

1 Introduced by Committee on Government Operations

2 Date:

3 Subject: Elections

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to make
5 miscellaneous amendments to election law.

6 An act relating to miscellaneous amendments to election law

7 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

8 * * * Qualification and Registration of Voters * * *

9 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2124 is amended to read:

10 § 2124. VOTER'S OATH OR AFFIRMATION; HOW ADMINISTERED;

11 APPLICATION

12 * * *

13 (c) The At a minimum, the town clerk shall keep the completed
14 applications for addition to the checklist, or an electronic copy thereof, through
15 the end of the general election cycle that follows the one in which the
16 application was received. If the written notification that a person has taken the
17 oath or affirmation is submitted separately from the application, it shall be filed
18 along with the application. The town clerk shall verify, upon request, that a
19 voter has been given the oath or affirmation.

1 Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. § 2154 is amended to read:

2 § 2154. STATEWIDE VOTER CHECKLIST

3 (a) The ~~secretary of state~~ Secretary of State shall establish a uniform and
4 nondiscriminatory, statewide ~~computerized~~ voter registration checklist. This
5 checklist shall serve as the official voter registration list for all elections in the
6 ~~state~~ State. In establishing the statewide checklist, the ~~secretary~~ Secretary
7 shall:

8 * * *

9 (b) A registered voter's month and day of birth, driver's license number,
10 and the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number, ~~and street~~
11 ~~address if different from the applicant's mailing address~~ shall not be
12 considered a public record as defined in 1 V.S.A. § 317(b). Any person
13 wishing to obtain a copy of all of the statewide voter checklist must swear or
14 affirm, under penalty of perjury pursuant to 13 V.S.A. chapter 65, that the
15 person will not use the checklist for commercial purposes. The affirmation
16 shall be filed with the ~~secretary of state~~ Secretary of State.

17 * * *

1 Sec. 3. 1 V.S.A. § 317 is amended to read:

2 § 317. DEFINITIONS; PUBLIC AGENCY; PUBLIC RECORDS AND
3 DOCUMENTS

4 * * *

5 (c) The following public records are exempt from public inspection and
6 copying:

7 * * *

8 (31) Records of a registered voter's month and day of birth, motor
9 vehicle operator's license number, and the last four digits of the applicant's
10 Social Security number, ~~and street address if different from the applicant's~~
11 ~~mailing address~~ contained in an application to the statewide voter checklist or
12 the statewide voter checklist established under 17 V.S.A. § 2154.

13 * * *

14 * * * Primary Elections * * *

15 Sec. 4. 17 V.S.A. § 2362 is amended to read:

16 § 2362. PRIMARY BALLOTS

17 (a) The ballots shall be prepared and furnished to the towns by the
18 Secretary of State and shall contain the names of all candidates for nomination
19 at the primary. Ballots shall be printed on index stock and configured to be
20 readable by vote tabulators. A separate ballot for each major political party
21 shall be printed in substantially the following form:

1 OFFICIAL VERMONT PRIMARY ELECTION BALLOT
2 VOTE ON ONE PARTY BALLOT ONLY AND PLACE IN BALLOT
3 BOX OR VOTE TABULATOR
4 ALL OTHER PARTY BALLOTS MUST BE PLACED IN UNVOTED
5 BALLOT BOX

6 _____
7 [MAJOR POLITICAL PARTY NAME]

8 _____

9 Instructions to voters: To vote for a candidate whose name is printed on the
10 ballot, ~~mark a cross (X) or~~ fill in the oval at the right of that person's name. To
11 vote for a candidate whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the person's
12 name on the blank line in the appropriate block and fill in the oval to the right
13 of that blank line. When there are two or more persons to be elected to one
14 office, you may vote for any number of candidates up to and including the
15 maximum number.

16 * * *

1 Sec. 6. 17 V.S.A. § 2386 is amended to read:

2 § 2386. TIME FOR FILING STATEMENTS

3 (a) ~~Statements~~ Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section,
4 statements pursuant to this subchapter, ~~except for vacancies created by the~~
5 ~~death or withdrawal of a candidate after the primary,~~ shall be filed as set forth
6 in section 2356 of this title.

7 (b)(1) In the case of the death or withdrawal of a candidate after the
8 primary election, the party committee shall have seven days from the date of
9 the death or withdrawal to nominate a candidate. In no event, shall a statement
10 be filed later than 60 days prior to the election.

11 (2) In the case of nominations for the office of justice of the peace,
12 statements shall be filed as provided in section 2413 of this title.

13 * * * Nominations of Independent Candidates * * *

14 Sec. 7. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 161, Sec. 17a is amended to read:

15 Sec. 17a. 17 V.S.A. § 2404 is amended to read:

16 § 2402. REQUISITES OF STATEMENT

17 * * *

18 (d)(1) A statement of nomination and a completed and signed consent form
19 shall be filed:

20 (A) in the case of nomination for President or Vice President of the
21 United States, no sooner than the fourth Monday in April and not later than

1 5:00 p.m. on the August 1 ~~in the year~~ preceding the presidential general
2 election; or

3 (B) in the case of nomination for justice of the peace, no later than
4 5:00 p.m. on the third day following the primary election;

5 (C) in the case of any other independent candidate, no sooner than
6 the fourth Monday in April and not later than 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday
7 preceding the primary election prescribed by section 2351 of this chapter, and
8 not later than 5:00 p.m. of the third day prior to the day of a special primary
9 election.

10 (2) No public official receiving nominations shall accept a petition
11 unless a completed and signed consent form is filed at the same time.

12 (3) A statement of nomination shall apply only to the election cycle in
13 which the statement of nomination is filed.

14 * * *

15 * * * Nominations of Justices of the Peace

16 by Party Committee or Caucus * * *

17 Sec. 8. 17 V.S.A. § 2413 is amended to read:

18 § 2413. NOMINATION OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

19 (a)(1) The party members in each town, on or before each primary election,
20 upon the call of the town committee, may meet in caucus and nominate
21 candidates for justice of the peace.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20

* * *

(3) ~~The chair and secretary of the committee shall file the statements required in section 2385 of this title not later than 5:00 p.m. on the third day following the primary election. [Repealed.]~~

(b) If it does not hold a caucus as provided in subsection (a) of this section, the town committee shall meet and nominate candidates for justices of the peace as provided in sections 2381 through 2385 of this title. At least three days prior to this meeting, the town committee shall provide notice of the meeting by e-mailing or mailing committee members and by posting notice of the meeting in the office of the town clerk and in two other public places in the town.

(c) In any town in which a political party has not formally organized, any three members of the party who are voters in the town may call a caucus to nominate candidates for justice of the peace by giving notice as required in subsection (a) of this section. Upon meeting, the caucus shall first elect a chair and a secretary. Thereafter the caucus shall nominate its candidates for justice of the peace, ~~and cause its chair and secretary to file the statements required in section 2385 of this title not later than 5:00 p.m. on the third day following the primary election.~~

(d) [Repealed.]

1 * * *

2 (3) To the right of the party designation shall be an oval in which the
3 voter may indicate his or her choice by ~~making a cross (X) or~~ filling in the oval
4 ~~if tabulators are being used.~~

5 * * *

6 Sec. 10. 17 V.S.A. § 2474 is amended to read:

7 § 2474. CHOICE OF PARTY

8 (a)(1) A person nominated by any means for the same office by more than
9 one political party may elect, not later than 5:00 p.m. on the first Friday tenth
10 day following the primary election, the party or parties in which the nominee
11 will be a candidate. The nominee shall notify in writing the Secretary of State
12 or town clerk, as the case may be, of such choice by that deadline, and only the
13 party or parties which the nominee so elects shall be printed next to the
14 nominee's name on the ballot.

15 (2) If the nominee does not notify the Secretary of State or the town
16 clerk of his or her choice of party, the Secretary of State shall print on the
17 ballot those parties next to the nominee's name by listing in this order:

18 (A) the major political party for which the nominee had his or her
19 name printed on the ballot in the primary;

1 (B) any major political parties that nominated the nominee by the
2 party committee, in the order in which the nominations were submitted to the
3 Secretary of State;

4 (C) any major political parties for which the nominee received write-
5 in votes, in an order from highest to lowest vote counts; and

6 (D) any minor political parties that nominated the nominee by party
7 committee, in the order in which the nominations were submitted to the
8 Secretary of State.

9 (b)(1) A candidate for State office who is the nominee of two or more
10 political parties shall file with the Secretary of State, not later than 5:00 p.m.
11 ~~the first Friday~~ tenth day following the primary election, a statement
12 designating for which party the votes cast for him or her shall be counted for
13 the purposes of determining whether his or her designated party shall be a
14 major political party. The party so designated shall be the first party to be
15 printed immediately after the candidate's name on the ballot.

16 (2) If a candidate does not file the statement ~~before the first Friday~~
17 ~~following the primary~~ by that deadline, the Secretary of State shall designate
18 the party for which the votes cast shall be counted as provided in subdivision
19 (a)(2) of this section.

1 Sec. 11. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 161, Sec. 74(4) (effective dates;
2 effective date for town requirement to use vote tabulators) is amended to read:

3 (4) Sec. 27, ~~17 V.S.A. § 2941(b)~~ 17 V.S.A. § 2491(b) (political
4 subdivisions; vote tabulators; town requirement to use vote tabulators), shall
5 take effect on July 1, 2016.

6 Sec. 12. 17 V.S.A. § 2493 is amended to read:

7 § 2493. RULES FOR USE OF VOTE TABULATORS; AUDITS

8 (a) The Secretary of State shall adopt rules governing the use and the
9 selection of any vote tabulator in the State. These rules shall include
10 requirements that:

11 * * *

12 (3)(A) The Secretary of State shall conduct a random postelection audit
13 of any polling place election results for a ~~primary or~~ general election within
14 30 days of the election.

15 * * *

16 (c) The same vote tabulator or vote tabulator memory card used in any
17 local, primary, or general election shall not be used in a recount of that
18 election.

19 * * *

1 Sec. 13. 17 V.S.A. § 2532 is amended to read:

2 § 2532. APPLICATIONS; FORM

3 * * *

4 (c) If the request is made for a person who is not yet registered and the
5 request is received by the town clerk prior to the voter registration deadline set
6 forth in subsection 2144(a) of this title, the town clerk shall mail a blank
7 application for addition to the checklist, together with a full set of early voter
8 absentee ballots, to ~~the person who has applied for early voter absentee ballots~~
9 that person. All such applications for addition to the checklist ~~which~~ that are
10 returned to the town clerk before the close of the polls on election day shall be
11 considered and acted upon by the board of civil authority before the ballots are
12 counted. If the application is approved and the name added to the checklist,
13 the early voter absentee ballots cast by that voter shall be treated as other valid
14 early voter absentee ballots.

15 * * *

16 Sec. 14. 17 V.S.A. § 2547 is amended to read:

17 § 2547. DEFECTIVE BALLOTS

18 If upon examination by the election officials it shall appear that the early or
19 absentee voter is not legally qualified to vote, or has voted in person, or that
20 the affidavit on any envelope is insufficient, the certificate is not signed, or the
21 voted ballot is not in the voted ballot envelope, or, in the case of a primary

1 vote, the early or absentee voter has failed to return the unvoted ~~portions of the~~
2 primary ballots, such envelope shall be marked “defective,” and the ballots
3 inside shall not be counted and shall be returned in the unopened envelope to
4 the town clerk in the manner prescribed by section 2590 of this title. The
5 provisions of this section shall be indicated prominently in the early or
6 absentee voter material prepared by the ~~secretary of state~~ Secretary of State.

7 Sec. 15. 17 V.S.A. § 2566 is amended to read:

8 § 2566. MARKING BALLOTS

9 On receiving his or her ballots, the voter shall forthwith, and without
10 leaving the polling place or going outside the guardrail, ~~retire alone~~ proceed to
11 one of the booths not occupied by any other person and ~~prepare his or her~~
12 ~~ballots~~ vote by marking filling in the appropriate square or ~~place a cross (X)~~
13 oval opposite the name of the candidate of his or her choice for each office, or
14 by filling in the name of the candidate of his or her choice in the blank space
15 provided. ~~A voter shall not be allowed to occupy a booth more than five~~
16 ~~minutes when other voters are waiting to mark their ballots.~~

17 Sec. 16. 17 V.S.A. § 2569 is amended to read:

18 § 2569. ASSISTANCE TO VOTER

19 (a) A voter who declares to the presiding officer that he or she needs
20 assistance to mark the ballot ~~or register a vote on a machine~~ shall be assisted in

1 the marking or registering of the ballot by a person of the voter's choice or two
2 election officials of different party affiliations.

3 (b) A person who gives assistance to a voter in the marking ~~or registering~~
4 of his or her ballot shall not in any way divulge any information regarding the
5 choice of the voter or the manner in which the voter's ballot was cast.

6 Sec. 17. 17 V.S.A. § 2570 is amended to read:

7 § 2570. DEPOSITING BALLOTS

8 (a) In primary elections, ~~each voter shall separate all sections on the~~
9 ~~perforations, whether voted or unvoted, and fold each section separately. The~~
10 ~~the~~ voter shall first hand ~~the~~ any unvoted section or sections ballots to the
11 appropriate election official, who shall deposit ~~the section or sections~~ those
12 ballots in a receptacle marked for unvoted ballots. The voter shall then deposit
13 the voted ~~section of the~~ ballot in the ballot box or vote tabulator, unless the
14 voter requires assistance in depositing the ballot.

15 (b) In all other elections, ~~before leaving the booth,~~ the voter shall ~~fold his~~
16 ~~or her ballots separately,~~ without displaying the marks thereon; and ~~shall then~~
17 ~~himself or herself,~~ under the supervision of an election official, deposit each
18 ballot into the proper ballot box or in the vote tabulator.

19 (c) Except as provided in section 2569 of this title, no election official or
20 other person shall look at the contents of any ballot ~~or any voted or unvoted~~
21 ~~section of the~~ ballot.

1 Sec. 18. 17 V.S.A. § 2588 is amended to read:

2 § 2588. FILING RETURNS

3 * * *

4 (c) For any primary or general election:

5 (1) The town clerk shall report as soon as practicable on the day of the
6 election the unofficial vote counts of all candidates whose names appeared on
7 the ballot to the Secretary of State. The report shall be made by electronically
8 submitting the vote counts on the Secretary's online elections reporting system
9 or, if unable to submit electronically, by submitting those vote counts to the
10 Secretary of State by telephone, facsimile, or e-mail.

11 (2) The Secretary shall ensure that any vote counts submitted by
12 telephone, facsimile, or e-mail are entered into his or her online elections
13 reporting system as soon as practicable after he or she receives them.

14 (3) The Secretary's online elections reporting system shall cause the
15 unofficial vote counts to be posted immediately on the Secretary's official
16 website as soon as those vote counts are submitted.

17 * * *

18 Sec. 19. 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 161, Sec. 41 is amended to read:

19 Sec. 41. 17 V.S.A. § 2593 is amended to read:

20 § 2593. PARTICIPATION TO BE ENTERED ON STATEWIDE

21 CHECKLIST BY TOWN CLERK

1 Not later than 60 days after a an annual town meeting, primary election,
2 presidential primary, or general election, the town clerk shall indicate on the
3 town ~~or municipal~~ checklist of the statewide checklist each voter's
4 participation, participation method, and political party of ballot taken, if
5 applicable, in ~~the primary election, presidential primary, or general~~ that
6 election by a method approved by the Secretary of State.

7 * * * Recounts * * *

8 Sec. 20. 17 V.S.A. § 2602b is amended to read

9 § 2602b. ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES

10 (a)(1) The county clerk shall supervise the recount and may appoint a
11 sufficient number of impartial assistants to perform appropriate tasks which
12 have not been assigned to recount committee members. The county clerk shall
13 recruit town clerks to serve as impartial assistants to the county clerk for
14 operating the vote tabulators, and shall consult with the Secretary of State to
15 identify any vote tabulators to be used.

16 (2) The county clerk shall store all ballots, still in their sealed
17 containers, in his or her vault until the day of the recount.

18 (b) The county clerk shall assign committee members to teams of at least
19 four persons, consisting of one caller and one observer, representing different
20 candidates, and one tally person and one double-check person, representing
21 different candidates. Any additional team members shall be additional

1 observers and double-check persons, who shall be assigned to ensure that each
2 candidate has one person assigned as either a caller or an observer and one
3 person assigned as either a tally person or a double-check person. One team
4 shall be designated as the clerk observer team, which shall perform only the
5 functions established under this ~~section~~ subchapter for that team.

6 * * *

7 Sec. 21. 17 V.S.A. § 2602e is amended to read:

8 § 2602e. ~~SORTING OF BALLOTS~~

9 ~~(a) Ballots from the first container shall be counted by one team and placed~~
10 ~~into piles containing 50 ballots each, except where there is a final pile which~~
11 ~~contains less than 50, in which case, the counting team shall affix to the top of~~
12 ~~the pile a note indicating how many ballots are contained in the pile. All of~~
13 ~~these ballots then shall be transferred to another team which shall verify that~~
14 ~~they are in piles of 50 ballots each and that any remaining pile contains the~~
15 ~~designated number of ballots.~~

16 ~~(b) The teams, except the clerk observer team and possibly the team which~~
17 ~~is processing the checklists, shall proceed to their tables and each team shall~~
18 ~~get from the county clerk one pile of ballots, one tally sheet, and one double-~~
19 ~~check sheet per 50 ballots, unless there are more persons per team who serve as~~
20 ~~double check persons, in which case, each such person shall be assigned a~~

1 ~~double check sheet. If a team spoils a tally sheet or needs to retally, it must~~
2 ~~turn in the tally sheet in order to get another one. [Repealed.]~~

3 Sec. 22. 17 V.S.A. § 2602f is amended to read:

4 § 2602f. RECOUNT BY VOTE TABULATOR

5 (a)(1) Vote tabulator-readable ballots from each ~~pile~~ container shall be fed
6 through a vote tabulator by one team until all vote tabulator-readable ballots
7 from the container have been entered. For ballots unable to be read by a vote
8 tabulator, such as damaged or plain paper ballots, a second team shall collect
9 these ballots from the pile and transfer the voter's choices on those ballots to
10 blank ballots provided by the Secretary of State. After all of the vote
11 tabulator-readable ballots have been fed through the vote tabulator, the first
12 team shall feed through the vote tabulator any transfer ballots created by the
13 second team.

14 * * *

15 * * * Local Elections * * *

16 Sec. 23. 17 V.S.A. § 2642 is amended to read:

17 § 2642. WARNING AND NOTICE CONTENTS

18 (a)(1) The warning shall include the date and time of the election, location
19 of the polling place or places, and the nature of the meeting or election.

20 (2) It shall, by separate articles, specifically indicate the business to be
21 transacted, to include the offices and the questions to be voted upon.

1 (3)(A) The warning shall also contain any article or articles requested by
2 a petition signed by at least five percent of the voters of the municipality and
3 filed with the municipal clerk not less than ~~45~~ 47 days before the day of the
4 meeting.

5 (B) The clerk receiving the petitions shall immediately proceed to
6 examine them to ascertain whether they ~~conform to the provisions of this~~
7 ~~subchapter~~ contain the required number of signatures of registered voters set
8 forth in subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3). If found not to conform, he or
9 she shall state in writing on the petition why it cannot be accepted, and within
10 24 hours from receipt, he or she shall return it to the petitioners. In this case,
11 supplementary petitions may be filed not later than 48 hours after the petition
12 was returned to the petitioners by the clerk or the filing deadline set forth in
13 subdivision (A) of this subdivision (3), whichever is later. However,
14 supplementary petitions shall not be accepted if petitions with signatures of
15 different persons totaling at least the number specified in subdivision (A) of
16 this subdivision (3) were not filed by the filing deadline.

17 (C) A petition submitted under this subdivision (3):

18 (i) may include more than one proposed article;

19 (ii) shall contain the petition language on each page on which
20 signatures are collected; and

1 (iii) shall include the printed name, signature, and street address of
2 each voter who signed the petition.

3 (D) A voter may withdraw his or her name from a petitioned article
4 at any time prior to the signing of the warning by a majority of the legislative
5 body.

6 * * *

7 Sec. 24. 17 V.S.A. § 2643 is amended to read:

8 § 2643. SPECIAL MEETINGS

9 (a) The legislative body may warn a special municipal meeting when it
10 deems it necessary and shall call a special meeting on the application of five
11 percent of the voters. A special meeting shall be warned within ~~45~~ 60 days of
12 receipt of the application by the ~~town~~ municipal clerk. A voter may withdraw
13 his or her name from a petition for a special meeting at any time prior to the
14 signing of the warning by a majority of the legislative body.

15 * * *

16 Sec. 25. 17 V.S.A. § 2664 is amended to read:

17 § 2664. BUDGET

18 A At its annual meeting, a town shall vote such sums of money as it deems
19 necessary for the interest of its inhabitants and for the prosecution and defense
20 of the common rights. It shall express in its vote the specific amounts, or the
21 rate on a dollar of the grand list, to be appropriated for laying out and repairing

1 highways and for other necessary town expenses. If a town votes specific
2 amounts in lieu of a rate on a dollar of the grand list, the selectboard shall, after
3 the grand list book has been computed and lodged in the office of the town
4 clerk, set the tax rate necessary to raise the specific amounts voted. The
5 selectboard may apply for grants and may accept and expend grants or gifts
6 above those which are approved in the town budget. The selectboard shall
7 include, in its annual report, a description of all grants or gifts accepted during
8 the year and associated expenditures.

9 Sec. 26. 17 V.S.A. § 2680 is amended to read:

10 § 2680. AUSTRALIAN BALLOT SYSTEM; GENERAL

11 * * *

12 (c) Budgets.

13 (1) A vote whether to use the Australian ballot system to establish the
14 budget shall be in substantially the following form:

15 “Shall (name of municipality) adopt its budget article or articles by
16 Australian ballot?”

17 (2) If a budget voted on by Australian ballot is rejected, the legislative
18 body shall prepare a revised budget.

19 (A) The legislative body shall establish a date for the vote on the
20 revised budget, and shall take appropriate steps to warn a public informational
21 meeting on the budget and the vote. The date of the public informational

1 meeting shall be at least five days following the public notice. The date of the
2 vote shall be at least seven days following the public notice.

3 (B) The vote on the revised budget shall be by Australian ballot and
4 shall take place in the same locations that the first vote was taken; provided,
5 however, that if that polling place is unavailable, the vote may be held at a
6 different location, with notice posted of the meeting location at the original
7 location.

8 (C) The budget shall be established if a majority of all votes cast are
9 in favor. If the revised budget is rejected, the legislative body shall repeat the
10 procedure in this subsection until a budget is adopted.

11 (D) Once a municipality votes to establish its budget by the
12 Australian ballot system, the vote on the budget shall be taken by Australian
13 ballot until the municipality votes to discontinue use of the system.

14 * * *

15 Sec. 27. 17 V.S.A. § 2681 is amended to read:

16 § 2681. NOMINATIONS; PETITIONS; CONSENTS

17 (a)(1)(A) Nominations of the municipal officers shall be by petition. The
18 petition shall be filed with the municipal clerk, together with the endorsement,
19 if any, of any party or parties in accordance with the provisions of this title, no
20 later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixth Monday preceding the day of the election,
21 which shall be the filing deadline.

1 Sec. 28. 17 V.S.A. § 2685 is amended to read:

2 § 2685. CONDUCT OF RECOUNT

3 (a)(1) ~~At Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, at the~~
4 ~~time and place specified by the clerk, the board of civil authority shall break~~
5 ~~the seal, open the ballot container, and recount the votes pursuant to the~~
6 ~~procedure set forth in section 2685a of this subchapter, unless the candidate~~
7 ~~who petitions for a recount requests that the recount be conducted by vote~~
8 ~~tabulator, in which case the recount shall be conducted by the presiding officer~~
9 ~~and board of civil authority pursuant to the procedure set forth in chapter 51,~~
10 ~~subchapter 9 of this title to the greatest extent practicable.~~

11 (2) When the ballot for the office is printed on index stock and
12 configured to be readable by vote tabulator, the presiding officer and board of
13 civil authority shall conduct the recount by vote tabulator, pursuant to the
14 procedure set forth in chapter 51, subchapter 9 of this title to the greatest extent
15 practicable, if:

16 (A) the candidate who petitions for a recount requests that it be
17 conducted by vote tabulator;

18 (B) the board of civil authority, at a meeting held not less than 60
19 days prior to a local election and warned pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 801, has
20 voted to require the municipality for which it is elected to use vote tabulators
21 in subsequent recounts; or

1 1,000 persons were not filed by 5:00 p.m. on the third Monday of January
2 ~~preceding the primary election~~ the deadline for filing petitions set forth in
3 section 2702 of this chapter.

4 * * * Campaign Finance * * *

5 Sec. 30. 17 V.S.A. § 2905 is amended to read:

6 § 2905. ADJUSTMENTS FOR INFLATION

7 (a)(1) Whenever it is required by this chapter, the Secretary of State shall
8 make adjustments to monetary amounts provided in this chapter based on the
9 Consumer Price Index. Increases shall be rounded to the nearest \$10.00 and
10 shall apply for the term of two two-year general election cycles. Increases
11 shall be effective for the first two-year general election cycle beginning after
12 the general election held in 2016.

13 (2) As used in this section, Consumer Price Index shall mean the
14 Northeast Region Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, designated as
15 “CPI-U,” in the northeast region, as published by the U.S. Department of
16 Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

17 * * *

18 Sec. 31. 17 V.S.A. § 2941 is amended to read:

19 § 2941. LIMITATIONS OF CONTRIBUTIONS

20 (a) In any election cycle:

21 * * *

1 Sec. 34. 17 V.S.A. § 2963 is amended to read:

2 § 2963. CAMPAIGN REPORTS; SECRETARY OF STATE; FORMS;
3 FILING

4 (a) The Secretary of State shall prescribe and provide a uniform reporting
5 form for all campaign finance reports. The reporting form shall be designed to
6 show the following information:

7 (1) the full name, town of residence, and mailing address of each
8 contributor who contributes an amount in excess of \$100.00, the date of the
9 contribution, and the amount contributed;

10 (2) the total amount of all contributions of \$100.00 or less and the total
11 number of all contributors making such contributions;

12 * * *

13 Sec. 35. 17 V.S.A. § 2964 is amended to read:

14 § 2964. CAMPAIGN REPORTS; CANDIDATES FOR STATE OFFICE,
15 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND COUNTY OFFICE;
16 POLITICAL COMMITTEES; POLITICAL PARTIES

17 (a)(1) Each candidate for State office, the General Assembly, or a
18 two-year-term county office who has rolled over any amount of surplus into
19 his or her new campaign or who has made expenditures or accepted
20 contributions of \$500.00 or more during the two-year general election cycle
21 and, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, each political

1 committee that has not filed a final report pursuant to subsection 2965(b) of
2 this chapter, and each political party required to register under section 2923 of
3 this chapter shall file with the Secretary of State campaign finance reports as
4 follows:

5 (A) in the first year of the two-year general election cycle, on
6 July 15; and

7 (B) in the second year of the two-year general election cycle:

8 (i) on March 15;

9 (ii) on July 15 and August 15;

10 (iii) on September 1;

11 (iv) on October 1, October 15, and ~~November 1~~ the Friday before
12 the general election; and

13 (v) two weeks after the general election.

14 (2) Each candidate for a four-year-term county office who has rolled
15 over any amount of surplus into his or her new campaign or who has made
16 expenditures or accepted contributions of \$500.00 or more during the four-year
17 general election cycle shall file with the Secretary of State campaign finance
18 reports as follows:

19 (A) in the first three years of the four-year general election cycle, on
20 July 15; and

21 (B) in the fourth year of the four-year general election cycle:

- 1 (i) on March 15;
- 2 (ii) on July 15 and August 15;
- 3 (iii) on September 1;
- 4 (iv) on October 1, October 15, and ~~November 1~~ the Friday before
- 5 the general election; and
- 6 (v) two weeks after the general election.

7 * * *

8 Sec. 36. 17 V.S.A. § 2965 is amended to read:

9 § 2965. FINAL REPORTS; CANDIDATES FOR STATE OFFICE, THE
10 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND COUNTY OFFICE; POLITICAL
11 COMMITTEES; POLITICAL PARTIES; END-OF-CYCLE
12 REPORTS FOR POLITICAL COMMITTEES AND POLITICAL
13 PARTIES

14 (a) At any time, but not later than December 15th following the general
15 election, each candidate required to report under the provisions of section 2964
16 of this subchapter shall file with the Secretary of State a “final report” ~~which~~
17 that lists a complete accounting of all contributions and expenditures since the
18 last report and liquidation of surplus and which shall constitute the termination
19 of his or her campaign activities.

20 (b)(1) At any time, but not later than December 15th following the general
21 election, each political committee or political party that has not filed a final

1 report as set forth in subdivision (2) of this subsection shall file an end-of-cycle
2 report that lists a complete accounting of all contributions and expenditures
3 since the last report.

4 (2) At any time, a political committee or a political party may file a
5 “final report” which lists a complete accounting of all contributions and
6 expenditures since the last report and liquidation of surplus and which shall
7 constitute the termination of its campaign activities.

8 Sec. 37. 17 V.S.A. § 2971 is amended to read:

9 § 2971. REPORT OF MASS MEDIA ACTIVITIES

10 (a)(1) In addition to any other reports required to be filed under this
11 chapter, a person who makes expenditures for any one mass media activity
12 totaling \$500.00 or more, adjusted for inflation pursuant to the Consumer Price
13 Index as provided in section 2905 of this chapter, within 45 days before a
14 primary, general, county, or local election shall, for each activity, file a mass
15 media report with the Secretary of State and send a copy of the report to each
16 candidate whose name or likeness is included in the activity without that
17 candidate’s knowledge.

18 (2) The copy of the mass media report shall be sent by e-mail to each
19 such candidate who has provided the Secretary of State with an e-mail address
20 on his or her consent form and to any other such candidate by mail.

1 (3) The mass media report shall be filed and the copy of the report shall
2 be sent within 24 hours of the expenditure or activity, whichever occurs first.

3 For the purposes of this section, a person shall be treated as having made an
4 expenditure if the person has executed a contract to make the expenditure.

5 (b) The report shall identify the person who made the expenditure; the
6 name of each candidate whose name or likeness was included in the activity;
7 the amount and date of the expenditure; to whom it was paid; and the purpose
8 of the expenditure.

9 (c) If the activity occurs within ~~30~~ 45 days before the election and the
10 expenditure was previously reported, an additional report shall be required
11 under this section.

12 (d)(1) In addition to the reporting requirements of this section, an
13 independent expenditure-only political committee that makes an expenditure
14 for any one mass media activity totaling \$5,000.00 or more, adjusted for
15 inflation pursuant to the Consumer Price Index as provided in section 2905 of
16 this chapter, within 45 days before a primary, general, county, or local election
17 shall, for each such activity and within 24 hours of the expenditure or activity,
18 whichever occurs first, file an independent expenditure-only political
19 committee mass media report with the Secretary of State and send a copy of
20 the report to each candidate whose name or likeness is included in the activity
21 without that candidate's knowledge.

1 in writing the municipal or district treasurer that they should not be so listed or
2 identified.

3 (b) The fiscal year of all school districts, charter provisions
4 notwithstanding, shall end on June 30.

5 (c) The fiscal year of other municipalities shall end on December 31, unless
6 the municipality votes at an annual or special meeting duly warned for that
7 purpose to have a different fiscal year, in which case the fiscal year so voted
8 shall remain in effect until amended.

9 (d) [Repealed.]

10 * * * Effective Dates * * *

11 Sec. 40. EFFECTIVE DATES

12 This act shall take effect on passage, except:

13 (1) Sec. 7, 17 V.S.A. § 2402 (requisites of statement), shall take effect
14 on January 1, 2016; and

15 (2) Sec. 19, 17 V.S.A. § 2593 (participation to be entered on statewide
16 checklist by town clerk), shall take effect on July 1, 2015.