

STATE ELECTION BOARD

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Oklahoma State Election Board is to achieve and maintain uniformity in the application, operation and interpretation of the state and federal election laws with a maximum degree of correctness, impartiality and efficiency.

This mission statement was adopted by agency management during the creation of the first agency strategic plan in 2001.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Paul Ziriaux, Secretary of the State Election Board
521-2391, pziriaux@elections.ok.gov

GOVERNANCE:

The Secretary of the Senate, who is elected by the members of the Senate, also serves as the Secretary of the State Election Board. The Secretary is the chief state election official, responsible for voter registration and election conduct, and has general supervisory authority over the County Election Boards.

The State Election Board is composed of three members and two alternates. Board members are appointed to four-year terms by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, from lists of ten nominees recommended by the state committees of the two political parties with the largest number of registered voters. Two members and an alternate member are appointed from the list of one political party, and one member and an alternate member are appointed from the list of the other political party.

The duties of the Board include certifying election results, hearing contests of candidacy, and appointing County Election Board members and Secretaries.

The current Board members and alternates are:

W. Stephen Curry, Chairman
Thomas M. Montgomery, III, Vice Chairman
F. Diana Spurlock, Member
Gerald D. Buchanan, Alternate
Dr. Tim Mauldin, Alternate

The State Election Board does not have any committees or subgroups.

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

There is no formal attendance policy for Board members. A quorum consists of two members.

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

2013-14 Performance Report

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MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

The most significant modernization effort is the installation of a new statewide ballot scanner voting system. A request for proposals was released in September, 2010, and a contract was awarded to Hart Intercivic of Austin, Texas, in January, 2011. Installation of the new system began during 2011. The new equipment was used for the first time on February 14, 2012, and it was used for all elections in 2012. The voting system complies with all requirements of state and federal law and includes a component that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently.

The agency has also continued the process of upgrading its voter registration database and election management system, a project that began in 2008. We expect this effort to be completed at the end of FY-2013.

Both the purchase of the new voting system and the upgrade of the database have been done to comply with the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. Oklahoma received federal funds specifically for the purpose of complying with this legislation. While the initial purchases were made with federal funds, ongoing maintenance and operations will be a state responsibility.

The State Election Board assisted the County Election Boards in redrawing precinct lines after legislative and county commission redistricting. The number of precincts statewide was reduced by 8.5%, which helps to reduce the cost of most elections.

The agency has taken numerous steps to reduce costs. Four vacant positions remain unfilled, although we expect to fill several in the coming months. Travel has been limited to necessary equipment maintenance and training. Printing and postage expenses have been reduced through the use of e-mail and the agency website, and we continue to explore ways to use technology to create efficiencies.

CORE MISSION:

All services performed by the State Election Board are directly related to its core mission of conducting elections and providing voter registration services. No other agency duplicates the services provided by the State Election Board.

PRIVATE ALTERNATIVES:

While there are vendors in other states that provide services such as equipment programming and ballot printing, we are not aware of any vendor in the private sector that provides comprehensive election conduct on a statewide basis. The State Election Board has not been approached by any organization about privatization of the election system. We believe that the current system provides secure, accurate election conduct at a cost that is lower than the fees charged by vendors of election services in other states.