FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

IN THIS ISSUE

STAY IN THE KNOW

Follow us on social media for the latest updates on elections, outreach, and more!

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GET VOTE READY

Check your registration information, review your voting districts, and find your polling place by scanning the QR code!

Charleston County Board of Elections & Voter Registration
(843) 744-VOTE (8683)
chsvotes.gov

CHS VOTES

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Above: Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration Executive Director Isaac Cramer

During the first three months of 2023, our team has been working to lay the foundation for a successful municipal election season. With elections in May, June, and November, we have a busy year ahead. Between election preparations, we have been revising our standard operating procedures, training our full-time staff, and conducting voter outreach.

Recently, we participated in the 2023 Black Expo in North Charleston, where we engaged with attendees about the importance of voting and voter education. You can view pictures of the event on **Page 8**. Going to the Black Expo has been an annual event for us for the past few years, and we look forward to next year's event!

In February, we held a special election for Charleston County School Board of Trustees District 6 and a Folly Beach Referendum. Sullivan's Island and Meggett are up next in May. Remember, there's no such thing as an off year. Make sure you know when your municipality's election is being held.

As election officials, we are continuously receiving training and education to give us the tools we need to best serve our voters. In February, our management team attended the 2023 South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials Legislative Conference to connect with other election officials in our state. See **Page 4** for more information.

We have been thrilled with the response from our community for the Adopt a Polling Location program, as many organizations and individuals have stepped up to volunteer their time and resources to support our efforts. By working together, we are building stronger relationships between the Board of Elections and our community partners, and we are fostering a culture of civic engagement and participation. As we prepare for upcoming municipal elections, we encourage more organizations and individuals to get involved in our Adopt a Polling Location program. More information can be found on **Page 9**.

As always, we welcome your feedback and encourage you to stay connected with us through this newsletter and our social media channels. Thank you for your continued support of the Board of Elections, and we look forward to working together to strengthen our democracy.

Isaac Cramer
Executive Director

Follow us on social media!

2023 WINTER ELECTIONS

Two Elections Kick Off 2023 Calendar

City of Folly Beach Referendum

48 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in the City of Folly Beach Referendum. Of these, more than 12 percent chose to vote early, while about four percent voted absentee. The vast majority decided to vote on Election Day, which was Feb. 7.

School Board of Trustees District 6 Special Election

A special election was also held on Feb. 7 to fill a vacant seat on the School Board of Trustees for District 6. A little more than 9 percent of those who were eligible voted early. Full results for this election, and for the City of Folly Beach Referendum, can be found on our website.

Early Voting Available to Charleston County Residents

We want to remind Charleston County residents that they can cast their ballots ahead of Election Day, no excuse needed! Election law changes in 2022 established early voting in South Carolina for all elections, including primaries and runoffs. More information can be found here.

Be a Poll Manager!

★ **Serve your community**

★ **Participate in the democratic process**

★ **Get paid for your work**
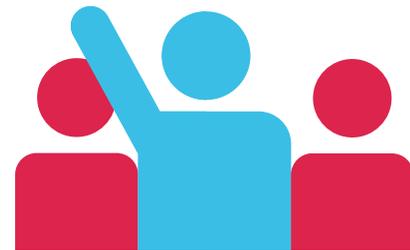
We are always in search of poll managers and clerks to help ensure elections are run smoothly in Charleston County. This flexible and paid opportunity is available to those aged 16 and older, and training is conducted by Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration staff to prepare you for any position on Election Day. For more information, and to apply, follow this link.

SCARE 2023

Annual legislative conference held by the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials
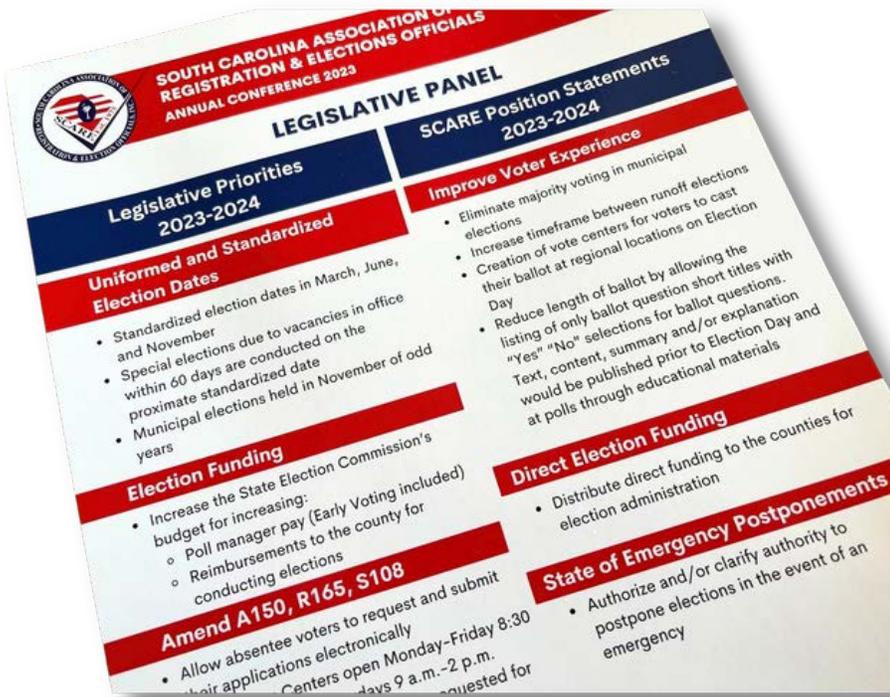
Leaders with the Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration spent time in Myrtle Beach for this year's legislative conference of the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE). The statewide group gives registration and election officials a chance to review, discuss and suggest improvements to laws surrounding voter registration and voting in South Carolina.

The event, which was attended by officials from around the state, served as a forum for many guest speakers who addressed various topics relating to elections. Some of the subject matter centered around election efficiency, safety, security, and transparency.

Right: Former SCARE President Marie S. Smalls, CERA, addresses attendees 2023 SCARE Legislative Conference

SCARE 2023

Charleston County BEVR Executive Director Leads Legislative Panel Discussion, Elected to New Role

Above: Isaac Cramer leads the legislative panel discussion at the 2023 SCARE Legislative Conference

Charleston County Board Of Elections & Voter Registration Executive Director Isaac Cramer led a panel discussion with state lawmakers during the annual conference. The panel spoke on proposed changes to election and voting laws and participated in a question and answer session with attendees.

Additionally, Isaac was elected as 2nd vice president of SCARE. He has been actively involved in SCARE since 2014 and quickly assumed a leadership role, serving in its legislative committee beginning in 2015. His efforts to enhance communication between members of SCARE helped drive him to his most recent position in 2018 as legislative committee chairman.

You can learn more about SCARE, as well as the South Carolina Association of Counties, by visiting its website.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Empowering and Educating Young Minds at Charleston Advancement Academy High School

In February, the Charleston County Board of Elections & Voter Registration served students from Charleston Advancement Academy High School's two campuses. Across two days, members of our outreach team spoke to dozens of students on both James Island and at Trident Technical College.

Students were taught about the importance of voting and the mechanics surrounding how elections are conducted in Charleston County.

Those aged 18 and older were able to register as voters at the event, while others aged 16 and up were given the opportunity to sign up as student poll managers.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Serving citizens at the 2023 Charleston Black Expo

Above: Members of the Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration assist Charleston County voters at the 2023 Black Expo

The Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration had a wonderful time attending the 2023 Charleston Black Expo on March 11. Several of our team members served the many attendees who had stopped by our booth at the Charleston Area Convention Center throughout the day.

We offered free services to citizens at the event, including registering voters, updating information, signing up poll managers, and creating photo IDs. Our team also provided goodies such as cups, frisbees, and more to those who learned about the democratic process.

Our team has spent the past several years attending the Charleston Black Expo. We always appreciate the opportunity to participate in outreach events and directly serve Charleston County voters.

More photos from this year's event can be found on **Page 8**.

DID YOU KNOW?

We can conduct outreach events for your organization including:

- Issuing Voter IDs
- Satellite Voting Unit Tours
- Absentee Enrollment
- Voter Education
- Mock Elections
- Voting Machine Demos
- Voter Registration
- Poll Worker Recruitment
- and more!

Interested? Contact us at **outreach@charlestoncounty.org**

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

2023 Charleston Black Expo
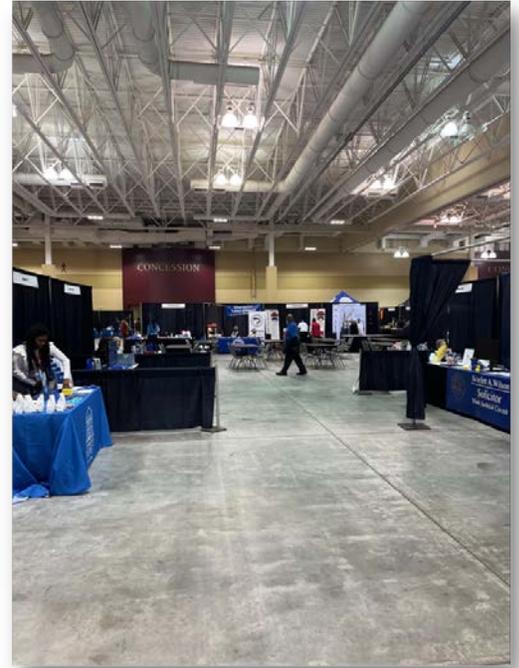
ADOPT A POLLING LOCATION UPDATE

Group Honored for Program Participation

The Exchange Club of Charleston, SC was the most recent organization to benefit from participation in our Adopt a Polling Location (APL) initiative!

Participants from the group assisted with the 2022 General Election by managing a polling place on Election Day.

Above: Isaac Cramer presents a check to leaders of The Exchange Club of Charleston, SC

In February, Isaac visited the service group to thank its members and to present a check for $1,720. Those funds will be reinvested into Charleston County to further improve the community through the organization's efforts.

During the 2022 election season, six Lowcountry groups participated in BEVR's inaugural Adopt a Polling Location program. You can learn more on **Page 10**.

Left: Isaac Cramer poses with members of The Exchange Club of Charleston, SC to celebrate the group's participation in the Adopt a Polling Location prgram.

Is your group interested in adopting a polling location?
Learn more about the program and apply via <u>our website</u>.

COUNTYWIDE INITIATIVES HELP STAFF POLLS

Two innovative programs see successful launches in 2022

The Charleston County Board of Elections and Voter Registration piloted two initiatives in 2022 that looked to give back to the community while providing qualified staff members to work at polling places.

As mentioned on **Page 9**, Adopt a Polling Location gives non-partisan groups the opportunity to "adopt" a polling location on Election Day. Staffers from each organization are trained to serve as poll managers.

Their pay for working the day is then donated directly to a local nonprofit of choice, reinvesting the funds into the community.

Six organizations participated in the program in 2022, including Charleston Parks Conservancy, Charleston Promise Neighborhood, The Exchange Club of Charleston, SC, the James Island Charter High School Wresting Team, the Lowcountry Food Bank, and the South Carolina Stingrays. In 2022, APL participants raised more than $10,000.

More than $10,000 raised in the program's first year!

Day for Democracy (DFD) provides Charleston County employees with training and additional pay for working at the polls on Election Day. Through this program, Charleston County workers are able to further serve their community without needing to take paid time off to perform this civic duty.

With DFD, voters are able to benefit by receiving reliable staffing and professional service, while trust is also built between Charleston County's employees and the citizens they serve.

128 Charleston County workers participated in the inaugural DFD initiative. An after-action survey found that nearly 95% of respondents said they would participate again.

128 DFD participants helped staff 51 polling locations!

COUNTYWIDE INITIATIVES HELP STAFF POLLS

Checks presented to Adopt a Polling Location Pioneers

COUNTYWIDE INITIATIVES HELP STAFF POLLS

Checks presented to Adopt a Polling Location Pioneers

Thank you to our participating organizations!

Reminders

★ Ensure you are properly registered at least 30 days prior to an election.

★ Update your registration information via <u>email</u>, on our <u>website</u>, or by visiting our office at 4367 Headquarters Road in North Charleston.