

**Administration**  
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Bunnell, FL 32110



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February 24, 2015

By Email & US Mail

Ms. Maria Matthews, Director  
Florida Division of Elections  
Room 316, R.A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Re: Clarification of Request for Advisory Opinion Regarding the Removal of a  
Canvassing Board Member

Dear Ms. Matthews:

This is to correct a statement of fact in my request for an advisory opinion from the Division, dated December 5, 2014, regarding the legal authority of the Canvassing Board to disqualify or remove one of its members.

In the 2014 General Election, our then-Supervisor of Elections objected to the service of County Commissioner George Hanns on the Canvassing Board due to a campaign mailer of candidate and fellow County Commissioner Frank Meeker. The mailer mistakenly and inadvertently attributed to Mr. Hanns an endorsement quote for Mr. Meeker's candidacy. My request for an advisory opinion stated the mailer was sent to 1,509 "households." We recently learned from the records of Mr. Meeker that the mailer was sent to 1,509 *individuals*. The difference between "households" and "individuals" might be construed as noteworthy by some since a mailer to *households* could mean an intended circulation to wider and more numerous audiences.

Second, for clarification, my advisory opinion request stated that upon discovering the mistaken endorsement, Mr. Meeker notified the Elections Commission. To clarify, Mr. Meeker telephoned the Elections Commission but was transferred directly to Division Attorney Ashley Davis. Mr. Meeker identified the problem to attorney Davis and discussed his proposed corrective action, which Mr. Meeker implemented as described in my request letter.

**Charles Ericksen, Jr.**  
District 1

**Frank Meeker**  
District 2

**Barbara Revels**  
District 3

**Nate McLaughlin**  
District 4


**George Hanns**  
District 5

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Our position remains that a mistaken endorsement cannot be considered active campaigning giving rise to a disqualifying conflict under the present statute and the Division's opinions. The statutory scheme for the Canvassing Board, Section 102.141(1) Florida Statute, is quite specific in assigning the authority for appointing and replacing board members to specific bodies or officials. The process does not contemplate the Canvassing Board as a body corporate having a say in who can or cannot serve.

Thank you and please accept this letter of clarification and integrate it into your analysis of the issues previously presented.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Craig M. Coffey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Craig M. Coffey  
County Administrator