

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County Commissioners Vote to Retain Appointed Elections Administrator

After considering testimony and comment collected from the public, the Missoula County Commissioners voted unanimously on Thursday, Oct. 26 to continue the practice of appointing an Elections Administrator. The reconsideration of this decision was prompted by county resolution number [2014-074](#), which obligated the commission to review the appointed position after a three-year period “to determine whether or not to continue with the appointed election administrator or to delegate the position to the clerk and recorder or to another elected official, pursuant to [MCA 13-1-301](#).”

“In the end, it’s about what is best for the voter,” Commissioner Jean Curtiss said. “Our community needs a fulltime, dedicated official who can continue to ensure the integrity of elections in Missoula County.”

“We are at a point in our history where we must have someone dedicated full time to the task of managing and administering elections, regardless of who ends up being the elections administrator of record,” Commissioner David Strohmaier said. “Elections are just too complex in our large county, and the public, rightfully, has a high expectation of competency in this role.”

“Having the position appointed under an elected board provides insulation from the whims and beliefs of one individual while still providing accountability to the voters,” Commissioner Nicole “Cola” Rowley said. “There is, in fact, more accountability for performance in a contracted employee who can be removed relatively easily than there is in an elected official who can only be removed from office during a recall.”

Current Elections Administrator, Rebecca Connors, will be leaving her post on Friday, Dec. 15, which will require the commission to open the position for recruitment. The Missoula County Elections Administrator job description from 2014 is attached to this release.

The timeline to post this position, rate of pay and anticipated start date are yet to be determined. The commission will also be considering the composition of the selection committee and the interview process in the near future. These details will be shared in a subsequent release once they are finalized.