**Observations from Board of Elections Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.**

**Board of Elections Meeting Room, Bolivia**

Present at the meeting were: Staff Director, Sara Knotts, Deputy Director, Melissa Monroe, Chairman, Stuart Smith, and Randy Pelton. Board member Boyd Williamson was absent.

The League of Women Voters member present was Gail Bromley.

This meeting was rather brief. There were no public comments at this meeting.

Minutes from the December 21 meeting were approved. In those minutes, it was clear that 10 observers spoke in favor of Sunday voting, including three from the League of Women Voters. Those speaking in favor were: Ron Floor, Charles Warren, David Manning, Lisa Mosca, Bill Flythe, David Johnson, and Jennifer Fontaine. As mentioned in observation notes from December’s meeting, Gail Bromley, Carol Beaven and Beth Kirschner represented the LWV and spoke in favor. One observer spoke in opposition. His name is Joe Agovino. He mainly thought that churches bringing busloads of folks to the polls was unconstitutional due to separation of church and state issues.

While the LWV were clearly identified as to our representation, others were not identified as representing a group but instead spoke as individuals. It was suggested by Randy that new sign-in sheets include a place to identify any group affiliation from speakers. Some other observations that were not mentioned before from the minutes show the following.

* On the ballot, the names of candidates and how they are presented varies each year with different letters of the alphabet starting the list. This year the listing will start with names beginning with the letter “h” for the primary ballots.
* Absentee ballots will be available as of January 25.

The polling place relocation plan for the primary election was approved by the SBOE. Please see the county Board of Elections website for specific locations and times for the primaries. I have a 2016 Primary One-Stop Election Schedule that was distributed at the meeting along with the minutes.

Some discussion by the board members centered around the expectation that the **June** meeting of the Board will be heavily attended as they will take up once again the days and hours for Early Voting for the Fall election. The meeting will likely be moved to a larger room, probably at the Commissioners hearing room.

Sara and Melissa mentioned that the training they just attended on Voter ID implementation was very detailed, long and overwhelming. They expect the regional training on February 1-2 to be about the same. For that reason, they have decided to do two separate trainings for poll workers and judges, one devoted to Voter ID issues and another devoted to the regular issues presented for voting. They feel that they do not want to give too much information in one training when they themselves find the information to be overwhelming and they deal with it every day.

It is going to be a very interesting election season.

Submitted by: Gail Bromley, Voter Services Chair