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Lines formed early at the Seward County Activity Center when the polls opened at 7 a.m. Nov. 6, 2012, in the general election. Liberal and Kismet voters will be going to the polls April 2 to elect school board members, college board members and city commissioners. In order to vote in that election, voters must be registered by March 12. L&T photo/Earl Watt

By Rachel Coleman • Leader & Times Voters who did not make it to the polls for last week's primary election because they have not yet registered to vote are running out of time for their next deadline. Would-be voters have less than a week to get registered.

Thanks to an increased effort by the State of Kansas and the Seward County Clerk's office, several options make it easier for new voters to register. A paper application form is available from the Seward County Clerk's office, located in the Seward County Administration building at 515 N. Washington, Suite 100. The form can also be downloaded via the clerk's site on the Internet. That web address is www.sewardcountyks.org. For information, contact the local office at 626-3211.

Voter registration closes 21 days before any election, the form notes, so the application must be postmarked (or hand-delivered to the office) on or before that date, which in the case of the next election is March 12.

People who want to register to vote must provide proof of U.S. citizenship. Acceptable documents include:

- Birth certificate verifying U.S. citizenship
- U.S. passport, including expired passports

- U.S. naturalization documents, or the number of such a document
- Bureau of Indian Affairs card number, or tribal treaty or enrollment number
- U.S. hospital record of birth indicating place of birth in the U.S.
- U.S. military record of service with the applicant's name and U.S. birthplace

Virtual access to voter registration is also available directly from the Kansas Department of Revenue as well. Online voter registration requires a valid Kansas driver's license or nondriver identification card. If neither is available, the standard voter registration paper form is necessary.

First-time voters in Kansas are still required to show proof of citizenship, as from the list above. However, they may submit that proof by scanning and emailing PDF documents to the online service, and then mail, fax, e-mail or hand deliver the same document to the Seward County election office.

More information is available on the KDOR website, www.kdor.org/voterregistration/, or by calling 1-800-2626-VOTE (8683).

In the primary election last week, 1,391 local residents cast votes and whittled down the candidate field for the Liberal City Commission from 14 to eight. The primary effectively set the stage for the general election on April 2. However, total participation was one of the lowest in the past decade, especially in light of the census figures for Seward County, which list the total population at nearly 23,000 people. At least half of that number of residents are 18 years old or older.

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