

Elections Consolidation in 2011

The IAC Sub-Committee was appointed by Marie Scott, Chair of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee to research and develop an implementation plan for counties to use as they undertake the legislative mandate to consolidate elections under the direction of the County Clerks.

A major component to the elections consolidation challenge is already in place. The Secretary of State's, Idaho Voter Registration System (IVRS) is a comprehensive statewide data base containing all registered voters by name and address. The IVRS identifies each elector's voting precinct, legislative district and tax code area. The system also tracks all roads in the state along with address ranges organized within code areas and voting precincts.

The county election staff is responsible for maintaining and updating information in the IVRS data base. Should a voter registration be submitted with a new address, not contained in the data base, they verify the address and tax code area with assistance from their Assessor, GIS system or the State Tax Commission tax district boundaries as depicted at <http://www2.idaho.gov/gis/Google/Districts/>.

The sub-committee agreed that counties conduct an annual quality control cross check of the elections code area data with the assessor's parcel based tax code area coverage and verify that the county's tax code area boundaries agree with those of the State Tax Commission as provided at <http://www2.idaho.gov/gis/Google/Districts/> and <http://tax.idaho.gov/i-1073.cfm>. We recommend that County Clerks encourage the Secretary of State to incorporate some basic GIS functions in future IVRS updates.

Using the IVRS data base, the elections staff prints poll books for each taxing district or precinct in alphabetic order. Election Day registration at the polls requires a critical resource need for our poll volunteers. The sub-committee agreed accurate, legible, hard copy precinct maps with roads, tax code area boundaries and school zone designations must be supplied. While counties with GIS capability can add the tax code area boundaries and school zone designations to their precinct maps; counties without GIS must seek support from their Assessor's office.

There is a conflict in purpose and time between elections and tax allocations when taxing districts alter their boundaries. If an annexation is complete in April, the voters in the annexed area expect to vote in the May and November elections even though the annexation would not be in effect for taxing purposes until the following January. After reviewing IC 63-215, (3); we believe there is a need for legislation outlining a time frame

governing taxing district boundary changes relative to election dates, i.e. taxing district boundary changes must be received by the county clerk sixty (60) days prior to an election to be effective for that election.

Prior to updating the IVRS, elections staff needs to know the taxing district boundary changes have been received by the tax commission. The State Tax Commission posts all proposed taxing district changes on their web site with receipt of the change, this web site is updated daily and provides a good source for the elections staff to verify status of changes in their taxing districts. If data does not show, the change has not been received by the tax commission. <http://tax.idaho.gov/i-1069.cfm>

County Clerks must educate the taxing district personnel stressing the critical importance of implementing adequate checks and balances to insure changes to their district boundaries are accurate; and submitted to their County Clerks, County Assessors and State Tax Commission as soon as adopted. With the Secretary of State's endorsement, this subject could be added to the annual state wide budget and levy training.

IAC Sub-Committee

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