Total Commissioner Involvement in the Recharter Process

Paul E. Smith

Heart of Virginia Council
College of Commissioner
2010
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Paul E. Smith
District Commissioner
Capitol District, Heart of Virginia Council

15 November 2009
College of Commissioner Science
Heart of Virginia Council
PREFACE

REASON FOR WRITING THIS THESIS

This paper is designed to address the ongoing issues with internet recharter. And to coordinate the efforts of the commissioner staff, District Executives and the Council Registrar.

GROUP THAT WILL BENEFIT FROM READING THIS THESIS

Commissioners at all levels will benefit from this thesis by giving them an understanding of the Internet Recharter process.

SCOPE OF THIS THESIS

This thesis covers how commissioners receive information on where units are in the recharter process and to keep track of the unit’s status until recharter is completed.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface ........................................................................................................ iii

Introduction .................................................................................................. 1

Recharter Prior to 2006 ............................................................................. 2

Internet Recharter Begins in December 2006 ........................................... 4

Internet Recharter 2007 to 2009 ............................................................... 7

Conclusion .................................................................................................. 10

Appendix 1 .................................................................................................. 12

Appendix 2 .................................................................................................. 13

Appendix 3 .................................................................................................. 14

Appendix 4 .................................................................................................. 16

Appendix 5 .................................................................................................. 17

Appendix 6 .................................................................................................. 19

Appendix 7 .................................................................................................. 20

Bibliography ............................................................................................... 22
INTRODUCTION

During the 2008 Recharter process, Capitol District had 44 out of 48 units complete the internet recharter prior to the December 31st deadline. On February 10th, the District Executive called to inform me that 17 units had not completed recharter and they were in danger of being dropped on February 28th. Capitol District was not unique; the other Districts had similar results.

Why did this happen? Was it lack of communication, lack of coordination, or lack of knowledge of whom is responsible for tracking and following up on unit recharters?

The recharter process involves the District Commissioners and their staffs. Printed on the recharter packet is the following statement: “To assist in this process (Internet Recharter), there is a report available to council employees with membership reporting capabilities entitled Commissioner’s Status Report (Appendix 1). This report provides the commissioner with the renewal status of each unit including the date of first login, the current stage of the process completed, and date submitted. The Council Registrar or the District Executive must provide access to this report. Once the unit submits the Internet recharter, the Commissioner’s Status Report no longer tracks the unit’s status.” So when does the Commissioner Staff stop tracking the recharter process?
During the August 29th, 2009 Basic Commissioner Class, 20 new commissioners were asked how many of them participated in the internet recharter process of the units; only two were involved in the unit recharter. On page 38 of *The Commissioner Field Book for Unit Service* states; “commissioner or unit committee submits the complete charter renewal application to the council service center” (Appendix 2). Commissioners at all levels need to understand Internet Recharter and their role in tracking the recharter.

**Recharter prior to December of 2006.**

Commissioner tracking of units in the recharter process was simple.

The Heart of Virginia Council provided each unit with a packet that included a print out of their unit current registered adults and youth. This recharter packet was given to the units between 60 and 45 days prior to the unit charter expiration date. For example: Capitol District’s packets were handed out at the November Roundtable since the unit’s expiration was January 31st. During this Roundtable a refresher class was given on how to complete the charter renewal (Appendix 3).

The recharter process was completed manually. The unit was provided two copies of the charter renewal. One copy was the unit work copy; the second copy was the official recharter. The official recharter could only have original signatures, all changes had to be in red ink and only deleted unit members were lined thru.
The unit had to provide registration for any youth or adults that were added to the unit since the recharter packet was printed.

Units were scheduled a recharter turn-in with the District. Usually this turn-in was scheduled on a Saturday prior to the charter expiration date. During the scheduled turn-in Districts would have stations set up manned by the District Commissioner staff and the final station manned by the District Executive. If the units had all their paperwork (registrations, original signatures on the charter renewal, and the checks) they would typically spend about an hour going thru the checking/review stations. Units that did not have a completed charter renewal were either helped at the stations or sent back home to get the necessary corrections completed and would have to schedule with the District Executive a new turn-in date. Units could opt for coordinating directly with the District Executive for a turn-in time during the week. Typical problems that stopped a unit from turning in their charter renewal were:

1. No signatures on the charter renewal
2. No applications for new youth or adults
3. Registration fees and check did not match.

During this time the District Commissioner and the District Executive were able to keep track of the units recharter status.
Internet Recharter begins in December of 2006.

Commissioner tracking of units in the recharter process becomes a challenge.

The Heart of Virginia Council started Internet Rechartering for all Districts beginning with Crater District in December of 2006, followed by Capitol District in January 2007 and the remaining Districts every month thereafter. Prior to going “live” with the Internet recharter, the Council provided training to the District Commissioners and their staffs on the how to do Internet recharter. Districts were provided a Power Point slide show to take back to their Roundtables and train the unit recharter persons. The Heart of Virginia Council provided on their web site a link for a tutorial on internet recharter (Appendix 4).

During the 2006-2007 Recharter cycle, the Council provided units with a packet. The packet included:

1. A copy of the current registration of the unit that included both Adult and Youth listings. This was a work copy.

2. A 3x5 card with the Unit ID and Pass Code to start Internet recharter. Note only the Council Registrar and the unit have that pass code.

The intent for Internet Recharter is to streamline the recharter process. It is a Windows based program that the units can access from any internet location. The Internet recharter has five steps:
1. Load Roster. Requires the unit to either load Council Information that is gathered from Scoutnet or upload from a commercial data base such as “Troopmaster”.

2. Update Roster. During this step the unit must:
   b. Select members for renewal.
   c. Promote members.
   d. Add new members.
   e. Update member data.
   f. Update Adult positions.

3. Check Roster. This step checks the recharter for errors. The program will tell the unit what the errors are and will not let the unit proceed until the errors are corrected. Once the unit has corrected the errors, then they are prompted to re-validate. This checks for to ensure the errors are corrected validates

4. Update Fees. This step updates the fee status of the members. It allows the unit to account for a member that is in multiple positions and pay one fee. It also where the unit accounts for the Boy’s Life fees.

5. Submit Roster. This is the final step in Internet Recharter. The unit can print out a roster for review. When the unit selects the submit to Council an electronic copy of the recharter is sent to Council. No further corrections are allowed to the recharter once the unit has submitted the electronic recharter to council. The unit then selects the Print Renewal Application.
The unit has completed the Internet recharter process. The signed Renewal Application and check for the fees must be submitted to Council for the unit to be rechartered.

During this first iteration of Internet recharter, the Districts conducted Internet Recharter assistance dates. Units were directed to turn in their completed recharters directly to the Council offices, usually the District Executive. Tracking of the status of the units during the Internet recharter was conducted by the District Executives. If units were not on track to complete on time recharter, the District Executive would contact the District Commissioner to assist in contacting the units. After the units submitted their internet recharter renewal, the District Executive still continued to monitor the units on turn in of signed charter renewal and completed fees. Tom Butler, Capitol District Executive 2006-2007, stated that Council felt that during the transition period from hard copy charter renewal to Internet Recharter the District Executives were the best people to monitor and track unit statuses.

Internet Recharter 2007 to 2009.

The Heart of Virginia Council changed all the Districts to complete their recharter process by December 31st. The Council no longer printed work copies of the charter renewal application. The Internet recharter program did not change. The recharter time line became:
1. Recharter Packets and pass codes are distributed to units during the October Roundtables.

2. Unit charter expiration date is December 31st.

3. Units drop from the data base if charter application or fees are not turned in by February 28th

During the 2007 charter renewal process, Districts conducted Internet Recharter refresher training. The Districts also conducted recharter assistance and turn-in dates. Tracking of the unit status in the recharter process was conducted by phone calls and unit visits by the District Commissioner staff. After December 31st the District Executives again took over the follow up and tracking the units turn in of the charter application. Eric Stephens, Capitol District Executive 2007-2008, stated that it was his job as District Executive to track and receive the charter applications for the units that had not turned in the signed applications or fees.

In the 2008 charter renewal time, the Council made available the Commissioner’s Status Report (Appendix 5). Unfortunately the report is not an automatic report. The District Commissioner had to call the Council Registrar and ask for the report to be sent to them. Every Friday, I had to call the Registrar and ask for the report to be emailed to me.
The Commissioner’s Status Report provides the Commissioner with the following:

1. The date the unit logged/registered into the Internet Renewal program.
2. The contact information of person that is processing the unit recharter.
3. What stage the unit is in the Internet Renewal Process.
4. The Date the unit submitted the electronic charter application to Council.

By having access to the Commissioner’s Status Report, Capitol District was able to have all units but two complete their Internet recharter by the December 31st deadline. Again the District Executive this time Tommy Bacote, stated that it was his job to get the outstanding charter renewals turned in.

On February 10th, 2009, the District Executive call to inform me that 17 units had not completed the charter renewal process. The other Districts were similarly informed that they had units that had not completed recharter. The Council Director of Field Services stated that is was the District Commissioner Staff’s responsibility to track and follow up with the units to complete the recharter process.

The District Executive provided a report titled Capitol recharters as of Feb 10th 2009 (Appendix 6). The District Executive could not tell why a unit was on hold or had not been posted. The Council Registrar provided that units had either not submitted a signed charter application or had not paid their fees. The report does not show why a unit is flagged. After numerous phone calls to units, the units were able to complete their charter renewal.
With the 2009 recharter cycle, Districts seem to be going backwards. All the Districts are conducting Unit Recharter turn-in dates. Council has asked for the Districts to try to complete the recharter around the 15th of December. In order for the District Commissioner to get the Commissioner’s Status Report, we can ask the District Executive or the Council Registrar to provide them.

Conclusion

The District Commissioners need timely access to where units stand in the recharter process. All of us keep some kind of internal tracking sheet (Appendix 7) to track our units. Council or National needs to allow the commissioner to have direct access to the Commissioner’s Status Report. By having that direct access we do not have to take the time away from the Council Registrar. After December 31st the Council needs to provide the Commissioners with the status of the recharter, and also provide why a unit has not completed the process (signatures or fees).

The Commissioner Field Book for Unit Service puts the responsibility of charter renewal tracking on the commissioners, with the Council by providing the status of where a unit was in the recharter process, the Districts can avoid a last minute surprise of units endanger of dropping from the rolls.
Internet Recharter has added a new dimension on how units conduct charter renewal. Roles and responsibilities have not changed. The District Commissioners and Executives must ensure that open communication and information is shared in a timely manner to complete the recharter of their units.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Appendix 1
Appendix 2
Appendix 3
Appendix 4
Appendix 5
Appendix 6
Appendix 7