Mecklenburg County
Department of Internal Audit

Board of Elections
Elections Process Follow-Up Audit
Report 1817

October 5, 2018

MECKLENBURG COUNTY
Department of Internal Audit

To: Dena Diorio, County Manager

From: Joanne Prakapas, Director, Department of Internal Audit

Date: October 5, 2018

Subject: Elections Process Follow-Up Audit Report 1817

The Department of Internal Audit completed a follow-up audit on reported issues from the Board of Elections – Elections Process Audit Report 1476 issued April 9, 2015. The follow-up audit objective was to determine with reasonable but not absolute assurance whether management took effective corrective action on the issues presented in the audit report.

Internal Audit staff interviewed key personnel; observed operations; reviewed written policies, procedures, and other documents; and tested specific transactions where applicable. Internal Audit conducted this audit in conformance with The Institute of Internal Auditor's International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

FOLLOW-UP SUMMARY

There were twelve recommendations in the Board of Elections – Elections Process Audit Report 1476. The following table provides the original number of recommendations and summarizes the follow-up audit results performed to date.

Fiscal Year	Audit Report	Implemented	Open	Not Implemented[1]	Withdrawn	Total Carryforward
2015	1476[2]	N/A				12
2018	1817	7	1	3	1	1

The attached **Follow-Up Results** matrix provides details for the most recent follow-up audit. Internal Audit will review any carryforward issues later to verify recommendations are fully implemented and working as intended.

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[1] Management assuming risk for not taking corrective action
[2] Initial report

The cooperation and assistance of the Board of Elections staff are recognized and appreciated.

c: Deputy County Manager/Chief of Staff
        Assistant County Managers
        Deputy County Attorney
        Senior County Attorney
        Board of County Commissioners
        Audit Review Committee
        Director, Board of Elections

Follow-Up Results
BOE Elections Process Report 1476

- **Implemented** – Audit issue has been adequately addressed by implementing the original or alternative corrective action plan **(I)**
- **Open** – Corrective action for audit issue initiated but not completed **(P)**; Implemented but not operating as intended **(IO)**; Not been addressed but management fully intends to address issue **(O)**
- **Not Implemented** – Audit issue not addressed and management has assumed the risk of not taking corrective action **(NI)**
- **Withdrawn** – Audit issue no longer exist due to operational changes **(W)**

Risk Observation	Recommendation	Management's Risk Mitigation Strategy	Original Implementation Date	Implementation Status		
				Current Status	Comments	
1.1	Internal Audit recommends management develop formal, documented policies and procedures for all key election activities. The policies and procedures should include, at a minimum: • Early voting process • Tabulation and reporting • Ballot accuracy • Audit and certification • Election document retention requirements • Pollbook list maintenance	Develop formal written procedures, including incorporating the various checklists we currently use for the successful completion of the election and incorporate the policies and procedures of the NC State Board of Elections Precinct Uniformity Program into a written document. Deadline is to complete in conjunction with this election cycle (end of this year).	12/2015	NI	Management believes State Board of Elections guidelines provide sufficient guidance around key election activities and assumes the risk of non-implementation.	
2.1	Internal Audit recommends management obtain clarification of nicknames that do not require affidavits and ensure necessary candidate affidavits are obtained consistent with North Carolina General Statute 163-106.	Staff will seek "nickname" clarification from the North Carolina State Board of Elections prior to the start of candidate filing in July, 2015 to determine what comprises a nickname (example: Bill or William).	07/2015	I (2)		

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| | | | | Implementation Status | |
| | | | | --- | --- |
Risk Observation	Recommendation	Management's Risk Mitigation Strategy	Original Implementation Date	Current Status	Comments
2.2	Internal Audit recommends management retain voting equipment testing documentation for at least five years in compliance with the North Carolina Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.	Will advise the North Carolina State Board of Elections of the discrepancy in the North Carolina Records Retention and Disposition Schedule of retaining testing for 5 years when only required to keep the voting information for 2 years. Our office will maintain the testing for five years and will ask the State for guidance and clarification by the end of this year.	12/2015	I	
2.3	Internal Audit recommends management re-emphasize to poll workers the importance of documenting custody exchanges.	The staff will emphasize in training of precinct officials and regional precinct coordinators of the importance of maintaining signatures on all custody documents. Will re-emphasize with this year's training.	12/2015	I	
	We also recommend management implement a review process to ensure custody exchanges are performed in accordance with standards promulgated by the State Board.		12/2015	IO	Internal Audit determined the implementation is not working as intended and management will change the confirmation and review activities from post-election to pre-election. Management also indicated training will address custody concerns.
2.4	Internal Audit recommends management re-emphasize to poll workers the importance of using Incident Reports. We also recommend management implement a review process to ensure Incident Reports are completed in accordance with State Board requirements.	First step is for my staff to determine what is the definition of an incident and if an incident may be reported by the precinct official or by the regional precinct coordinator (RPC). If RPC files the incident, does the report have to be on the State prescribed form? Develop a consistent process by the end of this year.	12/2015	I (2)	

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				Current Status	Comments
2.5	Internal Audit recommends management ensure the ATV and early voting reconciliation documentation includes the preparer's name and, if differences are noted, related explanations.	The Electronic Voter iDentification (EViD) scan of election Authorization to Vote (ATV) forms on election day and Early voting site reconciliation form of votes cast on voting panels will be amended to add preparers name and comment for any comments, by the end of this year.	12/2015	W	Management indicated that the State General Assembly is in the process of directing County Boards of Election that they will not be able to use EViD to perform the reconciliations.
2.6	Internal Audit recommends management ensure staff consistently evidences key information such as preparer's name and explanation of actions taken when conducting maintenance activities. Further, management should document its review and approval of ongoing and final pollbook maintenance.	Management reviews the work of staff as a course of their normal operating procedure. Review of workflow is provided by monthly list maintenance reports generated by department manager. I believe the daily and monthly review of list maintenance will provide adequate support for justification of the daily duties of the Voter Administration staff and further review would be redundant. Develop a documented procedure to incorporate our current checklists we use to verify the poll book produced by the Statewide Election Information Management System (SEIMS). Poll book review will consist of action and assignment and sign-off and management approval. Set goal is to complete in conjunction with this election cycle.	12/2015	NI (2)	Management does not see the need to implement these recommendations and assumes the risk of non-implementation.

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3.1	Internal Audit recommends management have someone independent of testing activities be responsible for reviewing the test results. If that is not possible, management should implement appropriate compensating controls.	The current process of testing of the voting panels and ballots incorporates a multi-tier approach. The ballot is developed by the Director and the Public Information Manager. The Mecklenburg County Board of Elections submits the ballot to the NC State Board of Elections for approval and after approval the ballot is handed over to the Precinct Operations Manager for actual programming. Before programming starts, an outside vendor produces a "test vote script" of each ballot for testing. Testing is performed by the Precinct Operations Team and is reviewed by the Director and is run through the State's Election Night Reporting software to ensure the accuracy of reporting the results. When the ballot is loaded on the voting panel and the logic and accuracy test is performed we will make certain the person performing this operation and the reviewer are two separate individuals. This will begin with this year's ballot.	12/2015	I	