North Carolina’s Journey to Modernizing its Voting System

Veronica Degraffenreid
Elections Preparation & Support Manager
North Carolina’s Journey to Modernizing Elections System
Conference Recap

- Voting System
- Electronic Poll book
- Ballot On Demand
- Ballot Delivery System
- Voter Registration System
- Election Management System
- Ballot Marking Device
- Election Night Reporting System
Where We Are Going
How we got here . . .

- NVRA – implemented in 1995
- NC Elections Omnibus Bill of 2013
- HAVA – implemented in 2006
What needs modernizing?

Voter Registration System

- North Carolina has a statewide voter registration database system – essentially an Elections Management System with 13 separate applications. We call it SEIMS (State Elections Information Management System) – its seamless?
- Its core applications were first developed in the early to mid-1990s.
- It’s a distributed system amongst NC’s 100 county boards of elections.
- 100 county servers that replicate up to SEIMS.
What needs modernizing?

Voting System

• Paper ballots mandated
• DREs will be decertified in 2018 (possibly 2020)
• “New” technology
• Increase in PM
• We *think* we know where we want to go.
• Not quite sure how to get there.
Who is on the journey?
Old Organizational Structure - Compartmental

- Administration
- IT
- Voting Systems
- Campaign Finance
- Management

New Organizational Structure - Integrated

- Management
- Elections Administration
- Voting Systems
- IT
- Legal
- Campaign Finance
- Investigations and Audits
Method of travel?
What do we pack?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergarments</td>
<td>• inside support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoes</td>
<td>• navigable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweaters and Coats -</td>
<td>• protective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tees and swimsuits –</td>
<td>• fluid, withstand heat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belts –</td>
<td>• outside support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual ware –</td>
<td>• functional, flexible, comfortable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formalwear</td>
<td>• official</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessories –</td>
<td>• pretty, impressive</td>
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A Coordinated Outfit: System Integration

Voter Registration
- GIS
- Addressing standards
- NVRA

Election Setup
- Master election schedule
- Master contest list

Voting system
- Voting system certification
- Ballot marking devices
- Official ballot changes

Precinct Management
- Electronic Poll books
- Election Worker
- Voting Sites

Data and Audits

Election Reporting

Precinct Management

North Carolina State Board of Elections
We need luggage
We need new luggage
We need a trunk

And some other luggage

And some accessory bags
Where does the journey begin?
The Voting System – The Simple Envelope

People must register

People must vote

People win
The Journey – This is really where we are going . . .
Now your SEE it

And the winner is

... uhh one moment

PIN-interests

EASE-N-C
The Election System
We need to SEE it.
Simulated Election Event
Certification Process

- System meets federal standards
- Vendor requests formal certification
- Vendor sends documents
- Does vendor and voting system meet requirements under NC law
Certification

- NC law says that we trust the testing labs
- Your system can accurately record voter choice
- Your system can accurately tally votes
- Your tabulation software can accurately aggregate results
- Your system is accessible
But will it work in NC?
NC Landscape

- 100 Counties
- 2726 Precincts
- 553 Municipalities
- 38 Multi-county municipalities
- 19 election districts
- 6,327,668 registered voters
- One Certified Voting Systems Vendor since 2006
What makes us special?

NC quirks

- State Election System – all 100 counties use state system
- Possible 4 elections every even-numbered year
- 3 election event dates every odd-numbered year
- Ability for special elections
- Reporting by vote tabulation districts
- Limited Voting
- Filing Jurisdiction
- Voting Jurisdiction
- Multi-county jurisdictions
- Three recognized parties
- Semi-closed primary
- Second Primary

- Candidate filing ends at the end of February
- Four municipal election types
- Municipalities can opt out of absentee voting
- Absentee voting schedule varies
- Paper ballot only
- Specific ballot specifications
- Vote for 1+
- 17 year-old ballots
- Non-partisan judicial contests
- Retrievable ballots
- Split precincts
- Homegrown Election Reporting
- Sample Ballots
- UOCAVA Ballots
Our first S.E.E. was in April

- We provided jurisdictional and election-specific data which covers nearly all of our quirky election situations. This was designed to see whether their coders, their experts, could deduce what was really going on. The point of this was not to trip them up, but to ascertain to what degree they already understood and could identify these situations, and thereby facilitate more meaningful communication to follow. The second, and more important, purpose of this was to determine whether their system allowed or prevented these sorts of situations. If the system as presented was lacking some functionality, we might still certify it but prohibit its use in those counties where those particular situations could arise.
Our second S.E.E. was in early May

- We provided jurisdictional and election-specific data which covers nearly all of our quirky election situations. This was designed to see whether their coders, their experts, could deduce what was really going on. The point of this was not to trip them up, but to ascertain to what degree they already understood and could identify these situations, and thereby facilitate more meaningful communication to follow. The second, and more important, purpose of this was to determine whether their system allowed or prevented these sorts of situations. If the system as presented was lacking some functionality, we might still certify it but prohibit its use in those counties where those particular situations could arise.
Our third S.E.E. is on Friday

- We have provided jurisdictional and election-specific data which covers nearly all of our quirky election situations. This is designed to see whether their coders, their experts, could deduce what was really going on. The point of this is not to trip them up, but to ascertain to what degree they already understood and could identify these situations, and thereby facilitate more meaningful communication to follow. The second, and more important, purpose of this is to determine whether their system allows or prevents these sorts of situations. If the system as presented is lacking some functionality, we might still certify it but prohibit its use in those counties where those particular situations could arise.
NC Election Event Procedures

- Geocode
  - District assignment
  - Annexations
  - Precinct changes

- Voter registration

- District Relations report

- Election Setup

- Candidate Filing
NC Election Event Procedures

- Election Definition
  - Jurisdictions
  - Precincts participating
  - Contests and Candidates
  - Voting method
  - Voting equipment
  - What type of ballot coding

- Ballot Coding

- Ballot Proofing and Approval
  - 4 stages
  - Use reports
NC Election Event Procedures

1. L&A Testing
2. Mock Election
3. One-stop voting (early voting)
4. Election Day Vote
5. Post Election Audits
NC Election Event Procedures

- Post Election Audits
- Reconciliation
- Audits
- VTD (60-Day Sort)
The Xylophone Effect

Election A

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Election B

1
2
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Election C

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The Purpose of the SEE is to determine... CAN YOUR SYSTEM DO THIS?
The SAVE Principal

SMEs Are Vital to Elections
State Voting Systems Expert must understand...

- Geopolitical units
- Election Districts
  - Keep a repository of governing documents
  - Get the legal definition, including boundary maps
  - Master Contest List
  - Keep track of legislation
  - Keep track of litigation
  - Keep track of resolutions
- Election Administration
  - Election events
  - Voting methods
  - Voter registration
- Information Technology
  - Must work smarter
Regardless of whether you have a State Voting Systems Expert, Map it Out

- Processes
- Data dictionary
- Storyboard or Flowcharts
- Calendar/Schedule
- Governing Documents
- Definitions
  - *What’s a precinct?* A geospatial boundary or a ballot configuration group made up of ballot configuration units
  - *What’s a poll?* A place or site where people go to vote or the machine in a precinct
  - *What’s a jurisdiction?* A county or governing unit or who has the control of an election or an election procedure or task
No Map
No Plan
No Clear Direction
Election Reporting
How & Why We Moved to Our Own Election Reporting Tool
Before Things Went Crazy . . .
Normal SEIMS Development

In late 2013, SBOE was engaged in the development and testing of various enhancements and improvements to our State Elections Information Management System (SEIMS).

These enhancements were slated to go into production in January 2014.
On July 25, 2013, North Carolina’s General Assembly passed substantial election laws changes:

- Photo ID
- Absentee changes
- No Same-Day Registration
- Elimination of Pre-registration

The legislation became law in August 2013.

Some of these election law changes required that changes be made to SEIMS.
NO CONTRACT

- In late 2013, contract negotiations with North Carolina’s web site and election reporting vendor broke down.

NO WEBSITE OR ENR

- Along with other tools, we LOST our vendor for both our website and for election night reporting.
The plan: build it ourselves

We were left with no other viable options other than to do IT ourselves:

- Website
- Election Reporting
First. . . the website

- Used a DNN platform.
- Hired a web designer.
- The redesigned and SBOE website was released in February 2014.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Reporting Application</th>
<th>Election Reporting Web Interface</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We added a new SEIMS application to handle result imports.</td>
<td>• We designed a barebones web interface for the May Primary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The application created a state-level management log-in.</td>
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Glitches mar NC Board of Elections website’s vote count

BY PATRICK GANNON
pgannon@ncinsider.com  May 7, 2014
Election Reporting Revamped

Maps

Contest Details

More bandwidth
### 11/04/2014 OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS - STATEWIDE

#### US SENATE (VOTE FOR 1)
*Precincts Reported: 2726 of 2726*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME ON BALLOT</th>
<th>PARTY</th>
<th>BALLOT COUNT</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thom Tillis</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>1,423,159</td>
<td>49.02%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kay Hagan</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>1,377,651</td>
<td>47.26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sean Haugh</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>106,300</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write-In (Miscellaneous)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,307</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Rhodes (Write-In)</td>
<td></td>
<td>621</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Waddell (Write-In)</td>
<td></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Gurney (Write-In)</td>
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<td>342</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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</tbody>
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#### US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 01 (VOTE FOR 1)
*Precincts Reported: 218 of 218*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME ON BALLOT</th>
<th>PARTY</th>
<th>BALLOT COUNT</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. K. Butterfield</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>154,333</td>
<td>73.38%</td>
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<td>Arthur Rich</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>55,990</td>
<td>26.62%</td>
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#### US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 02 (VOTE FOR 1)
*Precincts Reported: 157 of 157*

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<th>NAME ON BALLOT</th>
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<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Renee Ellmers</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>122,128</td>
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<td>Clay Aiken</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>66,479</td>
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#### US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 03 (VOTE FOR 1)
*Precincts Reported: 242 of 242*

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<th>NAME ON BALLOT</th>
<th>PARTY</th>
<th>BALLOT COUNT</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Jones</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>139,415</td>
<td>67.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Adamo</td>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>66,182</td>
<td>32.19%</td>
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State elections result site saw outages

Tags: State Board of Elections

Posted November 4
Despite the Challenges . . .

More control over design and functionality

Integration with SEIMS

• Statewide aggregation
• Audit controls (pre-election & post-election)
• Canvass tools & reports
Logic & Accuracy Testing

- Are all contests represented?
- Are all candidates represented?
- Have counties properly setup coding?
- Check statewide or multi-county aggregation?
Big Picture

Statewide Elections
Lowest Common Denominator

State
County
Precincts
Election Reporting

Pretty important part of Voting System
Because of the Integration - The Future

Ballots cast = voter history?
Determine possible recount contests
Determine the winner(s)
- Move to primary?
- Certify for election?
How we track agency activity

Voter Registration Activity

VR Preference Activity (declinations plus)
Voter Registration must keep up with the times

- NC NVRA Agency Activity appears to have declined in recent years
- NC public assistance agencies and disability services agencies have changed their business model – they are using online or computer-based case management systems.
- NC NVRA business model must adapt.
In NC, we refer to declinations as “preferences”. It’s a YES or NO based on the desires of the services applicant.

If you are not registered to vote at the address where you live now, do you wish to register to vote here today? YES or NO.

These preferences are recorded on a preference form (paper)

In 2010, we developed an online preference form system that allows agencies to shift away from paper.
Paper versus Web-based Preference Form
If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?

Please select one of the options below:

- YES, I would like to apply to register to vote here today.
- YES, I would like to apply to register to vote, but I will take a voter registration application home to complete at a later time.
- YES, I would like to pre-register to vote
- I am ALREADY REGISTERED, but I would like to update my voter registration information. I will complete a voter registration Application/Update form for this purpose.
- I am ALREADY REGISTERED to vote at my current address.
- NO, I am declining the opportunity to register to vote today.

*(IF YOU DO NOT CHECK A BOX, YOU WILL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE DECIDED NOT TO REGISTER TO VOTE AT THIS TIME.)*

Agency can record the voter’s preference for voter registration services.
In addition to the client’s preference as to voter registration, the following information is captured by the agency user:

- Applicant’s full name
- Applicant’s date of birth
- Date
- Agency Name
• The submissions come into a database maintained at the State Board of Elections.
• Not all agencies use the system. It is an opt-in.
• Agencies must still send their paper preference forms and completed voter registration forms to a local board of elections.
A new web form system will be developed that will permit the agency user to capture whether the client who says yes to the voter registration inquiry would like to receive their voter registration application by email or mail.

Since 2013, agencies are seeing less in-person applicants for service. This is due in to the introduction of web-based applications for service -- ePass (web based services application) and healthcare.gov (Medicaid).

It is also due to Ex Parte review applications (check of other sources to confirm employment and address, eliminates need for the client to have an in-person review interview). Agency staff now have more phone contact with clients than ever before.

The system will either email a pdf version of the form or send the services applicant an online voter registration form – that too is being developed at the State Board of Elections.
NORTH CAROLINA ELECTRONIC ACCESS to STATE ELECTIONS
Online Registration is not prohibited.

NCGS 163-82.6

(b) Signature. - The form shall be valid only if signed by the applicant. An electronically captured signature, including signatures on applications generated by computer programs of third-party groups, shall not be valid on a voter registration form, except as provided in Article 21A of this Chapter [UOCAVA]. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, an electronically captured image of the signature of a voter on an electronic voter registration form offered by a State agency shall be considered a valid signature for all purposes for which a signature on a paper voter registration form is used.
Online Access Coming Soon

Voter Registration

Absentee Requests

NVRA Agency Activity

Data
Outline

- SBE Audits
- CBE Responsibilities
- Issues/Challenges
- The Future
SBOE RESPONSIBILITIES

• SBE is responsible for the proper voter placement within statewide jurisdictions, but not the creation of those jurisdictions.

• SBE conducts an electronic audit every weekend and makes those results available on every Monday morning for use by CBE election officials.

• SBE can run the audits “On Demand” if requested by a CBE.
SBOE AUDITS

- NC Senate District
- NC House District
- Congressional District
- Judicial Districts
- Precinct
- VTD
- County Boundaries
- Future? Addresses, Municipal Boundaries, etc.
What is an SBOE jurisdictional audit?

An SBE jurisdictional audit is:

- SBE imports all voter addresses into SBE GIS system.
- SBE maintains all voter addresses in separate database.
- Audit is performed in SQL Server database using stored procedures.
- Stored procedure uses SQL ‘STIntersects’ and several joins to overlay addresses, jurisdictions to identify mismatches.
- Exceptions such as voters not in the correct jurisdiction and addresses not found are identified for the county in shapefiles, dbf and kmz file formats.
Sample Jurisdictional Audit

Using SEIMS GIS Audit Files and Google Earth
### Sample Jurisdictional Audit

GIS Shapefile (.DBF) – Unmatched Records

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<tr>
<th>COUNTY_ID</th>
<th>GISPREC</th>
<th>SEIMSPREC</th>
<th>SEIMCODE</th>
<th>SEIM</th>
<th>SEIMVRN</th>
<th>UNAMEVRN</th>
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*Note: The table continues with similar entries.*
CBE Responsibilities

- County Board of Elections will be responsible for making all of the necessary changes due to redistricting updates and audits.
- CBEs will utilize the SEIMS Geocode application to make updates to correct street ranges in the incorrect jurisdictions. Counties can use the assistance of their county GIS or Mapping Department.
Sample Jurisdictional Tools

NC Congressional Current & Previous
Sample Jurisdictional Tools

NC 2011 State Redistricting Map Overlays

This statewide map will show you boundary lines on any or all of the state district maps.

Click on any spot on the map for the district name. Currently this only works on one map layer (district) at a time.

2011 Statewide Redistrict Maps (more info)
- Congressional Maps - (blue) (more info)
- Senate Maps - (green) (more info)
- House Maps - (purple) (more info)

Enter Address (Find me) within ...

441 N harrison st, (7601) ¾ mile

Search  reset map  2 results found

View or download the new state:
- House District Maps (Google Cardboard) | KML
- Senate District Maps (Google Cardboard) | KML
- Congressional District Maps (Google Cardboard) | KML
- All 3 maps in a single file (Google Cardboard) | KML
Issues/Challenges
The Future

- SBE is integrating GIS into the Voter Registration application replacing street files/ranges with shapefiles and address points.
- SBE is about to release and give the counties the ability to correct inaccurate mapping of address points.
- SBE will have 100 county election offices assisting with voter registration additions and changes and verifying the accuracy of the location of the address point. For SBE, voter registration is where you reside and “Lay your head.”
- ftp://alt.ncsbe.gov/ShapeFiles/
  Filename: address_points_sboe.zip
The Future?
Thank You
Questions?

Veronica Degraffenreid
NC State Board of Elections
veronica.degraffenreid@ncsbe.gov