# Memorandum

Date: June 13, 2014

To: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa and Members
Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor

Subject: August 26, 2014 Primary Election Update

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On February 5, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) passed Ordinance 13-13, which created Section 12-1 of the Code of Miami-Dade County and calls for pre and post-election update reports for any Primary or General Election to the Board.

Attached is a memorandum from Penelope Townsley, Supervisor of Elections, that summarizes the topics specified in Section 12-1 of the Code, as well as the Elections Department's preparations for the August 26, 2014 Miami-Dade County Primary Election. Important information including the anticipated voter turnout, enhancements since the last election cycle, estimated wait times, resource allocations, availability of the sample ballot, absentee ballot and early voting schedules, polling place changes, and outreach initiatives are included.

If you have any questions, please contact Supervisor of Elections Penelope Townsley at 305-499-8509 or me at 305-375-1880.

Attachment

c: Alina T. Hudak, Deputy Mayor and Interim Director of Public Works and Waste Management
R. A. Cuevas, Jr. County Attorney
Penelope Townsley, Supervisor of Elections

# Memorandum

Date: June 13, 2014

To: Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez
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From: Penelope Townsley
Supervisor of Elections

Subject: August 26, 2014 Miami-Dade County Primary Election

On February 5, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) passed Ordinance 13-13, which created Section 12-1 of the Code of Miami-Dade County and calls for pre and post-election update reports for any Primary or General Election to the Board. Accordingly, this report outlines the Elections Department's (Department) preparations for the August 26, 2014 Miami-Dade County Primary Election. With the election quickly approaching, below is a summary of the topics specified in Section 12-1 of the Code as well as important information you have been accustomed to receiving leading up to a countywide election.

## NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Section 12-1 of the Code requires an analysis of election preparations with regards to anticipated voter turnout, estimated voter wait times, resource allocations, and budgetary and legislative needs.

### Anticipated Voter Turnout

Empirical data shows that primary elections tend to have a relatively lower voter turnout, in both gubernatorial and presidential election cycles. Looking at the voter turnout over the past four Primary Elections, approximately 20% of Miami-Dade County voters typically participate. Considering these voting trends, voter turnout is likely going to be 20-25%. However, allowing for greater voter participation that comes with the Department's increased voter education campaigns as well as outreach efforts by activist organizations, the Department is prepared for an overall voter turnout that exceeds historical patterns. It should be noted that turnout at a given precinct will always vary, and special attention is given to municipalities with additional ballot content in this election.

Historical voter distribution patterns show about half of the voters participating will cast their ballot prior to Election Day via Absentee or Early Voting, and the other half will cast their ballot at their assigned precinct on Election Day. While this data is taken into consideration, as the Department learned in the November 2012 election, voting patterns may change. Therefore, equipment and staffing allocations for both Early Voting and Election Day are based on the number of registered voters, rather than predicted turnout. This allows the Department to be prepared should voter turnout exceed historical patterns.

**Voter Turnout**

| Election | Registered Voters | Total Ballots Cast |
|---|---|---|
| 08/31/04 Presidential Primary Election | 984,079 | 296,818<br>30% |
| 09/05/06 Gubernatorial Primary Election | 1,074,759 | 171,629<br>16% |
| 08/26/08 Presidential Primary Election | 1,170,135 | 190,783<br>16% |
| 08/24/10 Gubernatorial Primary Election | 1,203,633 | 215,527<br>18% |
| 08/14/12 Presidential Primary Election | 1,242,973 | 248,605<br>20% |

**Participation by Voting Method**

| Absentee Voting | Early Voting | Election Day Voting | Total Ballots Cast |
|---|---|---|---|
| 35,201<br>12% | 35,829<br>12% | 225,788<br>76% | 296,818<br>100% |
| 37,033<br>22% | 25,858<br>15% | 108,738<br>63% | 171,629<br>100% |
| 55,502<br>29% | 28,193<br>15% | 107,088<br>56% | 190,783<br>100% |
| 79,750<br>37% | 32,882<br>15% | 102,895<br>48% | 215,527<br>100% |
| 92,360<br>37% | 38,654<br>16% | 117,591<br>47% | 248,605<br>100% |

**Enhancements Since Last Election Cycle**
As you know, after the 2012 General Election, the Mayor's Elections Advisory Group (EAG) had the opportunity to review what worked, what did not, and what changes needed to be made prior to 2014. With the help of the EAG, County administration, and the Board, recommendations made to the Florida Legislature influenced significant election reform in 2013. In addition, the Department received funding for two technology upgrades and engaged in reprecincting to realize operational efficiencies in this election cycle. These improvements will all contribute to a more streamlined voting experience.

***EVIDs***
Electronic Voting Identification System (EVIDs), commonly referred to as electronic poll books or automated voter check-in process, is an electronic poll book connected to the live registration database, replacing the archaic paper registration books. Using EVIDs is an enhancement that will:

- Allow a faster and more efficient voter check-in process,
- Instantly verify voter eligibility with a swipe of a driver's license or similar ID,
- Immediately update voter registration records,
- Ensure voters are in the correct precinct and automatically direct voter to correct precinct if necessary, and
- Ultimately, reduce wait times on Election Day as well as administrative calls to the Department requesting assistance.

While EVIDs have been used in the past for some municipal elections and countywide Early Voting locations, this will be the first time that EVIDs are used in a countywide election.

***ReliaVote***
The ReliaVote equipment used to process absentee ballots was upgraded in March 2014. The ReliaVote upgrade replaced the existing outdated sorter and added an additional sorter to enhance efficiency. The upgrade increased capacity while allowing the simultaneous processing of outgoing and incoming absentee ballots. It will substantially increase ballot sorting throughput, increase efficiency, provide redundant absentee ballot sorting capabilities, and protect the Department against an unexpected mechanical breakdown, as was experienced in November 2012.

In addition, the new server will improve the signature verification process, making ballots available for opening and scanning more expeditiously than in past elections. In an effort to further improve this function systematically, the Department is also in the process of testing ReliaVote's Automated Signature Verification software to ensure implementation with confidence in this election. We do expect this technology will increase efficiency, further reducing the time required to complete signature verification and thereby reducing costs over the long term.

***Reprecincting***
On March 18, 2014, the Board passed Resolution 288-14, approving the Department's reprecincting plan. This plan achieves operational efficiencies at Election Day voting locations with minimal voter impact as follows:

- 812 Precincts (decrease of 236 precincts operationally)
- 565 Polling Places (increase of 25 Polling Places)
- 5% of registered voters will have a new polling place on Election Day

These changes resulted in the following:

- Reduction of "split" precincts where voters with different ballot styles existed in the same precinct.
- Addressed large precincts that did not have capacity in the polling place they were located in.
- Redistributed voters and added polling facilities where warranted.
- Allowed for a more efficient allocation of equipment and personnel resources.

**Wait Times**
The Department is estimating a one-page ballot for most voters in Miami-Dade County. This, coupled with the increased early voting availability through extended days and hours, the introduction of electronic poll books on Election Day, more efficient composition of voting locations, and faster absentee ballot processing, Miami-Dade County voters can expect an improved voting experience during the upcoming election.

In an effort to develop a sustainable model to estimate wait times during high turnout elections, the Department has been working with the Management Planning and Performance Analysis group within the County's Office of Management and Budget (OMB). We have worked jointly and will use Lean Six Sigma tools to analyze data and improve the overall voting process by reducing delays and better anticipating wait times. Over the last year, a series of mock elections were staged so that OMB could observe the actual time it took voters at each station within a voting location. Additionally, OMB has observed and recorded actual election data to supplement the mock election data.

While this model is still being developed, we know with certainty that through the use of EVIDs, the time voters will spend checking in has been significantly reduced. Generally, a voter will spend 30-45 seconds checking in, barring any special circumstances. In addition, the Department conducted a mock of a recent Primary Election ballot, similar to the one we are anticipating. The average time a voter spent at a privacy booth to review and complete their ballot was 1.5 to 2 minutes. The limited time a voter will spend at these two stations will certainly make for an expeditious voting experience overall.

Developing the methodology to track wait times will be an on-going process as OMB continues to gather voter data and fine-tune the model, which will be especially useful in future general elections when voter turnout will likely be higher and ballots lengthier.

It is important to note that there are currently five municipalities confirmed with ballot content in this election. For these, the Department will ensure that appropriate resources are designated in light of longer voting times in these jurisdictions.

**Resource Allocations**
For Election Day voting locations, the Department's preliminary allocation is as follows:

- 1,187 EVIDs: depending on the number of registered voters, the allocation will be a minimum of two and a maximum of four units at each voting location.
- 6,002 privacy booths
- 1,796 DS200 optical scanners: This allocation has been adjusted to reflect the Department's recommendation that there is a minimum of two optical scanners at every voting precinct. Any precinct that has more than 500 voters now has two optical scanners.
- The Department will use approximately 7,000 poll workers for this election, which equates to 10 poll workers per polling location, and will have 90 administrative and technical troubleshooters, as well as 20 supply trucks traversing the county for quick response time.

For Early Voting locations, the Department's preliminary allocation is as follows:

- 80 EVIDs: This allocation reflects four units at each voting location.
- 425 privacy booths
- 64 DS200 optical scanners: this equates to three to four optical scanners at each location, with two back up at each site.
- The Department will use approximately 187 poll workers for Early Voting, which equates to 9-11 employees per site.

**Budgetary and Legislative Needs**
In light of the significant enhancements realized over the past year and half, the Department has requested a budget commensurate with the needs anticipated to successfully conduct the upcoming election. No additional legislative requests are anticipated at this time.

## GENERAL UPDATES

The following is a summary of important information you are accustomed to receiving prior to a countywide election.

**Early Voting – Four Locations Have Changed for the Primary Election**
Counties now have greater flexibility in terms of Early Voting availability and permissible locations. The law now requires 8-12 hours of Early Voting per day; allows for up to 14 days to include the Sunday before the election; and expands existing permissible sites to include fairground, civic center, courthouse, county commission building, stadium, convention center, government-owned senior center, or government-owned community center.

The Department is taking advantage of all of these improvements. We will continue to offer Early Voting for the Primary Election at 20 sites conveniently located throughout the County. However, four of the sites have been relocated to better facilities to improve the Early Voters' experience. The remaining 16 sites remain the same as in previous countywide elections. The new site schedule will be an important element in the Department's media plan and will be included in the sample ballot as well as the Elections homepage. I kindly request the assistance of all County Commissioners in disseminating this important message to our voters.

To better serve our voters, Early Voting will be available for 14 days with more hours ever offered in Miami-Dade County, for a total of 112 hours, with varying hours of operation to accommodate all voters.

- August 11-15: The first week will offer early hours during work days (Monday-Friday) (7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)
- August 18-22: The second week will offer late hours during work days (Monday-Friday) (11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
- August 16, 17, 23, and 24: Standard weekend hours (Saturday and Sunday) (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

The Early Voting Schedule for the Primary Election is attached for your reference. Daily turnout statistics will be posted on the Elections homepage starting on August 11, 2014. In addition, wait times for all 20 Early Voting sites will also be posted on the Elections homepage and will be updated throughout the day so voters can make an informed decision as to when and where is most convenient to them.

**Poll Worker Training**
With the introduction of the new EVID technology at all Election Day voting locations starting with this countywide election, the task of getting our poll workers ready began much earlier than usual. At the recommendation of the EAG, the Department also began recruiting an additional 800 County employees with administrative and supervisory experience to support EVID operations. These employees will transition to a polling place management role in 2016.

The training program was designed in three phases, commencing in 2013 and will continue through August:

1. ***EVID Introduction***
   The objective in this phase was to introduce the technology and for poll workers to become familiar with its functionality. Between August and December 2013, 1,972 County employees were introduced to the new EVID technology. An additional 5,643 Non-County employees were introduced to EVIDs in February 2014.

2. ***EVID Training and Testing***
   Between April and May 2014, a total of 2,820 poll workers responsible for operating the EVID technology on Election Day successfully completed the test on the proper use of the equipment. In light of the time between training and the actual election, the Department has implemented a training lab available at Elections Headquarters for poll workers to practice on the equipment and the accompanying procedures.

3. ***Standard poll worker training prior to each election as required by state law***
   State law requires that all poll workers receive training prior to each election. As such, poll worker training curriculum is on schedule, and it will run from June 23, 2014 through August 8, 2014 and workers will be assigned to their location by the end of training. EVID operators will conduct mock check-in exercises during this phase to further enhance their skills.

While the training curriculum is comprehensive, it is important to note that as with any major implementation or enhancement, there is a learning curve as our poll workers become comfortable with this technology. Call center staff will be available to assist these new operators when the occasion arises.

**Voter Registration**
July 28th, is the "book closing" date for this election. There are currently 1,282,730 active registered voters in Miami-Dade County, broken down by political party listed below. This number will continue to change as additional registration applications are received by the deadline.

- Democrats 550,695
- Republicans 362,408
- No Party Affiliation 350,492
- Other Minor Party 19,135

**Absentee Ballots**
- There are approximately 196,000 absentee ballot requests on file for this election. This number will continue to grow as we draw closer to the election.
- Absentee ballots will be mailed to overseas voters on July 12, 2014.
- Absentee ballots for domestic voters will be mailed by July 29, 2014.
- Daily statistics will be posted on the Department's homepage starting on August 4, 2014.
- The last day to request an absentee ballot to be mailed is Wednesday, August 20, 2014.
- The last day for our office to mail out an absentee ballot is Friday, August 22, 2014.
- Absentee ballots must be received in our Doral or Downtown office by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, August 26, 2014.

House Bill 7013, which went into effect on January 1, 2014, made some noteworthy absentee ballot changes that our voters need to be aware of during this election cycle.

- *Request.* Requires a written request signed by the voter if the request is to mail the absentee ballot to an address other than the one on file in Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS).

- *Missing signature.* Allows voter to cure the missing signature if he or she completes an absentee ballot affidavit and provides an ID by 5 pm on the day before the election. Voters may access the affidavit and instructions on the Department's website.

- *Emergency excuse for Election Day absentee ballot delivery.* Limits Election Day delivery of an absentee ballot to a voter or a voter's immediate family member unless the voter executes affidavit as to an emergency that precludes the voter from going to the voter's assigned polling place.

To that end, the Department will continue to educate voters on the importance of keeping their voter record and signature updated with our office, and to protect their absentee ballot.

**Sample Ballot**
Voters are encouraged to view their customized sample ballot on the Elections Department's website. This is an excellent tool for our voters to familiarize themselves with their specific ballot content ahead of the election; it also allows them to complete their ballot more quickly when it is time to cast their ballot. This is by far the best way to prepare in advance.

In addition, the sample ballot will be distributed as an insert in The Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald on Sunday, August 3, 2014, a week before the start of early voting. A 3" by 3" tri-color post-it note will be placed on the front page of The Miami Herald and El Nuevo Herald publications in Miami-Dade County to alert readers of the sample ballot insert. The sample ballot will contain all federal, state, and county ballot content, the Early Voting schedule and locations, and information on the three ways to vote – Absentee, Early Voting, and Election Day. Copies will also be available in public libraries, county and commission offices, and city halls beginning August 4, 2014. A proof of the sample ballot will become available in July, once candidate qualifying has concluded and the master ballot has been finalized. Immediately thereafter, an electronic copy of the sample ballot will be posted on the Elections homepage well in advance of the 2014 Primary Election.

**Outreach and Media Relations**
The Department will engage in a multi-faceted outreach campaign to ensure voters are properly educated prior to the August 26, 2014 Primary Election.

The Department conducts outreach efforts daily to familiarize our voters regarding the new EVID technology, the new absentee ballot changes, and precinct changes derived from the reprecincting plan that goes into effect later this month and will focus on several key messages to voters through radio, print, and TV news outlets regarding:

***General Reminders***
The Elections Department website has a wealth of online tools including the ability to view voter registration status, polling place, ability to submit an absentee ballot request, and track their absentee or provisional ballot, to name a few. The County's 311 Answer Center is also equipped to answer many of the most common inquiries.

***Registration Book Closing***
Registering to vote and updating their voter record in a timely manner. Individuals can register to vote in the Primary Election in the State of Florida by Monday, July 28, 2014. Since Florida is a closed-primary state, any changes to a voter's political affiliation must be submitted by this deadline as well. Voters who wish to vote via absentee may take this opportunity update their signature on file if they have not already done so.

***Reprecincting***
In an effort to minimize confusion for affected voters, the Department will engage in a strategic Voter Awareness Campaign. This campaign includes a paid media plan; partnering with elected officials and municipalities that represent the affected voters; attendance at community events; and partnerships with community organizations.

- Radio and newspaper advertisements, as well as bus shelters throughout the county will deliver this important message.
- Outreach events are conducted in high impact areas.
- Affected voters will receive the first of two notifications, including a cover letter regarding reprecincting changes and new Voter Information Cards, after the reprecincting changes go into effect on June 20, 2014.

- Affected voters will receive the second of two notifications in August in the form of a follow-up letter reminding voters of their new precinct/polling place assignment.
- Voters will also be able to view their assigned precinct and voting location for this election on the Department's website or by calling the County's 3-1-1 Answer Center.

Registered voters have the ability to vote in one of the following ways:

Absentee Ballot Voting:

- The importance of keeping their signature current to ensure the signature on an absentee ballot matches the signature on record
- The importance of signing inside the red box on the back of the absentee ballot envelope, and how to cure an unsigned absentee ballot
- Not to give their absentee ballot to anyone other than an authorized designee as prescribed by Section 12-14 of the Code of Miami-Dade County
- Postage is not necessary when returning an absentee ballot for this election

Early Voting:

- New days, hours and locations convenient to our voters
- Reminding voters to access their customized sample ballot online
- Bring proper ID

Election Day:

- Importance of reviewing your precinct and polling place assignment
- Reminding voters to access their customized sample ballot online
- Bring proper ID

**Polling Place Changes**

Aside from polling place changes derived from the reprecincting plan in effect on June 20, 2014, it is customary that some polling places used in previous elections are not available for an upcoming election. The Department is in the process of identifying alternative sites that are equally convenient and accessible to the voters in those areas.

All affected voters are notified in a number of ways:

- Voters who are assigned to a new temporary polling place will receive an official notice by mail.
- Voters assigned to a new permanent polling place, one that will continue to be utilized for all future elections, will receive a letter indicating the change, as well as an updated Voter Information Card.
- Legal advertising listing all polling place changes will be placed in the Miami Times, Daily Business Review, Diario las Americas, and Haiti en Marche.
- Signage is placed outside of the previous facility in areas that can be seen by voters before leaving their vehicles to minimize inconvenience.
- Voters are able to view their polling place address as well as a photograph of the polling place by visiting our website.

The list of temporary and permanent polling place changes is still on going and will be available closer to the election.

**Logic and Accuracy Test**

The Logic and Accuracy Test (L&A) of the optical scan voting equipment and the ADA iVotronics will be held on Wednesday, August 6. As with all elections, the Department will conduct a thorough examination of the equipment through rigorous testing that simulates Election Day conditions, from opening the equipment to transmitting and tabulating results. This is just one of the three levels of equipment testing performed prior to deployment and/or use. This is a public test, and per state law, candidates, political parties, and political committees will receive notification of this test.

**Reporting Results**
As you know, the Department's website and MDTV remain the most effective outlets to obtain up-to-the-minute election night results. We expect to release results as follows:

- Absentee Ballots Results – 7:15 p.m.
- Absentee ballot results will continue to be updated until completion. It is important that viewers understand that not all absentee ballots are included in the first release and totals will continue to be updated. Clear messaging will be included.
- Early Voting Results – 7:30 p.m.
- Subsequently, there will be periodic updated precinct results every 30 minutes through completion. Since state law allows any voter in line by 7:00 p.m. to vote, the number of releases will vary based on polls closing.
- Messaging at the top of the Results Page will clearly indicate what results are included, and what is pending tabulation.

**In Closing**
Election preparations are going well. As we prepare for the August 26 Primary Election, we will be implementing the technology and administrative enhancements recommended by the Mayor's Elections Advisory Group for the 2014 Election Cycle. This will be the first countywide election with electronic poll books for quicker voter check-in, enhanced absentee ballot processing equipment, and additional permanent County staff at all Election Day voting locations. In addition, the reprecincting plan realized minimal impact to the voters while creating operational efficiencies for the Department.

Candidate qualifying is underway, and the ballot will be ready by early July. Shortly thereafter, absentee ballots for military and overseas voters will be mailed on July 12, 2014, and absentee ballots to domestic voters are scheduled for mailing by July 29, 2014. Early Voting and Election Day poll workers are being trained daily, voting equipment is being tested, and public awareness will soon be promoted through media outlets. During the next 11 weeks, the Department will continue to prepare for a successful countywide election.

Be assured that the Department is committed to conducting this election with integrity, and voters can feel confident they will have a convenient voting experience.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 305-499-8509.

Attachments: Early Voting Schedule

C: Alina T. Hudak, Deputy Mayor
Mayor's Elections Advisory Group

# EARLY VOTING SCHEDULE FOR THE PRIMARY ELECTION 8/26/2014

ATTACHMENT

| AUGUST 11TH | AUGUST 12TH | AUGUST 13TH | AUGUST 14TH | AUGUST 15TH | AUGUST 16TH | AUGUST 17TH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
| 7:00AM – 3:00PM | 7:00AM – 3:00PM | 7:00AM – 3:00PM | 7:00AM – 3:00PM | 7:00AM – 3:00PM | 8:00AM – 4:00PM | 8:00AM – 4:00PM |
| AUGUST 18TH | AUGUST 19TH | AUGUST 20TH | AUGUST 21ST | AUGUST 22ND | AUGUST 23RD | AUGUST 24TH |
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
| 11:00AM – 7:00PM | 11:00AM – 7:00PM | 11:00AM – 7:00PM | 11:00AM – 7:00PM | 11:00AM – 7:00PM | 8:00AM – 4:00PM | 8:00AM – 4:00PM |

| Site Name &Address | Site Name &Address |
|---|---|
| City of Miami – City Hall<br>3500 Pan American Drive<br>*(Entrance is located at the northeast side of the building – ADA entrance is through the front door of City Hall)* | Model City Library @ Caleb Center<br>2211 NW 54th Street |
| Coral Gables Library<br>3443 Segovia Street | North East Regional Library<br>2930 Aventura Boulevard<br>**Original Site: Aventura Government Center<br>19200 W Country Club Drive<br>(2nd Floor Commission Area) |
| Coral Reef Library<br>9211 SW 152nd Street | North Dade Regional Library<br>2455 NW 183rd Street |
| Elections Department<br>(SOE Main Office)<br>2700 NW 87th Avenue | North Miami Public Library<br>835 NE 132nd Street |
| Homestead Community Center<br>(William F. "Bill" Dickinson Community Center)<br>1601 N. Krome Avenue<br>**Original Site: Florida City - City Hall<br>404 West Palm Drive | North Shore Branch Library<br>7501 Collins Avenue<br>(Program Room) |
| John F. Kennedy Library<br>190 West 49th Street | South Dade Regional Library<br>10750 SW 211th Street |
| Kendall Branch Library<br>9101 SW 97th Avenue | Stephen P. Clark Gov't Center (SOE Branch Office)<br>111 NW 1st Street (Lobby) |
| Lemon City Library<br>430 NE 61st Street (Reading Room) | West Dade Regional Library<br>9445 SW 24th Street |
| Miami Lakes Community Center (Mary Collins)<br>15151 NW 82nd Avenue<br>**Original Site: Miami Lakes Public Library<br>6699 Windmill Gate Road | West Flagler Branch Library<br>5050 West Flagler Street |
| Miami Beach Regional Library<br>227 22nd Street<br>**Original Site: Miami Beach City Hall<br>1700 Convention Center Drive<br>(1st Floor Pension Office) | West Kendall Regional Library<br>10201 Hammocks Boulevard |

Revised MR: 5/20/14

*RED INDICATES REPLACEMENT SITES