

LWVCC VOTER SERVICES TOWNHALL:AUGUST 4, 2020- 1:00-3:15 pm

Presenters: Karen Yarborough, Cook County Clerk; Edmund Michalowski, Deputy Clerk of Elections; John Nally, Attorney for Cook County Clerk; and John Mirkovic, Cook County Clerk's Office

Moderator: Nancy Marcus, LWVCC Voter Services Chair

After brief remarks from Karen Yarborough, questions were directed to the panelists from Cook County League members. Those questions have been categorized and recorded below.

Cook County Clerk website: cookcountyclerk.com

Cook County Courthouses: Bridgeview, Chicago, Markham, Rolling Meadows, Skokie

VOTER REGISTRAR

- 1. How can new voter registrars take the oath, after receiving their training online?** This can be done at the court houses when they pick up their registration supplies.
- 2. When do current Deputy Registrars' credentials expire?** November 30, 2020

VOTE BY MAIL

- 1. If you drop off your mail ballot at an early voting site, how will it be stamped with the date?** The ballots will be picked up daily from the drop-off sites, placed in a secure envelope, and then delivered to the mail-in ballot processing center in Cicero. Those ballots will be stamped with that day's date.
- 2. Will the counting of mail ballots be done only after the close of polls on election day?** The ballots will be sorted, signatures verified and sent through the scanner at the mail-in ballot processing station in Cicero. The information from the scanner will not be tallied until the polls close on election day.
- 3. How many requests for ballots have been received thus far?** (August 4) 112,000
- 4. When will mail-in ballots be sent out?** September 24, 2020 for those who have applied before then. Thereafter, within two business days of receiving the application for the ballot.
- 5. Can one go to the State Board of Elections and apply for the mail-in ballot?** It is much better to go directly to the County Clerk's web site.
- 6. Could the Clerk put instructions on the website about marking the mail-in ballot properly?** Deputy Clerk Michalowski agreed that this is a good idea.
- 7. Will drop-off boxes for mail-in ballots be curbside or inside the building?** Boxes will be inside only to ensure that they are secure.

- 8. Will voters have to pay to post their mail-in ballots?** No, this postage will be paid by the County Clerk's office.
- 9. How does verification of the voter signature work?** There are three judges who examine the signature. All three must agree in order for it to be rejected. Then the voter will be notified, so that they can prove that voter did, indeed, send in that ballot.
- 10. Can you go online to the Clerk's office to get the wait time to drop off a mail-in ballot?** Yes.

ELECTION DAY VOTING

- 1. If registered voters are evicted, what happens to their ability to use that address to vote?** Attorney John Nally said that if a change of address happens within 30 days of election day, the voter will still be allowed to go to the same precinct for the prior address. If the change happened prior to 30 days before the election, the person can do on-the-spot registration on election day and then immediately cast the ballot. If someone is homeless, the person can give an address where mail can be received to use for registering to vote. This might be a homeless shelter, a friend or relative's home, etc.
- 2. How will courthouses be used to support the election process?** They will be used as transfer stations on election day. This is also the place for new deputy registrars to sign the oath and to pick up their voter registration materials.
- 3. How will election workers and voters be protected on election day?** There will be masks for all (including voters who forget), face shields, hand sanitizer, alcohol wipes, and social distancing. Judges will be trained in how to respond to a voter who refuses to use a mask and safe practices while in the precinct.
- 4. How will the public be reassured that the election will be safe and secure?** Clerk Yarborough emphasized that her office will be very active in publicizing all the election day safety and security measures through media.
- 5. Are election judges trained to inform voters that if they must vote a provisional ballot, they may go to 69 W. Washington to get it reconciled and to be sure that it is counted?**
 - a.** Yes, judges are trained to inform voters of this if the reason the person voted provisionally was because the person needed to show some identification and failed to do so.
 - b.** However, there are other reasons why a person may have had to vote provisionally, which do not involve the need to show identification.
 - c.** The reason for having to vote provisionally is set forth on a form, one copy of which goes with the provisional ballot and one copy of which is given to the voter. That form states what, if any, further action the voter needs to do to have the provisional ballot counted.

6. **Please clarify when and whether people who newly register, either (a) online or (b) using the paper registration form downloaded from online, can utilize a mail-in ballot and whether any additional information has to be sent in.**

a) **If the person registers online:** People who register to vote for the first time online need to provide either their Illinois State Driver's License Number or their Illinois State ID number, and the last four digits of their Social Security number on the online registration form. The Voter Registration process can then capture the signature of the voter from the Secretary of State database from their driver's license or state ID. They can request a ballot by mail right on the registration form by indicating they wish to have a mail ballot sent to them under the current law signed by the Governor June 16. The signature from their driver's license or state ID will be used to compare to the signature on their mail ballot to verify their identity when the mail ballot is returned.

b) **If the person registers using the paper registration form and mails that in.**

i. If they provide their Illinois Driver's License Number or their Illinois State ID number and the last four digits of their Social Security number on the paper application, the voter registration process can then capture the signature of the voter from the Secretary of State database from their driver's license or state ID. They can request a ballot by mail right on the registration form by indicating they wish to have a mail ballot sent to them under the current law signed by the Gov. June 16. The signature from their driver's license or state ID will be used to compare to the signature on their mail ballot to verify their identity.

ii. If a voter does not provide their Illinois State Driver's License number or their Illinois State ID number, or the last four digits of their Social Security number on the paper registration form, they must vote in person the first time they vote unless they submit along with their registration form a copy of one form of identification below showing their name and address:

1. a current and valid photo identification
2. utility bill
3. bank statement
4. government check
5. paycheck
6. lease or contract for residents
7. student ID and mail addressed to the voter's residence
8. a government document

c) **NOTE:** First-time voters voting under the provisions of the UOCAVA (Uniform Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) and the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act do not have to vote in person for the first time whether they registered online or by mail.

- d) The provision of the law that allows a voter to request a mail ballot on the registration form currently sunsets January 1, 2021.

ELECTION JUDGES

- 1. How can those interested help with the counting of the mail ballots?** There will be a need for election judges to work on this, considering the enormous increase in the number of mail-in ballots because of the pandemic. There will be training for these judges. Anyone interested can contact the Clerk's office. Note: we are seeking more information as to what is the best contact information to use.
- 2. What kind of help does the Clerk need most?** Election judges on election day. People can go to the Clerk's web site to apply online to be an Election Judge.
- 3. What has been done as an outreach to high schools?** State law now allows sixteen year olds to be election judges. November 3 is now a state holiday, so that facilitates using students and teachers as election judges.

SECURITY

- 1. What is being done around voter machine security?** There have been audits of the machines from the March election which showed the machines had 100% accuracy. In addition, there is a paper ballot plus an electronic image that provide paper trails if necessary. In addition, the voting machine is not connected to the internet and does not do the actual tallying of votes.
- 2. How will the public be reassured that the election will be safe and secure?** Again, Clerk Yarborough emphasized that her office will be very active in publicizing all the election day safety and security measures through media.

OTHER

- 1. What if a League wishes to organize a mock election? When would be an appropriate time to do this?** Probably mid-September and on into October.
- 2. Can you see your original signature online that you gave when you registered?** No, because of legal and security reasons, attorney Nally said this was not possible. *(Note that we are seeking clarification as to how one can update the signature that is on file.)*

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH SEEKING CLARIFICATION

Here are the topics that were raised during the Town Hall for which the Cook County League is seeking further clarification or more information from the Clerk's office. Once we have the responses, we will send the additional Q&As to the suburban Leagues and the participants in the Town Hall, as well as post these on the Cook County League's web site, www.lwvcookcounty.org.

1. Will curbside voting be available during Early Voting? What about on Election Day?
2. What are the procedures for voting on Election Day if a person requested a mail-in ballot but
 - a. Did not receive the ballot?
 - b. Received the ballot and does not bring in that ballot to the polling place?
 - c. Received the ballot and does bring in the ballot to the polling place?
3. How can a voter update the signature on file?
4. How can a voter update the address on file if they have moved from one suburban Cook County location to another?
5. Seeking further information as to why using the Clerk's web site to apply online for a mail-in ballot is the best method to use to make that request.
6. Seeking more information as to someone who would like to help process mail-in ballots can apply with the Clerk's office to do so.
7. Seeking further information as to how the Clerk's office is assisting voters in senior citizen residences.
8. Seeking further information on what to do is the voter needs to change the address previously provided when the voter applied for a mail-in ballot.
9. Seeking more information as to what outreach the Clerk's office is doing with high schools regarding registering students to vote. (*See the Q&A # __ above with regard to what the Clerk's office is doing to seek student and staff Election Judges.*)

The Cook County League is passing along to the Clerk's office the comments made during the Town Hall regarding

- a) Student's often not knowing the last 4 digits of their Social Security numbers, thereby eliminating the option to help them register online
- b) The Clerk's web site not being clear as to what you should do if you cannot register online
- c) Suggestion that instructions for completing a mail-in ballot should be included on the Clerk's web site

