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SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

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M CARPENTER
Supervisor

May 14, 2009

Honorable Mayor Hanrahan and Gainesville City Commissioners,

This letter is a follow-up to conversations that I have had with your City Clerk, Kurt Lannon, regarding the 2010 City election dates and city election law updates.

Mr. Lannon and I have discussed on numerous occasions over the last several years the need for updates to the City election laws. These updates would provide the City some additional flexibility with their ballots, reduce costs with regard to poll worker training, and create adequate time between the regular election and run-off election to continue to offer early voting. It is my understanding that these issues have been discussed with the City.

Some of the election updates discussed:

- The need for 3 weeks between the end of the regular election and any ballot distribution for the run-off. This is to meet legal requirements for in-house and public testing, as well as printing and shipping deadlines. The printer requires 5-7 business days to print the ballots and shipping requires another 3 days for ground transportation.
- The possible implementation of a City ordinance that would permit the City to make use of paper ballots, as opposed to the scanable marksense ballots if necessary. Paper ballots could allow for an election to take place when County tabulation equipment was not available.
- An ordinance to recognize the regular and run-off election series as one election for the purpose of poll worker training. This would allow the required training received at the beginning of the election series to be applied to both regular and run-off elections, thus saving the City the cost of re-training the poll workers prior to the run-off.

Mr. Lannon and I met and discussed possible 2010 election dates for the City. One option was to join the City of Newberry and the City of Alachua on the second Tuesday in April, thus creating a three city election day. The March 2, 2010 date with a run-off

on March 30th was also discussed. It is my understanding Mr. Lannon presented these dates to you and the April date was not accepted. My understanding from Mr. Lannon is the City prefers the March 2nd date, but would continue to keep in place the three week period between elections requiring a run-off on March 23rd.

The City of Gainesville, as with all municipalities, has the sole legal authority to set its election dates and administer its elections. In the past, the City has elected to enter into an agreement with the Supervisor of Elections' office to administer the city elections for them, and I look forward to continuing this relationship. Although, if the City chooses to set March 2nd and March 23rd as the 2010 election dates, I cannot in good conscience sign an agreement to administer the run-off election.

My concern for the City is that three weeks does not guarantee adequate time to comply with the laws, regulations and best practices which result in a quality election. As you can see by the attached schedule there is not enough time to print and receive ballots, test equipment, hold legally required public meetings, and meet the early voting opening date. The City may want to review alternatives and I have included a few of the many options you may want to consider, some of which you have looked at in the past.

- You may wish to extend by one week the time between the regular and run-off elections.
- You may want to maintain your current schedule and choose to offer early voting for the regular election only.
- You may wish to discuss a change to a plurality vote that would negate the need for a run-off.

As the Commission will be addressing the election date at an upcoming meeting, I felt it was important to provide this information for your consideration.

We are all committed to providing a voting experience for our citizens that encourages participation in the process and promotes confidence in the elections. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact me.

Respectfully,



Pam Carpenter
Supervisor of Elections

cc: Kurt Lannon

Gainesville City Election Run-Off Election Time Line

Tuesday	March 2, 2010	Regular Election
Wednesday	March 3	Review precinct results Research provisional ballots
Thursday	March 4	Review precinct results Research provisional ballots 5:00 PM Earliest date to certify election and confirm candidates for run-off Select post-election manual audit races/precincts
Friday	March 5	Begin post-election manual audit Program ballot and ballot order City must proof and approve ballot in AM Ballot order placed with printer
Weekend	March 6/7	Receive ballot proof from printer
Monday	March 8	City proof and approve ballot for printing AM Ballot proof to printer-printing can begin OS Memory card programming can begin TSX Memory card programming can begin
Tuesday	March 9	Begin equipment diagnostics Pollworker classes begin
Wednesday	March 10	Program TSX encoders Begin testing equipment – NOT POSSIBLE- NO BALLOTS AVAILABLE
Thursday	March 11	Complete equipment testing – NOT POSSIBLE – NO BALLOTS AVAILABLE
Friday	March 12	Earliest date for ballot printing to be completed based on printer's required 5-7 business days print schedule Public L&A Test of equipment as required by law- NOT POSSIBLE- NO BALLOTS AVAILABLE FOR TESTING