July 11, 2013

MEMORANDUM 2013-01
To: County Boards of Elections conducting municipal elections in 2013 that allow absentee voting
From: Kim Westbrook Strach, Executive Director
Subject: One-Stop Voting Implementation Plans for the 2013 General Election

Dear Directors,

This is a reminder regarding planning how your county will conduct One-Stop voting for the 2013 municipal elections. Counties that wish to provide additional One-Stop absentee voting sites, expanded hours, or open a site “in lieu of” the CBE office in a different building must submit an Implementation Plan to SBE for approval. To review, One-Stop voting must be available at the CBE office from the third Thursday before each election, open during general business hours on weekdays up until the Friday before the Election, and also on the last Saturday before the Election until at least 1:00 p.m. and no later than 5:00 p.m. (N.C. Gen. Stat. §163-227.2(b)).

State law mandates submission of Implementation Plan to the State Board, if the county wishes to change or expand sites and/or hours. N.C. Gen. Stat. §163-227.2(g). The Implementation Plan must be brought by unanimous vote of all the County Board’s Members (the new Board). The Implementation Plan must be either signed by all members of the County Board of Elections, or attached to a resolution that is signed by all members of the County Board of Elections. If unanimity cannot be reached on a Plan, a member or members of a County Board may also petition the State Board to adopt a proposed Plan.

Plans should be scanned and e-mailed to George McCue at george.mccue@ncsbe.gov.
The following outlines the due date for Implementation Plans, which depends on which election events are covered in the Implementation Plan:

- One-Stop plans covering the September 10 election event: Due no later than **Monday, July 22, 2013**
- One-Stop plans covering the October 8 election event: Due no later than **Friday, August 1, 2013**
- One-Stop plans covering the November 5 election event: Due no later than **Friday, August 16, 2013**

Generally, One-Stop voting sites must follow the guidelines for polling locations as set forth in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-129. However, N. C. Gen. Stat. § 163-227.2(g1) sets forth criteria for exceptions should there be unusual circumstances in selecting a One-Stop location.

As done in 2012, One-Stop site information will need to be entered into One Stop System Manager by the County Board of Elections staff after the Implementation Plan has been approved. Instructions will be provided at a later time, once Implementation Plans begin to be approved by SBE.

The following list provides guidelines to create your county’s One-Stop Implementation Plan. More detail is encouraged. The Plan should be statutorily compliant and thorough enough to use it as an explanation of your procedure in the case of any protest, legal proceeding, or question from the public. Also, attached separately is a Sample Plan for further guidance, if needed, as to the level of detail that SBE looks for in a successful Implementation Plan.

**GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING A ONE-STOP ABSENTEE VOTING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

1. **Resolution:** State that the CBE (specifically, the Board who will be in power during the 2013 elections) unanimously agreed upon the One-Stop Implementation Plan. Include a copy of the resolution or minutes verifying that unanimous agreement was reached. The resolution should specifically identify which 2013 elections that it pertains to. Any subsequent changes will have to be approved by the SBE Executive Director.

2. **Specify whether sites are in addition to the CBE office or “in lieu of” the CBE office:** If the One-Stop site is “in lieu of” the CBE office, the site must be proximate to the CBE office and must provide adequate coverage for the county’s electorate. Explain why the CBE office will not be used and how the “in lieu of” site was selected. SBE approval is not required if the county wishes to simply move One-Stop voting to a different room in the same building as the CBE office.

   For municipal elections, it is also common for One-Stop voting to be held at a municipal building such as a City Hall “in lieu of” the CBE office.

3. **Location:** List the name and street address of the building that will house each One-Stop site.

4. **Open hours:** Provide the exact days and hours that One-Stop voting will occur at each location covered by the Plan.

5. **Notice:** Describe when, where, how, and what notice will be given regarding places and times of One-Stop voting. Notification must be given to news media and political party chairs no later than 30 days prior to Election Day (10 days prior to the beginning of One-Stop voting). It is recommended that information about One-Stop voting is included in the legal notices of the Election required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 163-33(8).
6. **Security:** Describe how the building will be secured. Give sufficient details to demonstrate that the voting machines and ballots will be protect from access by unauthorized persons. Explain measures taken for daily security of ballots, equipment, and other election materials. Include important details such as where sensitive materials and equipment is stored overnight, and confirm that authorized CBE staff are the only people that will have access to the secured area.

7. **Signs:** Describe the signage that will be used to direct voters to the correct building as well as any signage used on the interior of the building directing voters to the correct room.

8. **Accessibility:** For new One-Stop sites, address the accessibility of the building and the parking by completing a Voting Site Accessibility Survey (if the site is not new and an Accessibility Survey has previously been completed and is still current, please specify so). Confirm that curbside voting will be available at each site.

9. **Voting equipment:** Describe the voting equipment, how it will be used, and how it will be secured at the end of each day. Describe the process used for testing equipment.

10. **Laptop computers:** How will data be transferred from the remote site to the county server? (The two options would be a “hybrid” connected mode in which data is transferred periodically throughout the day, or by a “disconnected” mode in which data is transferred manually via a USB drive.)

11. **Staffing and training:** Describe staffing and training for staff in the event staff is not previously an employee of the County Board of Elections office.

12. **Chain of custody of ballots, equipment and materials (if the plan is for an additional or alternative site not in the elections office):** How will ballots, equipment and supplies be returned to the CBE office? Are ballots stored at the remote site or are they brought back to the CBE office at the end of each day of One-Stop voting?

13. **Ballot retrievability:** Confirm ballots can be retrieved from the voting equipment, as is required of all absentee ballots, if necessary.

14. **Observers:** Confirm that political party observers are allowed in the same manner they are allowed on Election Day (see NCGS § 163-45).

15. **Electioneering:** Confirm that electioneering will be allowed on the property, but outside of the buffer zone as set out in NCGS § 163-166.4.

16. **Emergency/backup plan:** What will you do if one site or even more than one becomes unavailable without warning? Provide a contingency plan that addresses all sites (consolidate sites, alternate sites, etc). A key component of any emergency plan is that the County Board of Elections will be contact as soon as possible to assess the situation and take action if needed.

As always, thank you for your cooperation.