



Lumpkin County Board of Elections & Registration

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- Agenda Item:** Renewal of the contract with A.V. Building Services for the delivery and retrieval of the election equipment to and from the polling locations.
- Problem Statement:** The Board of Elections & Registration is seeking to renew the contract with A.V Building Services to deliver, set up and retrieve the election equipment from the polling locations. This contract has eliminated prior issues encountered in the delivery and retrieval process such as Board Member safety and the difficulty in locating volunteers to assist. The contract with A.V Building Services continues to be the most cost effective way to deliver and retrieve the election equipment.
- Facts Bearing on the Issue/Problem:** Election Equipment (consisting of voting machines, heaters/fans, stanchions, state required signage, directional signage, electric and extension cords, tables, chairs, and security equipment) must be delivered, set up in accordance with state election law, and retrieved the day before and the day following every election. There are currently seventy voting units weighing over fifty pounds each which must be securely transported to the precincts on fourteen carts which weigh over four-hundred pounds fully loaded, totaling over 3,500 pounds. The election forms, ExpressPolls and other equipment is picked up by the Poll Managers the day prior to every election and returned by them on election night.
- Prior to 2007, a combination of state probationers and the Board of Elections & Registration members used a rental truck to deliver and retrieve the election equipment to and from the precincts prior to and after every election. In 2007, Secretary of State Handel ruled that no prisoners or probationers could be used to transport or touch any voting equipment.
- Beginning with the 2008 election year, the Board of Elections & Registration began using volunteers from the Lumpkin County High School Football Team and a rental truck to deliver and retrieve the equipment.
- Beginning with the 2010 election year, with a change in Lumpkin County High School Administration, the school policy discouraged using the football team members to assist in the delivery and retrieval of election equipment due to missing important classes and/or training. This office was informed that it was too difficult to obtain approval from the administration and there were very few students willing to participate. There were several elections where other volunteers had to be located the morning of delivery or retrieval and were paid with staff funds due to the scheduled volunteers not showing up and having no budget for paid assistance.
- The Board of Elections & Registration voted at the 8/17/2010 regular monthly meeting to contract out the delivery and retrieval of the election equipment due to the difficulties in obtaining volunteers capable of transporting the heavy equipment and loaded carts, as well as the potential detriment to the health of the Board Members that currently assist. The Board also wanted consistent personnel handling the delivery and retrieval so that they would be more familiar with the equipment and how to set polling locations up appropriately.
- In the past the cost for the Board of Elections & Registration to deliver and retrieve the voting equipment using a rental truck, county vehicle, four Board Members and volunteers on average totaled \$735 per election. Due to the consolidation of the precincts current projected cost for the Board of Elections to deliver and retrieve the voting equipment would be \$650 per election.
- Beginning with the 2012 election year, A.V. Building Services began conducting the delivery and retrieval of the election equipment at a cost of \$624.00 per election.

**Potential Courses
of Action with
Comparison:**

- A. Return to the previous course of action with the Board of Elections & Registration finding volunteers, renting a truck and using a county vehicle to deliver and retrieve the election equipment to and from the polling places at a cost of approximately \$650 per election.
- 1) **Strengths:** The Board of Elections & Registration would be personally overseeing the delivery/retrieval process.
 - 2) **Weaknesses:** Costs more than the A.V. Building Services Contract. No current known volunteers are available and prior volunteer pool is no longer available. Volunteers would have to be trained every trip, twice per election, on the equipment and applicable state laws. If volunteers cannot be found, then the option of paying workers would have to be considered. Board Members have been injured during previous delivery/retrievals and have health issues that prevent them from safely being able to perform the tasks.
- B. Have the Board of Elections & Registration hire day laborers, rent a truck and use a county vehicle to deliver and retrieve the election equipment to and from the polling places, reducing the number of Board Members accompanying to two. This reduces the base cost to \$544 but adds an additional \$332 per day (average quote from HireAHelper.com), at a total cost of approximately \$1,208 per election.
- 1) **Strengths:** Board Members would not be required to perform the physical tasks. Laborers could be scheduled and guaranteed to arrive at the appointed time.
 - 2) **Weaknesses:** Costs \$584.00 more than the A.V. Building Contract and \$558.00 more than having the Board of Elections deliver and retrieve the equipment. Laborers would have to be trained every trip, twice per election, on the equipment and applicable state laws.
- C. Renew the contract with A.V. Building Services to deliver and retrieve the election equipment to and from the polling places at a cost of \$624 per election.
- 1) **Strengths:** A.V. Building Services has conducted the delivery and retrieval of the election equipment for the past 3 election cycles and therefore are familiar with the process. Training for A.V. Building Services will only be required if any changes are made to the current laws and policies involving election equipment delivery and retrieval. The contract eliminates the Board members involvement, which eliminates the Board Members risk of injury. The contract reduces the amount of time spent organizing and conducting the delivery and retrieval by the office staff and Board Members which increases the efficiency of elections and voter registration. The contract is renewable annually or may be discontinued with a 30 day notice should services become unsatisfactory. At \$624 per election it is the most cost effective way to deliver and retrieve the election equipment.
 - 2) **Weaknesses:** The Board of Elections and Registration would not be directly involved with the delivery/retrieval process, but would still be accountable for any issues or violations should they occur.

**Staff
Recommendation:**

Recognizing the difficulty in finding, retaining, and training volunteers, as well as the safety concerns of the members of the Board of Elections and Registration, and considering the savings in cost and staff time during the critical days prior to elections, along with the benefits of having a consistently trained entity contracted to securely and accurately deliver and retrieve the election equipment, it is the Staff's recommendation that the County renew the contract with A.V. Building Services for election equipment delivery and retrieval.