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TRINITY COUNTY
SUPERIOR COURT



TRINITY COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

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TO: The Honorable Michael B. Harper
Judge of the Superior Court

FROM: Trinity County Board of Supervisors

CC: Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: Response to Recommendations of 2016-2017
Grand Jury Financial and Administrative Committee Final Report
Re: FAR 2016-2017-002 Transparency and Elections Codes

DATE: October 3, 2017

The Grand Jury Financial and Administrative Committee has requested a written response to their final report on the FAR 2016-2017-002 Transparency and Elections Codes. The response of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors is as follows:

Finding #1: *Visual access at the Canvass was hindered for observers although direct access was not requested by the GJ at the time of its observation.*

Response: Disagree wholly. The Elections Department complied with Election Code sections 15272 and 15104(d). Proper access has been provided to observers.

Recommendation #1: *Adhere to the Election Codes concerning observers*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors has confidence that the recommendation has been adhered to and followed.

Recommendation #2: *The computer screens used for the signature validation shall be placed closer to the observers' relegated viewing area, enabling them to see the signatures clearly as stated in EC 15272.*

KEITH GROVES
DISTRICT 1

JUDY MORRIS
DISTRICT 2

BOBBI CHADWICK
DISTRICT 3

VACANT
DISTRICT 4

JOHN FENLEY
DISTRICT 5

Response: Election Code 15272 refers to manual tallies and access to the individuals conducting the tallies. It appears that the Grand Jury may be misinterpreting the code.

Finding #2: *The EO designated a viewing area at the Weaverville Veteran's Hall polling place wherein observers could view the election process but not interfere with voters' rights to secrecy.*

Response: Agree.

Recommendation #3: *The EO must continue to balance the rights of individual voters and observers to assure that the election process is transparent and all voter/citizen rights are upheld.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors has confidence that the recommendation has been adhered to and followed.

Finding #3: *EC 12109 was not adhered to by the EO. Whenever the ballots at any election or from any precincts are to be tallied at a central place and not at the precincts, the elections official or secretary of the jurisdiction conducting the election shall specify the public place to be used and give notice thereof as EC 12109 dictates.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors has no responsive information regarding this finding.

Recommendation #4: *Place a public notification of Pre-Canvass, Election Day, and Canvass procedures in a newspaper of general circulation published in Trinity County at least 10 days before the day of the election.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials.

Recommendation #5: *Place a public notification of Pre-Canvass, Election Day, and Canvass procedures at least 10 days before the day of the election in the glass enclosed bulletin board on the wall near the Court House main entrance.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors is aware that this information is posted on the County website, which had greater circulation than the bulletin board.

Recommendation #6: *Place a public notification of Pre-Canvass, Election Day, and Canvass procedures at least 10 days before the day of the election to www.trinitycountv.org website.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors has confidence that the recommendation has been adhered to and followed.

Recommendation #7: *Utilize the SOS's suggested Election Observer Panel Plan available at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-systems/oversight/county-election-observer-panel-plans/>*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors has confidence that the election officials follow all requirements regarding observations. The Board of Supervisors is aware that an enhanced observation window has been put in place, which should allow the appropriate viewing and privacy issues to continue to be adhered to.

Finding #4: *Trinity County employees working at the Court House have access to voter information kept in the secure storage area.*

Response: Disagree wholly. Voter information is kept in a locked and secured area, only accessible by Trinity County Clerk/Recorder/Assessor's office staff.

Recommendation #8: *Perform inventory of all keys distributed to Court House employees.*

Response: Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, the Board of Supervisors has confidence that the election officials have inventory of the keys, pursuant to County policy.

Recommendation #9: *Distribute keys as necessary for County and Court employees to perform their duties.*

Response: Board of Supervisors does not have authority over the elected officials. However, it is appropriate for the Trinity County Clerk/Recorder/Assessor's office staff to have access.

Recommendation #10: *Designate separate secure storage locations in the Courthouse for each County department use that is also separate from Court use.*

Response: The Board of Supervisors does have storage locations that are separate from the Court house. The County will continue to review storage issues.