ECAM 2012 Convention
What's Different about Presidential Elections?
(and other election topics)

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January 25, 2012
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Introduction

- Overview
- Qualifying and Election Details by Office
- Presidential Elections: What's different from other elections.

Qualifying and Election Details by Office

- 2012 Regular Elections

2012 Elections in Mississippi

- President and Vice-President
- US Senate (Senator Wicker's seat)
- US House (all four)
- Supreme Court (4 seats, all 3 districts)
- County Election Commissioner
- County School Board (Districts 3 and 4*)
- Consolidated School District Trustee
- Municipal School District Trustee**
- Mississippi Levee District Commissioner***
- Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District****

Presidential Preference Primary

- Presidential Preference Primary-March 13
- Only for Democrats and Republicans.
- Coincides with Congressional Primary and Yazoo-MS Delta Levee District primary
- Congressional might require a runoff April 3. Yazoo-MS Delta Levee District may also require a runoff April 3.
- Results of the presidential vote are used by the parties, under party rules, in their delegate selection plan.

U. S. Senate and Congress

- US Senate and all four U.S. House of Representative seats elected this year.
- Qualifying deadline January 13.
- March 13 primary coincides with Presidential Preference Primary.
- Runoff for federal office, if required, April 3.

Mississippi Supreme Court

Nonpartisan offices, no primary.

- Qualifying deadline May 11.
- General Election Nov. 6
- Runoff, if required, Nov. 27 (3 weeks)

County Election Commissioner

- *NEW*Qualifying deadline June 4.
- Not in primaries, but may declare party affiliation, which appears on general election ballot.
- Qualify by petition with 50 signatures, FILED WITH CHANCERY CLERK! The Board of Supervisors must rule on Election Commission candidate qualifications.
- Runoff, if required, Nov 27 (3 weeks later).

County School Board Member

- Districts 3&4 are up for election this year under the statutory schedule, but several counties are on different schedules-consult school board, superintendent, or their attorney.
- Qualifying period of August 8-Sept 7.
- No party affiliation, no primary.
- Qualify by petition with 50 signatures.
- NO RUNOFF; majority not required, high vote wins.
- Rules are different for school trustees.

Consolidated School District Trustee

- For counties with Consolidated School Districts, you usually have one of these elections each year. Staggered 5 year terms.
- Qualifying period of August 8 -Sept 7.
- Non-partisan, no primary, qualify by petition normally with 50 signatures.
- Unlike county school board member, RUNOFF IS REQUIRED if no candidate receives majority. Runoff date THREE weeks later, Nov. 27.

Municipal Separate School District Trustee

- Elections are normally only for municipal separate school district trustee with ADDED TERRITORY outside the municipal lines.
- One of a kind type of election.
- March 3 (Saturday) election at school 2-5pm.
- Qualifying deadline of January 23.
- Qualify with County Superintendent of Education.
- No absentee ballots.
- Watch out for Special Sep. School District Trustee, which has different provisions!

Yazoo-Miss. Delta Levee District

- All in this Levee District are elected this year.
- 2 each in Coahoma and Tunica counties
- 1 each in DeSoto, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Sunflower, LeFlore, Yazoo, Humphreys, and Holmes counties.
- Qualify by January 13. Party candidates $15 fee and statement of intent, run in primary. Independents-petition with 50 signatures.
- General election November 6.
- Rules for Mississippi Levee district DIFFERENT.
- Levee district election laws only in the General Laws, not in statute!

Mississippi Levee District

- Commissioners in the following counties this year:
- 1 each elected in 2012 from Washington, Bolivar, and Issaquena counties.
- Qualify by petition only by last working day prior to May 6, 50 signatures, no primary.
- General Election June 5, runoff if necessary on 19th, no election if only one candidate qualifies.
- Rules for Yazoo-MS Levee district DIFFERENT.
- Levee district election laws only in the General Laws, not in statute!

Candidate Qualifying- Summary

- County School Board Member: Qualifying deadline is a "window": August 8, 2012 to September 7, 2012. Requires petition with minimum of 50 signatures.
- County School District Trustee: Consolidated School Districts. Also has the Aug 8-Sept 7 qualifying window, 50 signatures.
- County Election Commissioner: NEW DEADLINE. Qualifying deadline is June 4, at 5pm (nearly all qualifying deadlines are 5pm) Petition requires 50 signatures. Petition must be filed in CHANCERY CLERK's office by the deadline!
- Delta area counties: Yazoo-Miss. Delta Levee Board Commissioner and Miss. Levee District Commissioner elections in 2012.

What is Different about Presidential Elections?

Civics Lesson – Presidential Preference Primary Elections

- Presidential Preference Primary: Is a device by which the popular vote for president is used by the state Democratic and Republican parties, under party rules, allocate delegates at their national convention.
- Mississippi not so long ago used caucuses in this process instead of a preference primary.
- "Super Tuesday" is just a term used to reflect the fact that many states have their presidential preference primary on this same day.

Civics Lesson 2: Electoral College.

- After 2000 election, everyone is an expert.
- First of all, electoral vote for President and Mississippi's electoral vote for Governor totally different and unrelated.
- For President, you win by getting a majority of the electoral votes. See the 12th Amendment to US Constitution.
- In most states, it is winner take all-whichever candidate for president gets the most popular votes, gets all that state's electoral votes.

Practicalities of Presidential Electors

- Each candidate in the general election will submit affidavits from 6 prospective presidential electors. (In 2000 we had 7.) They are who we are actually voting for on the ballot. "Presidential Electors For:"
- If their candidate wins, they travel to Jackson and cast their electoral votes for President and Vice-President.
- Their ballots are sent to the Congress, who count them.

2 major things

- Receipt time of Absentee Ballots expanded by 26 hours for office of President/VP.
- Voters in your county who move outside of your county within 30 days of Presidential Preference Primary or the November 6 General Election can "come back" and vote in person or vote absentee for President/VP. You may need to print Presidential-Only ballots for them!

The Big Urban Legend

- Someone, say from California, could be driving on I-20 between Atlanta and Los Angeles, and pull in to a polling place in Mississippi on a Presidential Election day and legally vote.
- WRONG.

More differences

- Remember that in "intent of the voter" issues voting for president and not vice-president is a vote for the presidential electors for BOTH.

Selected Military and Overseas Voters' Voting Issues

- Regulatory extension of voter registration and absentee voting deadlines for military. See Secretary of State Administrative Rules Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. Section 23-15-701: Registration deadline 10 days instead of 30 days prior to election (23-15-677); absentees accepted until 7pm election day, etc.
- Faxing/emailing of ballots, applications.
- For military voters, entire ballot will be counted if the absentee is received by the close of polls on election day. (contrast this with the rule that for non-military absentee ballots only the vote for President/VP is counted.)
- Call FVAP for military voting problems: 800-438-8683
- First and second primary ballots (and other runoff ballots)

23-15-683

- Requires sending two identical ballots, in different colors, and separate ballot envelopes for them.
- Applies to primaries and any other election where there might be a runoff.
- Even though the runoff ballot has all the first election candidates on it, the military voter either "guesses" who made the runoff or makes an unofficial contact to learn who made the runoff – phone call, email, web, etc.

Mandatory Purging Dates-2012

- Election Commissions must meet on the following statutory dates for purging:
- January 17
- February 7
- September 10

Election Commissions are required by law to meet on these dates. If necessary, a quorum must meet on these days and the commission may vote to recess until a later date. These dates, of course, are just a starting point; you must meet as often as necessary to fulfill your statutory purging duties.

See Miss. Code Ann. Section 23-15-153(1)

"Blackout" dates for large mailings of confirmation cards

- NVRA states you must complete any "systematic" removal programs not later than 90 days prior to any election.
- In general terms, this means no large mailings of confirmation cards or purging-related "mass mailings" during the "blackout" period.
- Other purging is OK during this period.
- "Blackout" dates: Dec 14-Mar 13/ Apr 3*
- "Blackout" dates: Aug 8-Nov 6/ Nov 27*

(*if there is a runoff)

Thanks.

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