



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
220 NORTH MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 8645
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48107-8645
(734)222-6850
FAX (734)222-6715

TO: Jeff Irwin, Chair
Ways & Means Committee

THROUGH: Robert E. Guenzel
County Administrator

FROM: Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

DATE: April 19, 2006

SUBJECT: Authorization to Create a Position for the Clerk/Register's Office

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

The Clerk/Register of Deeds requests the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners create a 1.0 FTE Administrative Coordinator position within the Elections/Administration Division of the Clerk/Register's Office.

BACKGROUND:

The Administrative Coordinator position for the Elections/Administration Division of the Clerk/Register's Office was eliminated in 2003 after processes within the office had been streamlined, creating a more efficient workflow and eliminating the need to replace an upcoming retirement within the office. Since that time, new State Election Law was implemented in January 2005, increasing the election-related responsibilities and duties of the Office of the Clerk/Register. In order to fulfill the duties and responsibilities mandated by the legislative changes, and in order to keep ballot generation and voting equipment programming in-house, the Office of the Clerk/Register is requesting Board approval to create the position of 1.0 FTE status Administrative Coordinator (Grade 25, Group 32).

DISCUSSION:

Prior to January 1, 2005, the Clerk/Register's Office functioned in an oversight capacity, with the local jurisdictions handling the detailed responsibilities of each election. The new election consolidation legislation limits elections to four calendar days each year during the months of February, May, August, and November and also requires the Clerk/Register of Deeds to play a more integral role in elections administration. As a result, the County Clerk's Office no longer experiences lengthy breaks between elections (especially during odd years) as was the case in previous years.

The increased workflow accompanying the new election consolidation laws has made it

necessary to create another position within the Elections Division of the Clerk/Register of Deeds Office. In addition to generating ballots and programming voting equipment for all jurisdictions within Washtenaw County, a longstanding function of the Elections Division, the Clerk/Register also has responsibility for posting all election notices (each of the 25 jurisdictions must post two notices prior to each of the four election dates if they have an issue on the ballot), training the majority of the election inspectors in Washtenaw County (approximately 1,000), and providing more effective and detailed support to all of the local jurisdictions' clerks. The new legislation also eliminated School Election Officials and requires the County Clerk to organize and facilitate elections for all ten (10) Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) school districts, the WISD itself, and the Washtenaw Community College. The duties associated with this new function include: preparing election related publications, acting as the filing official for all candidates, recruiting, hiring, scheduling and training Election Inspectors for several jurisdictions, arranging polling locations and equipment delivery for Election Day, and distributing and receipting Absent Voter Ballots within several jurisdictions.

The increase in duties is not limited to preparation for and administration of elections. As a result of a change in the State's position about how campaign finance is handled and reviewed, the Clerk/Register's Office is playing a more active role in auditing Candidate, Ballot Question and Political Action Committees. The Clerk/Register's Office has also committed to develop a training program, which will begin this spring, to educate candidates about campaign finance and campaigning procedures.

IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCES:

One (1) 1.0 FTE status Administrative Coordinator (Grade 25) position will be created.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

The increase in salary and fringe costs for this position is estimated to be \$38,544 for 2006. The additional personnel costs will be absorbed in the County's 2006 general fund budget through cost savings from a reduction in the use of part-time/temporary personnel in the Register of Deeds and Elections Divisions of the Clerk/Register's Office. The creation of this position will also allow the Clerk/Register's Office to defray the costs associated with hiring a consultant to program and generate ballots.

IMPACT ON INDIRECT COSTS:

There is no impact on indirect costs.

IMPACT ON OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OR OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

This position will allow for the County Clerk/Register's Office to continue generating ballots and programming voting equipment in-house. The cost savings of keeping these practices in-house rather than paying an outside vendor will benefit not only the County Elections Division, but also every local jurisdiction within Washtenaw County.

CONFORMITY TO COUNTY POLICIES:

This request is made in accordance with County policies.

ATTACHMENTS/APPENDICES:

Resolution

A RESOLUTION CREATING A 1.0 FTE ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR POSITION IN THE CLERK/REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 19, 2006

WHEREAS, the County Clerk/Register's Office eliminated an Administrative Coordinator position in 2003 due to streamlining of processes prior to Election Consolidation; and

WHEREAS, Michigan Election Consolidation Laws implemented in January 2005 have increased the functions and state-mandated duties of the County Clerk/Register's Election Division as well as the frequency of elections; and

WHEREAS, the County Clerk/Register now serves as the Election Coordinator for all School Elections, assuming the responsibilities formerly held by the 10 school districts' election coordinators; and

WHEREAS, these responsibilities include scheduling of polling locations, hiring and scheduling election inspectors, programming and printing ballots, providing Qualified Voter File support, accepting candidate filings and nominating petitions as well as school related proposal language; and

WHEREAS, it is determined that the increased occurrence of elections and the accompanying duties indicate a need for a 1.0 FTE Administrative Coordinator position; and

WHEREAS, the salary and fringe costs for this position will be funded through cost savings from a reduced use of part-time/temporary personnel in the Register of Deeds and Elections Divisions of the Clerk/Register's Office; and

WHEREAS, this matter has been reviewed by Corporation Counsel, the Finance Department, Human Resources, the County Administrator's Office, and the Ways & Means Committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the creation of the following position:

<u>Position #</u>	<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Create</u>
2523-0034	Administrative Coordinator	25	32	1.0