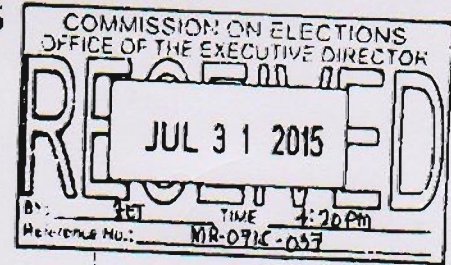




EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EN BANC  
MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS  
HELD ON JULY 07, 2015

Present:

Chairman J. Andres D. Bautista  
Commissioner Christian Robert S. Lim  
Commissioner Al A. Parreño  
Commissioner Luie Tito F. Guia  
Commissioner Arthur D. Lim  
Commissioner Ma. Rowena Amelia V. Guanzon  
Commissioner Sheriff M. Abas



xxx

xxx

xxx

15-0479. IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOTION FOR CLARIFICATION/MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION OF THE PPCRV RE: ITS ACCREDITATION AS COMELEC CITIZENS' ARM FOR PURPOSES OF THE GENERAL REGISTRATION AND CONTINUING REGISTRATION OF VOTERS, AND FOR THE MAY 9, 2016 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

This pertains to the Memorandum dated June 16, 2015 of Atty. Abigail Justine Cuaresma-Lilagan, Acting Clerk of the Commission, relative to the Comments/Recommendation of Executive Director Jose M. Tolentino, Jr. on the Motion for Clarification/Motion for Reconsideration of the PPCRV Re: Its Accreditation as COMELEC Citizens' Arm for Purposes of the General Registration and Continuing Registration of Voters, and for the May 9, 2016 National and Local Elections.

The Memorandum of Executive Director Tolentino reads:

*"Pursuant to Minute Resolution No. 15-0139, the undersigned respectfully submits the following comments on the above Subject:*

*The Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) seeks clarification and reconsideration of the COMELEC Resolution dated 29 January 2015 entitled 'In the Matter of the Accreditation of PPCRV as the Citizens Arm of the Commission for Purposes of the General Registration and Continuing Registration of Voters and for the National and Local Elections Set on 09 May 2016', praying that said Resolution be clarified and/or modified with regard to the other prayers sought in its Petition, quoted verbatim, as follows:*

- a) Accreditation of Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible voting (PPCRV) as a national citizen's arm for purposes of the general registration and continuing registration of voters and for the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016;*
- b) Furnish Petitioner free of charge with the electronic copies of the Computerized Voter's List (CVLs), i.e., in a precinct finder compatible format – for the effective discharge of its responsibility, particularly on the aspect of Voter's Assistance;*
- c) Furnish Petitioner free of charge of related election forms including but not limited to the following: a) procurement notices and awards; b) 6th copy of the election returns; c) voter's list; d) minutes of registration; e) minutes of voting and similar and/or related documents;*

- d) Delivery to, and labelling of the 6<sup>th</sup> copy of Election Returns in the name of herein petitioner PPCRV as citizen's arm of the Honorable Commission. In this regard, petitioner also requests that an Order be issued specifically directing all BEI's to observe this protocol on the delivery and labelling of said copies of the Elections Returns in favor of herein petitioner as citizen's arm for the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016;
- e) Allow Petitioner to conduct ocular inspections and/or examine identified venues of election and such related spaces and equipment that may be used in relation to the conduct of the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016;
- f) Authorized Petitioner to undertake a widespread stakeholder education and training program to educate the public and fully inform the electorate on the right of suffrage and government representation and inculcate values on clean, honest, accurate, meaningful and peaceful elections;
- g) It be provided a copy/ies of the permanent list of voters per precinct in each barangay, city and municipality consisting of the third copies of all approved voter registration records in each city and /or cancelled voters, the certified list of voters before any regular or special election to ensure proper coordination with said officers, free of any charge or access fee;
- h) It be assisted by all national and/or local election (s) officers by ensuring free and easy access to all of said documents and/or records mentioned in the preceding paragraph;
- i) It be included in the training of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) conducted by the Commission in every and all [barangays], regions, provinces, cities and municipalities prior to the elections, and allocating per said BEI training session four (4) slots for the PPCRV representatives chosen by the PPCRV National Office and/or its Diocesan Chapters free of charge;
- j) Issuance of the necessary orders to all concerned election officers nationwide to implement the foregoing order;
- k) It be assisted by law enforcement agencies in the performance of its duties and functions as said citizen's arm; and;
- l) All other function as citizen's arm that the Commission may warrant.'

Since the accreditation of PPCRV as the Commission's citizens' arm in connection with the May 9, 2016 national and local elections appears to be general in scope, the following Table is submitted to clarify the details of the other prayers sought by PPCRV.

Prayers Sought	Remarks
a. Accreditation of Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible [Voting] (PPCRV) as a national citizen's arm for purposes of the general registration and continuing registration of voters and for the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016	The duties of PPCRV as enumerated in the subject Resolution— voter registration, integrity of voters' list, voter education, all stages of election preparation, conduct and management of elections, post-election activities, and other activities as the Commission may deem necessary – cover the entire electoral process. Thus, said duties effectively accredit PPCRV as the national citizens' arm for purposes of general registration and continuing registration, as well as, for the 2016 national and local elections (NLE).

27

b. Furnish Petitioner free of charge with the electronic copies of the Computerized Voter's List (CVLs), i.e., in a precinct finder compatible format - for the effective discharge of its responsibility, particularly on the aspect of Voter's Assistance

This is covered under nos. 1 and 2 of the duties of PPCRV as enumerated in the Resolution. Consistent with the previous Resolutions issued by the Commission, the electronic copies of the Computerized Voters' List (CVL) shall be given free of charge to PPCRV either in CD format or in Hard Drive, subject to the conditions that the storage medium shall be provided by PPCRV; that (1) the CVL database shall be used exclusively for election purposes; and that the CVL shall be in portable document format (.pdf) only, with hash code, to ensure that the database cannot be edited. All that is needed is for PPCRV to formally request for the CVL, and to provide the appropriate storage medium.

The requested CVL, with precinct finder compatible format (Voter Search under our VRS), cannot be given at the moment because it is in the form of a database which can be edited. The ITD, however, has already been asked to study the possibility of converting the Voter Search program into a useable search format that cannot be edited.

c. Furnish Petitioner free of charge of related election forms including but not limited to the following: a) procurement notices and awards; b) 6th copy of the election returns; c) voter's list; d) minutes of registration; e) minutes of voting and similar and/or related documents

Copies of procurement notices and awards are covered under no. 4 of the duties of PPCRV. This may be obtained free of charge from the Bids and Awards Committee through a formal request.

Copies of the voters' list and minutes of registration are covered under nos. 1 and 2 of PPCRV's duties. The manner of obtaining the voters' list has been discussed earlier. With respect to the minutes of registration, the same can be obtained from either the respective Chairmen of the Election Registration Boards (ERB), or the Election and Barangay Affairs Department (EBAD).

Reproduction costs of records obtained from the ERB shall be shouldered by PPCRV unless the Office of the Election Officer has its own photocopying machine. Copies obtained from the EBAD may be free of charge upon completion of the digitization project for EBAD; otherwise, cost of reproduction shall be shouldered by PPCRV.

There are two copies of the minutes of voting. One is placed inside the ballot box, and the other is submitted to the Election Records and Statistics Department (ERSD). Providing a third copy of the minutes, which will be given to PPCRV, will be strenuous on the part of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI); thus, a maximum of two copies of the minutes should be prepared by the BEI.

	<p>The minutes can be obtained from the ERSD in digital format, upon completion of the digitization project for the ERSD. For this purpose, only digital copies shall be free of charge, while costs of reproduction (photocopying) shall be shouldered by PPCRV.</p> <p>The receipt by PPCRV of the 6<sup>th</sup> copy of the election returns shall be discussed below.</p>
<p>d. Delivery to, and labelling of the 6<sup>th</sup> copy of Election Returns in the name of herein petitioner PPCRV as citizen's arm of the Honorable Commission. In this regard, petitioner also requests that an Order be issued specifically directing all BEI's to observe this protocol on the delivery and labelling of said copies of the Elections Returns in favor of herein petitioner as citizen's arm for the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016</p>	<p>This may be granted since it is consistent with the General Instructions that have been promulgated in previous elections. There is no cogent reason why said 6<sup>th</sup> copy should not be given to PPCRV for the 2016 elections.</p> <p>For the 2016 elections, the BEIs can be instructed, through the General Instructions, to give the 6<sup>th</sup> copy to PPCRV at the precinct where the election took place. For this purpose, the PPCRV representative should be at the polling place during the issuance of said copy; otherwise, all unclaimed copies shall be forwarded by the BEI to the Election Officer, from whom the PPCRV representative shall obtain said copies. In other words, it will not be the duty of the BEI to look for the PPCRV representative during the issuance of the 6<sup>th</sup> copy.</p> <p>With respect to the labelling of the copy in favor of PPCRV, the same can be indicated in the envelopes where the first eight (8) copies of the election returns shall be placed. For this purpose, the Printing Committee shall be instructed to design the envelopes in such a way that said envelopes shall clearly state the recipients of the election returns.</p>
<p>e. Allow Petitioner to conduct ocular inspections and/or examine identified venues of election and such related spaces and equipment that maybe used in relation to the conduct of the national and local elections set on 9 May 2016</p>	<p>This is covered under no. 4 of PPCRV's duties. All that is needed is for the PPCRV to coordinate the Election Officers concerned. This procedure can be provided in the General Instructions for the 2016 elections.</p>
<p>f. Authorize Petitioner to undertake a widespread stakeholder education and training program to educate the public and fully inform the electorate on the right of suffrage and government representation and inculcate values on clean, honest, accurate, meaningful and peaceful elections</p>	<p>This is covered by no. 3 of PPCRV's duties.</p>

*af*

<p>g. It be provided a copy/ies of the permanent list of voters per precinct in each barangay, city and municipality consisting of the third copies of all approved voter registration records in each city and /or cancelled voters, the certified list of voters before any regular or special election to ensure proper coordination with said officers, free of any charge or access fee</p>	<p>The manner of obtaining copies of the list of voters has been discussed earlier.</p> <p>With respect to PPCRV's request to obtain the third copies of all approved voter registration record, the same will require further study since the three copies of the VRR already have their respective recipients, namely, the Election Officer, the Provincial Election Supervisor, and the National Central File of the ERSD. It will be taxing on the part of the applicant for registration if a fourth copy of the VRR will be accomplished. Moreover, cost of reproduction is high since approximately 56 million records are involved. Furthermore, since the VRR contains information of the voter other than his name, the right to privacy of information might be violated if this request will be granted.</p>
<p>h. It be assisted by all national and/or local election officers by ensuring free and easy access to all of said documents and/or records mentioned in the preceding paragraph</p>	<p>The manner of obtaining election documents has been discussed earlier.</p>
<p>i. It be included in the training of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) conducted by the Commission in every and all barangay, regions, provinces, cities and municipalities prior to the elections, and allocating per said BEI training session four (4) slots for the PPCRV representatives chosen by the PPCRV National Office and/or its Diocesan Chapters free of charge</p>	<p>In previous elections, PPCRV volunteers have been included in BEI training. For the 2016 elections, the General Instructions may again provide that PPCRV may send representatives to BEI trainings. The number of training slots, shall, however, be dependent on the size of the venue and number of machines available. With respect to training expenses, PPCRV shall shoulder the costs of food and accommodation of its representatives, similar to the arrangements in previous elections.</p>
<p>j. Issuance of the necessary orders to all concerned election officers nationwide to implement the foregoing order</p>	<p>This may be incorporated in the General Instructions.</p>
<p>k. It be assisted by law enforcement agencies in the performance of its duties and functions as said citizen's arm</p>	<p>All that is needed is for PPCRV to coordinate with the local COMELEC officials. The AFP, PNP and other law enforcement agencies, upon their deputation, may be directed to provide assistance to PPCRV and other citizens' arms that may hereafter be accredited.</p>
<p>l. All other function as citizen's arm that the Commission may warrant</p>	<p>This is covered under no. 7 of PPCRV's duties.</p>

Respectfully submitted."

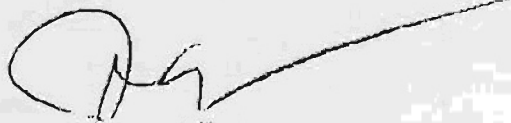


Chairman J. Andres D. Bautista inhibited during the deliberation of the matter for being a former PPCRV Trustee. Commissioner Ma. Rowena Amelia V. Guanzon abstained while Commissioners Christian Robert S. Lim, Al A. Parreño, Arthur D. Lim, and Sheriff M. Abas voted in favor. On the other hand, Commissioner Lue Tito F. Guia voted in favor with reservation.

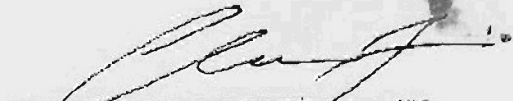
After due deliberation, the Commission **RESOLVED**, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to **approve in toto** the foregoing recommendation of Executive Director Jose M. Tolentino, Jr. on the Motion for Clarification/Motion for Reconsideration of the PPCRV Re: Its Accreditation as COMELEC Citizens' Arm for Purposes of the General Registration and Continuing Registration of Voters, and for the May 9, 2016 National and Local Elections.

Let the Executive Director implement this Resolution.

**SO ORDERED.**



**J. ANDRES D. BAUTISTA**  
Chairman



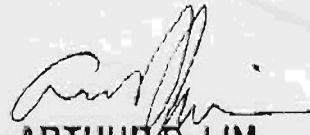
**CHRISTIAN ROBERT S. LIM**  
Commissioner



**AL A. PARRENO**  
Commissioner

*Approved  
Lue Tito F. Guia  
Vote to follow*

**LUE TITO F. GUIA**  
Commissioner



**ARTHUR D. LIM**  
Commissioner



**MA. ROWENA AMELIA V. GUANZON**  
Commissioner



**SHERIFF M. ABAS**  
Commissioner

- cc: Chairman
- All Commissioners
- Executive Director
- Deputy Executive Director for Operations
- Deputy Executive Director for Administration
- Clerk of the Commission

