



# Louisville Metro Government

601 W. Jefferson Street  
Louisville, KY 40202

## Action Summary - Final Committee on Equity and Inclusion

*Chair/Council President David James (D-6)*

*Vice Chair Nicole George (D-21)*

*Committee Member Barbara Shanklin (D-2)*

*Committee Member Keisha Dorsey (D-3)*

*Committee Member Markus Winkler (D-17)*

*Committee Member Robin Engel (R-22)*

*Committee Member James Peden (R-23)*

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Tuesday, September 8, 2020

11:30 AM

Council Chambers

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### THIS IS CONSIDERED A SPECIAL MEETING

#### Call to Order

Chair James called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

#### Roll Call

Chair James introduced the committee members and non-committee members present. A quorum was established.

**\*NOTE: All committee members and non-committee members present attended virtually.**

**Present:** 6 - Chair David James (D-6), Vice Chair Nicole George (D-21), Committee Member Barbara Shanklin (D-2), Committee Member Keisha Dorsey (D-3), Committee Member Markus Winkler (D-17), and Committee Member James Peden (R-23)

**Excused:** 1 - Committee Member Robin Engel (R-22)

#### Non-Committee Member(s)

Council Member Barbara Sexton Smith (D-4) and Council Member Bill Hollander (D-9)

#### Clerk(s)

Sonya Harward, Clerk  
Cheryl Woods, Assistant Clerk

#### Special Discussion

[ID 20-1174](#)

## ELECTION AND VOTING

Josh Douglas, University of Kentucky

- Administrative Regulations Adopted by the State Board of Elections
- Lessons Learned During Primary Election and Implementing Ideas for Improvement

Professor Josh Douglas gave an overview about the topics listed above that included the following:

- Making it easier to vote by being more inclusive, democratic, and convenient, and to break down barriers and improve turnout
- Voting in Kentucky in June was more successful than what the narrative by the media suggested, mostly because it referenced 600,000 people needing to vote at a limited number of locations and did not consider the number of mail-in ballots
- There were some issues including a traffic jam in Louisville that made people late and long wait times in Lexington
- Three ways to vote in November in Kentucky: (1) Vote by mail -- mail-in ballots can be requested now at GoVoteKy.com; (2) Three weeks of early in-person voting starting October 13 during regular County Clerk's office hours and on three additional Saturdays at polling places that have not been announced yet; and (3) Vote in person on November 3rd at polling places that have not been announced yet
- Concern whether there will be enough volunteer poll workers for the election in November
- Long-term problems with how Kentucky runs its elections
  - Kentucky's voter registration deadline is 29 days prior to election day (must be registered by October 5 this year), whereas 21 states have same-day registration and have higher voter turnout
  - Kentucky is implementing its new voter ID law - disenfranchises some voters
  - Not doing enough to reach out to the 150,000 citizens who have regained their right to vote

The following also spoke to this item:

- Chair James
- Vice Chair George
- Committee Member Shanklin
- Council Member Hollander
- Committee Member Winkler
- Committee Member Peden
- Committee Member Dorsey

The following was discussed:

- States that have the best processes for running elections and voter education
- What is driving the decisions regarding how many polling locations the County Clerks will choose to have in November:
  - Plans have to be submitted by the County Clerks to the Governor and Secretary of State to jointly approve
  - Proper ability to staff enough poll workers and follow the Center for Disease Control's social distancing guidelines
  - Must have one super center and one additional polling location
  - Hopes that the Governor and Secretary of State will consider whether

- the plans provide for enough polling places in areas where there are higher numbers of in-person voting
- Two drop boxes for absentee ballots in each county and important to make their locations known
  - Postcards that were mailed before the last election were informational, and there are no plans to send out postcards for general election
  - If the cards that are mailed to voters are returned after a second mailing, the person is put on an inactive list and will be removed from the voter rolls if s/he does not vote in the next two elections after the second notice
  - October 9 is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot, with the exception of a medical emergency
  - Absentee ballots will not be sent until the middle of September or end of September
  - Suggest that people register for absentee ballots right away, and if ready to complete it to do it right away so that the County Clerk's office has additional time to process it
  - Unlike the previous elections where ballots that had problems were not counted, the County Clerk's office now must contact the voter regarding any problem, and the County Clerk is to be directed to disregard minor errors and count the ballot
  - Any possible litigation because of ballots being counted or not being counted if there is a problem
  - Any research done regarding people who wanted to vote and were not able to
    - Some voters receiving postcards about voting at regular polling place
    - Question regarding whether the school tax increase item would be on the ballot even though it is being challenged in court
    - Kentucky Exposition Center is booked for other purposes during the election in November
  - Purging the voting rolls
    - Polls must stay updated and accurate
    - Postcard system to help purge voter rolls
    - How to get off the purge list
  - Provisions for elderly and disabled people
    - Only requirement is that the parking is accessible
    - Some states do curbside voting for elderly and disabled people
  - Call for younger people to become poll workers
    - Some breweries around the state have put advertisement for poll workers on their beer cans

Sadiqua Reynolds, Louisville Urban League

- Communication Plan Essential to Get Out the Vote
- Lessons Learned from Primary Election

Sadiqua Reynolds gave an overview of concerns she had regarding the upcoming election that included the following:

- No money being spent to get the word out to voters about the ways to vote and early in-person voting
- Getting mail-in ballots submitted early
- Council Members helping get the word out
- Have the County Clerk speak before the Council to present the plan for the election
- Misinformation being the enemy, so making sure to post appropriate signage
- Allowing paid time off for those that work at the polls
- Getting the word out on how to request the mail-in ballot via the portal and making the process easier
- Reaching out to those that have regained their right to vote and having wrong contact information for many of them, and also how some law offices are helping
- Making a video that shows what the ballot looks like, what is going to be on it, and what they need to do
- Reaching out to groups of young people to work at the polls, directly or through their employers
- Problem during last election regarding people getting notices that they changed their political party within 100 days of the election and could not vote
- Plaintiff in lawsuit against the Governor and Secretary of State; working together before dismissing the lawsuit; and an agreement that there would be more than one voting location for November's election
- Focus on aggressively getting the message out to vote early in October so there are no concerns on Election day
- Concerns regarding transportation to polls during the pandemic -- a lot of people stepped up to take people to the polls for the last election

The following also spoke to this item:

- Vice Chair George
- Committee Member Shanklin

The following was discussed:

- Sadiqua Reynolds was asked if she had been asked for any suggestions on how to get the message out about the election - she had not but would be very interested in helping with the advertising campaign
- The Kentucky Exposition Center may still be an option for one of the voting locations, and there has also been talk about using the downtown Convention Center
- Issues with having to sign the ballot twice, and showing people in advance would be helpful
- PSA video regarding how to request and complete the ballots will be shared when it is made

**Dr. Margie Charasika, League of Women Voters**

- Early Voting Helps Ensure Participation
- In-Person Voting Locations Necessary
- Limitations of Volunteer Poll Workers During COVID-19

**Dr. Margie Charasika did not attend.**

**There was additional discussion about the election/voting by the following:**

- Committee Member Dorsey
- Chair James
- Council Member Hollander

**The following was discussed:**

- A group of non-profits Committee Member Dorsey has pulled together that meets on Sundays and they will be discussing how to educate the public about how to complete the mail-in ballots
- Contact 'Kentuckians for the Commonwealth' and they will provide signs for neighborhood polling locations that lets people know that the location is not being used and provides information about where to go to vote
- Idea to hire an outreach worker(s) to go door-to-door in low income/low response areas to provide information about voting and help people request absentee ballots, and to help with accessing resources in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Having the County Clerk speak before the Committee about the plan for the election would be helpful
- County Clerk to announce on Friday the plan for the upcoming election
- Facilities planned to move the Election Center to 1000 E. Liberty by the general election, and the building has signs saying that it is the Election Center -- interest in knowing the status of that move
- Visit to current Election Center location this week and it did not appear to be packed up

## **Adjournment**

**Without objection, Chair James adjourned the meeting at 12:37 p.m.**