

Johnson County Election Office



Brian D. Newby
Election Commissioner

Comments Related to Special Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government

Friday, December 12, 2014

Members of the Committee, today I will briefly touch upon key tenants of consideration related to moving local elections from their current Spring timeframe at the polls.

While I have opinions related to approaches the Committee may want to consider, I am presenting these items primarily as data points for your evaluation in your overall recommendation.

1. Each Election Is Unique—as we consider moving elections, it's worth stressing that all elections come with their own nuances of candidates, candidate rotation, numbers of candidates constituting a primary, and the best way to conduct the election (mail or polls), just to name some of the unique items.
2. Elections Vary in Complexity, with more than 1,500 types of ballots in an August election in Johnson County.
3. Johnson County Residents Have High Expectations Related to Elections—Elections are among the more highly regarded services provided by the county.
4. Johnson County's Growth Provides Scale Issues—This leads to many cost drivers related to elections. Bottom line, elections are expensive because they involve, in the case of Johnson County voters, more than 370,000 participants.
5. Two-Thirds of Johnson County's Elections Are Unscheduled—We've had 60 elections in the last 10 years; 40 of them were special elections and spring primaries.
6. Turnout for Special Elections Is Greater Than Regular Spring Elections—We've seen this in Roeland Park's special elections and in mail-ballot elections.
7. Privacy, Identity Theft Remain Key Voter Concerns—Our office is seeing growing privacy concerns related to information shared with candidates, poll agent procedures, and envelope security.

8. Recruitment of Polling Places and Election Workers is Increasingly Difficult—Schools are almost always unavailable. More persons are being recruited as poll agents, reducing potential election worker pool.
9. Advance Voting Brings Cost Efficiencies, Introduces Other Cost Issues—With Ballot-on-Demand printing and maximum utilization of voting machines, advance voting maximizes the return on investment. Advance voting, though, is becoming more important because of limited polling place availability, and rent becomes a high and necessary expense.

Beyond the data discussions here, I will stand for questions and assignments to bring the committee more relevant data to any of these points, or additional items that we will discuss.

Thank you for allowing me to discuss this today.

Election Costs prepared for Senator Holmes - prepared 12/10/2014

2012 PRESIDENTIAL General Election - November 6, 2012		
BALLOTS	\$	79,903.00
POSTAGE	\$	55,209.06
POLL WORKERS	\$	339,481.67
SPACE RENTAL	\$	15,977.00
TOTAL:	\$	490,570.73
Total Ballots Cast		275,674
Per Ballot Cost	\$	1.78

2013 CITY/SCHOOL BOARD Election - April 2, 2013		
BALLOTS	\$	9,618.92
POSTAGE	\$	3,730.08
POLL WORKERS	\$	144,376.96
SPACE RENTAL	\$	4,035.00
TOTAL:	\$	161,760.96
Total Ballots Cast		29,553
Per Ballot Cost	\$	5.47

2014 PRIMARY Election - August 5, 2014		
BALLOTS	\$	46,070.75
POSTAGE	\$	16,326.90
POLL WORKERS	\$	205,717.50
SPACE RENTAL	\$	18,587.50
TOTAL:	\$	286,702.65
Total Ballots Cast		69,686
Per Ballot Cost	\$	4.11

2014 GENERAL Election - November 4, 2014		
BALLOTS	\$	33,946.11
POSTAGE	\$	16,144.80
POLL WORKERS	\$	283,502.68
SPACE RENTAL	\$	18,587.50
TOTAL:	\$	352,181.09
Total Ballots Cast		194,052
Per Ballot Cost	\$	1.81

KLRD Note: Prepared by Johnson County Election Office

Presentation to
Kansas Special Committee on Ethics,
Elections, and Local Government



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December 12, 2014

Election Business Drivers

1

Each Election is Unique

As we consider moving elections, it's worth stressing that all elections come with their own nuances of candidates, candidate rotation, numbers of candidates constituting a primary, and the best way to conduct the election (mail or polls), just to name some of the unique items.

2

Elections Vary in Complexity

With more than 1,500 types of ballots in an August election in Johnson County.

3

Johnson County Residents Have High Expectations Related to Elections

Elections are among the more highly regarded services provided by the county.

4

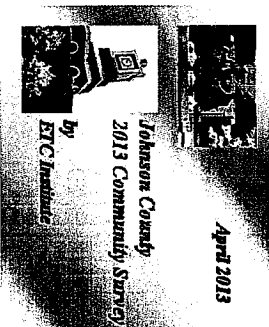
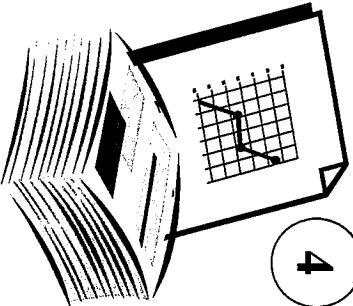
Johnson County's Growth Creates Scale Issues...

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Two Thirds of Johnson County's Elections are Unscheduled

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Election Business Drivers

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Turnout for Special Elections Is Greater Than Regular Spring Elections
 We've seen this in the Roeland Park's special elections and in mail-ballot elections.

8



Recruitment of Polling Locations and Election Workers is Increasingly Difficult
 Schools are almost always unavailable. More persons are being required as agents, reducing potential election worker pool.

9

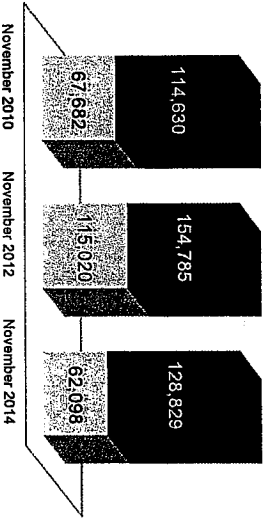
Advance Voting Brings Cost Efficiencies, Introduces Other Cost Issues
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7

SONY
 "Study: Credit Card Breach Fears Haunt Consumers' Holiday Shopping Plans"
 Forbes Headline
 December 4, 2014

Privacy, Identity Theft Remain Voter Concerns
 Voters are reacting to frequent identity theft reports by refusing to sign ballot envelopes and questioning record and website security. Election Office responses to these issues have new budget implications.



Special Elections – Higher Turnout

Turnout for Mail Ballot Elections

Blue Valley USD #229	2/1/2005	43.80%
Gardner-Edgerton USD #231	2/1/2005	51.50%
Spring Hill USD #230	2/1/2005	55.80%
Gardner	6/7/2005	51.30%
Spring Hill USD #230	6/19/2007	42.55%
De Soto USD #232	9/18/2007	45.58%
Olathe USD #233	10/16/2007	29.96%
City of Overland Park	1/29/2008	35.15%
City of Lenexa	5/27/2008	31.86%
City of Fairway	11/3/2009	41.41%
City of Merriam	1/26/2010	36.14%
City of De Soto	2/1/2011	39.43%
Spring Hill USD #230	6/7/2011	46.93%
City of Mission	12/6/2011	38.56%
Blue Valley USD #229	1/31/2012	38.59%
Gardner-Edgerton USD #231	1/31/2012	41.36%
Olathe - USD #233	6/11/2013	31.32%
City of Overland Park	10/8/2013	30.92%
City of Olathe	11/12/2013	32.46%
City of Roeland Park	12/10/2013	34.94%
City of Fairway	5/13/2014	39.36%

Turnout for Special Elections

Johnson County Question	9/27/2005	13.00%
City of Roeland Park Special Election	6/23/2009	24.90%
City of Roeland Park Special Election	2/14/2012	11.18%
City of Roeland Park Special Election	5/13/2014	23.44%
City of Roeland Park Special Election	12/9/2014	26.33%

Turnout for Spring General Elections

City General Election 2011	4/5/2011	9.76%
City General Election 2012	4/5/2012	11.02%
City General Election 2013	4/2/2013	7.98%
City General Election 2014	4/1/2014	9.61%



Polling Places Are Less Available

COVER STORY CONTINUED ON 4A

Safety pushes polls out of schools

Martha T. Moore
and Sabrina Tveit
USA TODAY

Local election officials are moving polling places out of schools as the shootings in Newtown, Conn., have intensified concern about opening school doors on Election Day.

In New York, Rockland County officials will relocate polls this year away from 10 schools at the request of the local school district in Clarkstown and Nyack. "In the wake of what happened in Connecticut, it's definitely taken on more urgency," says Kristen Slavsky, a county election commissioner. "Voters in these schools will have to move. They won't be going to the polling sites that they've been going to — for some of them, since they were eligible and registered to vote." In Baraboo, Wis., three polling

sites will be in the town civic center to avoid using schools, because of security concerns, says Cheryl Giese, Baraboo's city clerk.

A gunman killed 26 children and staff at Newtown's Sandy Hook Elementary School on Dec. 14.

In Johnson County, Kan., Election Commissioner Brian Newby says his

Voter locations change in wake of recent violence

office will pay for security guards at school polling places for an election April 2, at the request of the Olathe and Blue Valley school districts. Letters confirming the schools would host polling sites happened to be mailed on the day of the Newtown shootings. "I'm sure if you were at a school, you thought about security

that day," Newby says. Entrance to schools is tightly controlled, while polling places allow voters to come and go freely.

"It's not a nationwide stampede out of schools, but it's also not isolated," says election administration expert Doug Chapin, a University of Minnesota professor and author of the *Election Academy* blog. "Sandy Hook and Columbine have got people thinking 'Well, schools aren't as secure as we would like.' I think more and more jurisdictions are going to start talking about moving them."

A dozen proposed state laws would allow schools to refuse to host polling sites or create school holidays so that children aren't present during voting. About 12 states require school holidays for state and federal elections, according to Doug Lewis, executive director of the National Association of Election Officials.

for sale — based on the price of sales — fell in January to 4.2 months, the National Association of Realtors says. That's an almost eight-year low. A six-month to seven-month supply is considered balanced between buyers and sellers.

The availability of the most expensive homes in the markets Zillow tracks has tightened more than those at lower price levels.

Homes for sale in what Zillow defines as the top price tier in each market fell by almost 21% in February, a year earlier. The inventory of homes in the middle tier dropped 17%, those in the bottom tier fell 9%.

Five California cities in Zillow's survey are among those seeing the biggest inventory drops, from a 49% decline in Sacramento to a 36% fall-off in Riverside. Other cities are also seeing significantly fewer listings. New York is down almost 19%; Dallas/Fort Worth, nearly 21%; and Orlando is off 27%.

Only five of 99 metros showed an increase in listings, led by El Paso, up 19%, and Albuquerque, up 8%. Little Rock, Fort Myers, Fla., and Youngstown, Ohio, also saw increases.

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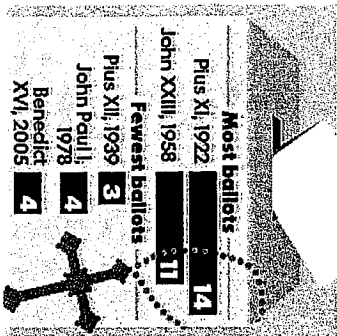
PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD

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Picking a pope

Total ballots cast in nine conclaves since 1903:



1 - One ballot held on first day, four held daily thereafter

Source: Global Catholic Network (gwin.com)

AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTO

STATE-BY-STATE 4A MARKETPLACE TODAY 5D PUZZLES 5D WEATHER 8A WHAT TO WATCH 6D YOUR SAY 7A



Polling Places Are Less Available

	2/25/14	4/1/14	8/5/14	11/4/14
ABM Gym	X	X	X	X
BVA Gym	X	X	X	X
BVM Gym	X			X
HMS Gym				X
LKM Gym	X	X		X
LMS Gym Foyer	X	X		
OTM Gym				X
OMS South Foyer				X
PRM Gym	X			
PSM Gym				
BVH Front Foyer				
BVN Aux Gym	X	X	X	X
BVNW Library Foyer				X
BVSW Aux Gym				X
BVW Aux Gym	X	X	X	X

