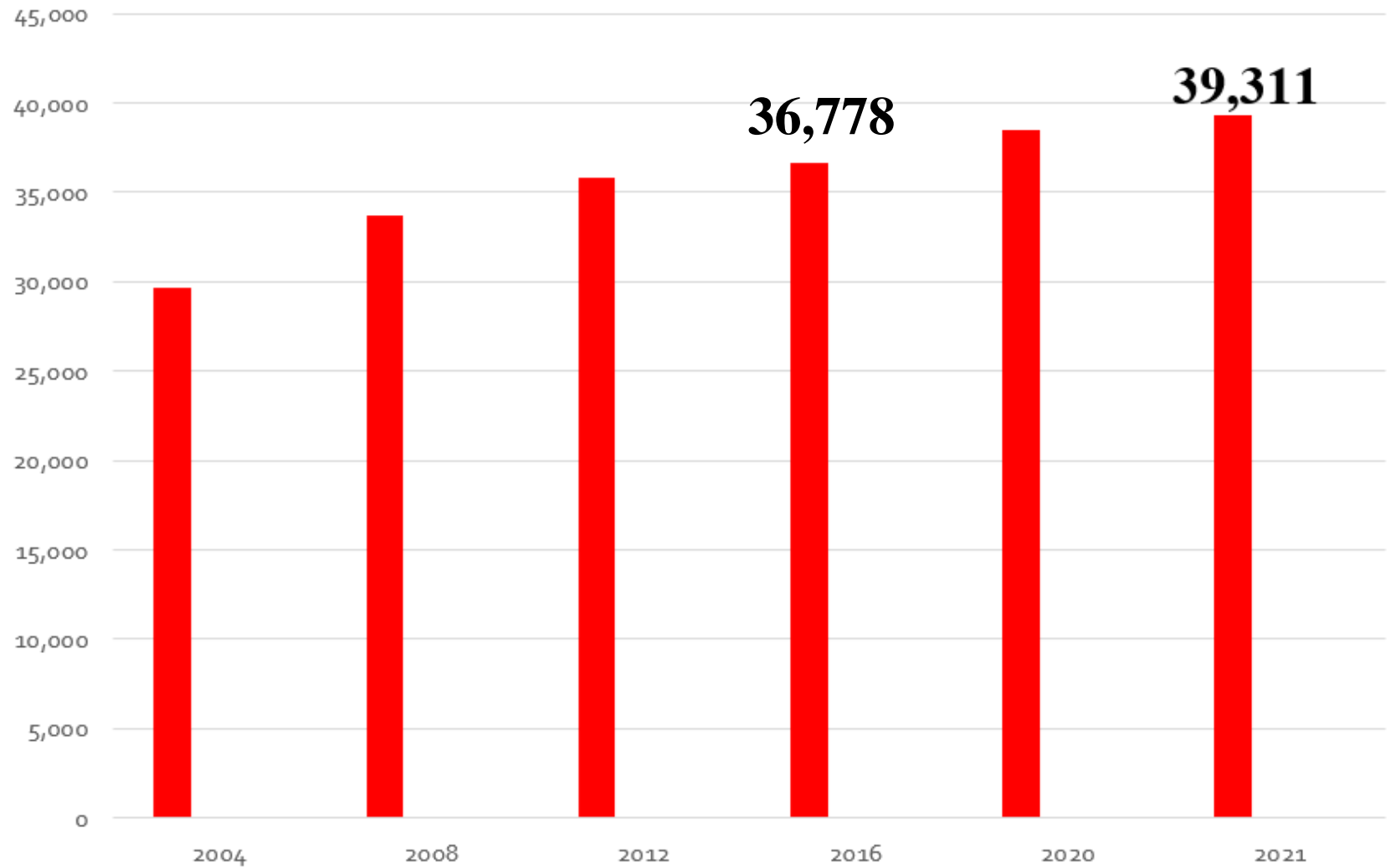
Supply Cart



Equipment and Supplies Storage Area



Number of Registered Voters



Voter Increase of 9%

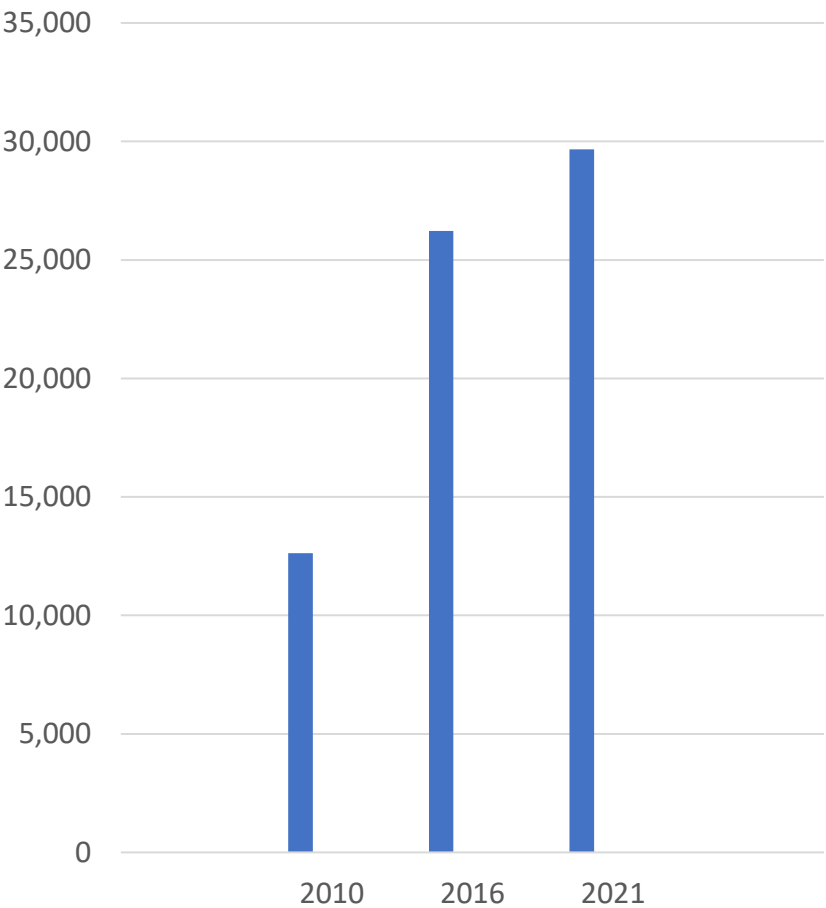
VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION STATISTICS

The General Registrar’s office receives VA Voter Registration Applications from various sources.

The VA Department of Elections requires each application received to be entered into the state system to reflect where the application originated.

- A - Public Assistance
- C - Disability Offices
- D - Discretionary Agencies
- F - Federal Form
- M - Military Recruiters
- I - Voter Card
- N - National Form
- O - Other Document/Information
- P - In Person
- R(N) - Confirmation Notice
- R(T) - Confirmation Transfer
- S - State Mail-In Form
- T - Third Party Voter Drive
- V - DMV
- W - Web DMV Verified
- WT - Web Third Party DMV Verified
- X - Web Not DMV Verified
- XT - Web Third Party Not DMV Verified

Voter Registration Applications Processed



57% Increase in
VA Registration
Applications

Staff and Temporary Staff Members

VA SB666/ - Voter registration; notification of denial. Requires notice of a denial of an application for voter registration to be provided by the general registrar to the applicant within five days of the denial. **This notice is required to be given in writing and by email or telephone** if that information was provided by the applicant. The bill requires the registration application to request that the applicant provide his telephone number and email address. If the general registrar is able to reach the applicant by telephone, corrections may be made by the applicant by telephone. *Effective date: July 1, 2020 (All year)*

Franklin County Absentee Ballots Mailed

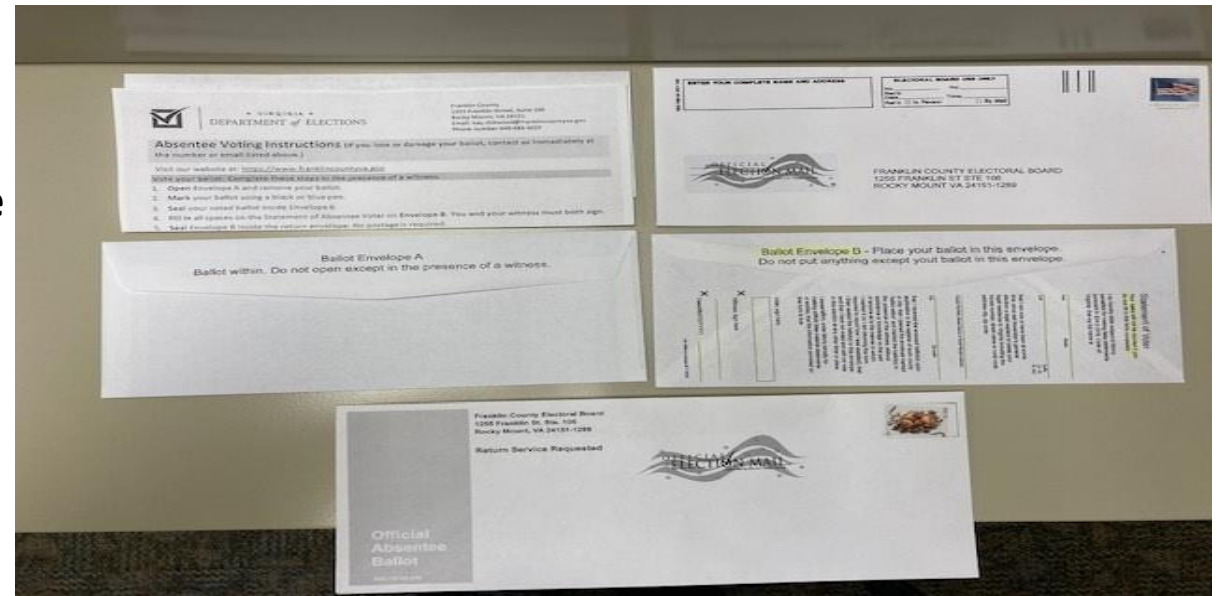
November 2020-2021
General Elections

1/24/2022

New laws, Elect guidelines and procedures, court orders, FOIA requests and etc.

- Proofing the ballots styles numerous times for accuracy
- Placing envelopes, labels, and postage
- Proofing, printing, folding voting instructions, and stuffing envelopes
- Thousands of applications being received, processed, 2-person verified, labeled, packed, and mailed in less than TWO WEEKS
- Seven days a week, 12-18 hour days for staff with zero days off
- Assistance from other seasonal staff and as well as numerous volunteers helped to ensure ballots were issued by the deadline as well as meet the deadline for FOIA requests received.

**Absentee
Ballot
Package**



Staff, Temporary Staff Members and Volunteers

Continued

November 2020-2021 General Election

The General Registrar, Assistant General Registrars and (5)Volunteers stepped in to assist with preparing the initial mailing of thousands of ballots, assisting in-person early voting voters that came into the Elections Office, answering phones, assisting with “curing” the ballots envelopes, filing voter registration and absentee applications, preparing PPE, training packets assembled and other election supplies, as well as a myriad of other tasks. (60 Days)

***Curing ballots is when a ballot envelope is returned by mail and the enclosed ballot envelope is missing important voter information that is required for the ballot to be counted. It is now *mandated* that our office reach out to the voter by mail, email, phone or letter within three days of receiving the ballot to allow them to “cure” their missing information. The ballot envelope “curing” process was very time consuming for staff to process and contact the voter by the deadline.**

Franklin County Absentee Ballots Mailed

Continued

November 2020-2021 General Elections

- **Challenges - Three 3rd Party Political Mailings, one of which resulted in mass confusion for our voters when they supplied inaccurate information listing Franklin City's return address instead of Franklin County's return address on their return mail envelopes. This led to voter confusion and many incorrect social media rumors.**

- **Another challenge was the lack of submission confirmations to the voters in the state's Citizen Portal resulted in mass confusion and voters submitting multiple absentee ballot applications...some as many as 5+ per voter. *All applications are required to be entered.***

- **These challenges resulted in hundreds of irate phone calls and media inquiries in addition to the already taxed phone lines we had for other requests. Correcting the misleading information and reassuring concerned citizens as to the sanctity of elections in Franklin County became a time consuming undertaking.**

From August 1, 2020, to November 6, 2020, this office had a total count of 6,973 in-coming calls for the November 2020 election.

- **Return postage envelopes were *required* to be provided for all mailed ballots issued. Increasing the amount of postage needed in our budget.**

- **From January 1, 2020, through November 2, 2021, there were a total of six elections that we prepared for regardless of the type of election.**

Absentee Ballot Drop Box

The legislative enactment of the Ballot Drop Box requires the presence of two staff members at all times for business hours. At the end of the day two staff members remove the ballot envelopes and log the number of ballots received.

This procedure also requires tracking the information for reporting into the state system on a daily basis.



Franklin County Absentee Ballots Mailed

Absentee Ballot Pre-processing

Absentee ballot by mail pre-processing is required by law to pre-process all mailed ballots received prior to Election Day. Procedures require a team of officers that represent both political parties to process the ballots so that we can meet the deadline for certifying election results.

Absentee Voting Turnout – General Registrar's Office

November 2020 General Election

2016 Absentee Voting for a like election: 2,181 Mail & In-Person Total

2020 In-Person Absentee Voting Office 8,647

Mail Absentee Voting Office 3,585 = 12,232 Absentee Voters

461% Increase

Officers of Election and Polling Places

PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY

- **200+ Officers of Election** are required to be trained before working at the polling places for every election. To handle this many officers we (Electoral Board and GR) plan/prepare the training into three days with six different sessions, while keeping the Voter Registration office open for business hours.
- 24 Polling locations were used for the November General election. These polling places were notified prior to the election and due to the COVID pandemic several of the rented facilities showed concerns about the county using the polling places for the election. After much discussion with the owners of the facilities, we were allowed to use their buildings by assuring them we were following CDC Guidelines along with sending PPE supplies.
- The General Registrar and staff are responsible for making sure every precinct has all the supplies, forms, PPE, signs, voting equipment and etc. for election day. The storage facility is off site and requires election supplies be delivered back and forth between the office and storage facility in preparation of deployment to polling places. This requires staff at various times prior to election (*as close to the election as possible*) to make sure the security carts and elections supplies are ready for Election Day.

AFTER ELECTION DAY

- The General Registrar and staff manually enter an invoice into MUNIS for every officer of election that worked the election and for any polling facilities that were used in the election. This process includes making sure any changes to the vendor/officer information is updated and setting up new vendors/officers and all their vital information.
- The GR and staff are responsible for making sure all election equipment and supplies are returned to the storage facility after an election in preparing for the next election.
- All voting equipment is cleaned and recharged on a scheduled basis. This would involve recharging 36 voting machines and 70 tablets used for electronic pollbooks.

Staff and Volunteers

Hours worked previously in a similar two-month election time period 990 hours.

Hours worked for the November 2020 General Election for a two-month time period 3,828 hours.

This office needs additional trained permanent staff and part-time staffing to handle the unprecedented workload and reduce the amount of overtime and comp time staff incurred for each election.

Staff and volunteers worked diligently all year to provide service to all voters and other citizens.

During this time when other departments had the opportunity to protect themselves from COVID 19 exposure by working split shifts or working from home, our office staff was here and exposed every day in order to meet the office requirements.



2022-2023 Budget Requests

Advisories come from the VA Department of Elections (ELECT) on a daily basis, usually multiples per day. Keeping up with these advisories is extremely time-consuming as each advisory normally has at least one if not multiple attachments. In 2021, there were **323** advisories issued by ELECT containing new or changed guidelines, laws and procedures to be adhered to.

Cybersecurity protocols, training and policies have now become a part of my day-to-day responsibilities that are tracked by the VA Department of Elections and could result in revoking this office's access to the state database if not properly completed, reported, etc.

All of this is in addition to the new law (§24.2-104.1) passed during the 2021 Special Session, which gives the Attorney General the authority to commence a civil action against office personnel or volunteers who violate any election law so long as there is reasonable cause to believe a violation has occurred whether intentional or not. This puts further emphasis on the need for me to review each of the advisories in depth to ensure everyone in my office is adhering to the everchanging guidelines/laws.

This enhances the need for permanent staff members who can stay current with the law changes and the guidelines issued by ELECT. The days of being able to bring in temporary office staff (volunteers) for an election period, bring them up to speed, and expect unimpeachable performance have passed – our duties are simply too intricate now.

This is also another reason staff in my office need to be full-time. Changes happen daily to policies, procedures, guidelines, etc. and it is difficult to keep up with what a part-time staff member has or has not been told when they only work a few days per week. By the time they return to the office, a whole week's worth of situations and changes have occurred and we have moved on to different issues.

Assistant Registrar Salary Comparison

The previous salary study for the county did not include the Assistant Registrar's salary for this office. The Assistant Registrar positions are deemed county paid employees. The salary needs to be adjusted to compare/compete with other localities.

Salary comparison for surrounding localities full time:

Bedford County – \$39,000.00 (Assistant with 10 years of service)

Danville City – \$37, 000.00 (Assistant with 17 years of service)

Salem City - \$44,000.00 (Assistant with 15 years of service)

Roanoke County- \$29,841.00 (**Assistant *starting* salary**)

Franklin County - \$28,737.93 (Retired Assistant Registrar with 20+ years of service)

Officers of Election Stipend Comparisons

Franklin County	Bedford County	Salem City	Roanoke County	Danville City	Henry County
Chief Officer \$170.00	Chief Officer \$200.00	Chief Officer \$170.00	Chief Officer \$225.00	Chief Officer \$180.00	Chief Officer \$180.00
Asst. Chief Officer \$135.00	Asst. Chief Officer \$185.00	Asst. Chief Officer \$160.00	Asst. Chief Officer \$200.00	Asst. Chief Officer \$160.00	Asst. Chief Officer 130.00
Officer of Election \$130.00	Officer of Election \$170.00	Officer of Election \$150.00	Officer of Election \$175.00	Officer of Election \$150.00	Officer of Election \$130.00

The number of volunteers that are in our locality average around 200 and each year they are dwindling down to where the Electoral Board and Registrar struggle to have enough Officers of Election to participate and keep the precincts staffed. There are 24 precincts that are required to be staffed in the county. Currently, there is a serious need to increase the stipend to compete with other localities and retain officers.

2022-2023 Budget Requests

1. Upgrade the current part-time position to full time.
2. Create a new full-time position.
3. Adjust salaries for all three full-time Assistant Registrars.
4. Adjust stipends for Officers of Election.

What's ahead...



- **State unfunded mandates including updated ongoing security requirements and certifications. (HB 2178 Minimum Security Standards)**
- **Cybersecurity requirements for written policies, reviews through national election organizations and federal agencies in order to maintain access to state database. Including participation in webinars, tabletop exercises and conference calls with Homeland Security, FBI, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis(MS-ISAC), Virginia State Police and etc.**
- **Redistricting will have significant impacts to our office workload and expense due to changes in boundaries. Required updated information keyed into the state system, mailing to voters, acquiring different or additional polling locations or precincts, printing of new maps, issuing legal notices/ads and additional staff to help with processing.**
- **Maintaining and recruiting Officers of Election to work scheduled elections.**
- **Preparing for all legislative changes and upcoming elections. Proposed bills for 2022-2023 totaling 32 so far for upcoming elections if passed.**

Despite the growing number of voters, new laws, expense, COVID 19 Pandemic and state mandates the General Registrar's office continues to work diligently to serve the people of Franklin County.

The staff of this office continues to work based on what the Code of Virginia requires of our staff and to safeguard democracy, however, we remind you we make every effort to be cost conservative and to keep office expenses down.

We realize that you have an enormous task trying to balance the budget and we thank you for your past support and consideration of our budget requests.