# Albemarle County

## Legislation Details (With Text)

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| **File #:** | 20-136 | **Version:** | 1 | **Name:** | |
| **Type:** | Resolution | | | **Status:** | Action Items |
| **File created:** | 12/18/2019 | | | **In control:** | Board of Supervisors |
| **On agenda:** | 2/19/2020 | | | **Final action:** | |
| **Title:** | Proposed Lease of Space for the Office of Voter Registration and Elections. | | | | |
| **Sponsors:** | | | | | |
| **Indexes:** | | | | | |
| **Code sections:** | | | | | |
| **Attachments:** | 1. Att.A - Resolution | | | | |

| Date | Ver. | Action By | Action | Result |
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**AGENDA DATE: 2/19/2020**

**TITLE:**
Proposed Lease of Space for the Office of Voter Registration and Elections

**SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:** Approve the Proposed Lease of Space for the Office of Voter Registration and Elections

**ITEM TYPE:** Regular Action Item

**STAFF CONTACT(S):** Richardson, Henry, Kamptner, Herrick, Bessette, Stewart

**PRESENTER (S):** Stewart

**LEGAL REVIEW:** Yes

**REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson**

**BACKGROUND:**
Effective for the November 2020 election cycle, Virginia localities are required to provide for no-excuse absentee, in-person voting, commonly known as “early voting”. HB 2790 enables early voting starting the second Saturday immediately preceding an election, continuing through the Saturday before the election (excluding Sunday). Citizens will be allowed to vote at any polling location that’s made available to the public, rather than being limited to a specific polling location. Localities must allow voters to cast their ballot at the Office of the General Registrar, locally housed at the 5th Street County Office Building (COB 5th).

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Quality Government Operations: Ensure County government’s capacity to provide high quality service that achieves community priorities

**DISCUSSION:**
In states which have enacted similar laws, 30-60% of voters take advantage of the opportunity to vote early. Based on this, initial estimates indicate the need for the County to accommodate 500 voters per hour, and likely more on peak volume days and/or times of day.

The COB 5th building and parking areas cannot accommodate such volumes. Use of one or more satellite polling locations to supplement the COB 5th facilities are considered untenable for reasons of physical security, cyber security and the limited selection of sites with sufficient parking and floor space for extended durations.

Staff considered and now proposes the permanent relocation of the Office of Voter Registration and Elections (the Office of the General Registrar and the Board of Elections) to a leased location, with sufficient floor space and parking to accommodate both that office and a central polling location.

This alternative has two added benefits. It would make available approximately 5,000 square feet of office and storage space at the COB 5th facility to help meet the space needs of departments located within that building. It would also create a 4,000 square foot space for a community center that would be available as a polling location during voting cycles.

Several locations were identified with available leasable space of appropriate size and with ample parking. Staff initiated negotiations with the owners of each of these properties and recommends that the Board authorize the County Executive to execute a lease of 11,600 square feet of commercial space, located at 206-216 Albemarle Square, Charlottesville, VA 22901, pending subsequent appropriation of funding. The initial term of the proposed lease would commence on the date the Office of Voter Registration and Elections opens for business, but no later than August 1, 2020. The lease would end on July 31, 2025, but would include options to renew for up to five additional, one-year terms.
**BUDGET IMPACT:** Initial capital costs are estimated to be up to $610,000. Ongoing operating costs are estimated at approximately $11,600 in FY19-20 and $225,000 in FY20-21, including rent, utilities, and facility and information technology maintenance.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment A) to approve one or more leases for approximately 11,600 square feet of space at 206-216 Albemarle Square as set forth above, and authorize the County Executive to execute the lease(s) after approval as to form and substance by the County Attorney, contingent on the Board's approval of a subsequent Appropriation for that purpose.

**ATTACHMENTS:**
Attachment A - Resolution