

# Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
October 19, 2016

## Present:

### Board

Joseph H. Secrist, President	(R)
Walter W. Black	(D)
Richard B. Bulman	(R)
Susan MacKinnon	(D)
John F. Hall	(R)

### Staff

Patricia L. Mitchell

### Attorney

Philip T. Cronan

### State Board of Elections

Sylvia Brown, Director, Personnel Services Division

### Public

Mary-beth Goll  
Eugene Goll  
Walter Johnson

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on October 19, 2016 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

## Approval of Minutes of September 21, 2016

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2016, a copy of which had been forwarded to the Board Members by email in advance of the meeting. Mr. Hall explained that he had made two corrections to the draft prior to the meeting and distributed copies of the corrected pages.

Mr. Bulman moved that the minutes, so corrected, be approved; Mr. Black seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Addition/Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Secrist asked that New Business be amended to address polling place evaluations by Board members. Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Mr. Bulman), the agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously.

## **Public Comment**

Mr. Secrist asked if the members of the public present wished to make any comments. Mrs. Goll asked for clarification as to qualification of poll watchers. Ms. Mitchell responded that poll watchers were required to attend training and to present a certificate from a party's central committee or from a candidate to the Chief Judge.

## **Election Director's Report**

Mrs. Mitchell provided her report in writing, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A. She stated that sample ballots had been mailed on October 19. Mr. Secrist asked why there were so many different versions of the ballot. Ms. Mitchell explained that the difference in the ballots was caused by the School Board members' elections. Ms. Mitchell further stated that the ballots were generated under the State Board's Election Management System software, not by the local office.

Mr. Bulman asked about overtime pay for voter outreach. Ms. Mitchell responded that some voter outreach effort was handled through ADECCA contract employees.

Ms. Mitchell noted that the warehouse space was temporarily without electricity due to the power line having been accidentally cut by Easton Utilities while digging in the area. She said that she had been promised that power would be restored by the end of the current week. She further said that a "logic and accuracy" assessment of the voting software would be performed October 20.

## **Attorney's Report**

Mr. Cronan stated that he had participated in a conference call on October 18. A topic discussed was the accreditation of poll watchers. Poll watchers must be in the polling place by 6:30 a.m. However, no accreditation was required for observing the closing of the polls.

Ms. Mitchell reminded the Board that anyone observing the collection of vote totals would be required to sign an acknowledgment that such results must not be divulged until all results were available to the public.

The question arose as to whether there were circumstances under which one poll watcher designated by a party central committee might relieve another. Mr. Cronan stated that he would seek clarification and would inform the Board and the Election Director before the beginning of early voting.<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Mitchell stated that campaign signs were required to be removed from the vicinity of the polling places by the closing of the polls on Election Day. Ms. Mitchell noted the difficulty of enforcing the 100-foot limitation on campaign signs when such signs were placed on private property.

Ms. Mitchell added that, because thirty candidates qualified as write-in votes, the task of canvassing those votes might be more time-consuming than usual.

Ms. Mitchell further stated that the cardboard stands on which required notices had been printed would be replaced by magnetic signs which would be attached to the carts in which voting machines were stored when not in use. In response to a question from Mr. Hall, she stated that the current budget was adequate to cover the costs of the magnetic signs.

Regarding Early Voting, Ms. Mitchell said that two greeters had been hired who would be posted outside the polling place to direct voters, and that a new banner and sign indicating the location of the polling place and parking had been purchased.

## **Old Business**

### **Invoices**

In response to a question from Mr. Bulman, Ms. Mitchell stated that the cleaning supplies had been purchased for the warehouse.

### **Budget**

Ms. Mitchell pointed out that the financial report related only to the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016 and that no final report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 had yet been received.

### **Election Judges**

Mr. Secrist pointed out that Rudolph Russell was listed as a Republican for Election Day on the Easton Fire House (1-1 and 1-3) but as a Democrat for early voting on October 30. He asked that Mr. Russell's party be corrected. Ms. Mitchell agreed to do so. He also asked for the party affiliation of the two VAC Card counters on Election Day at the Easton Fire House. Ms. Mitchell said that they were both Democrats. Mr. Secrist also pointed out

---

<sup>1</sup> His responses to the original question and to follow-up questions were received on October 22 and 23, 2016.

that there were seven election judges at Bozman, although District 2, Precinct 2 has the smallest number of registered voters, while less election judges were selected for larger precincts.

Mr. Bulman moved that the list of election judges be approved. Ms. MacKinnon seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Bulman asked what would be done if an election judge failed to be present for duty. Ms. Mitchell said that the voting equipment technical employees had been trained and would be available to help.

Mr. Secrist asked how the additional announcement regarding handicapped voters would be addressed. Ms. Mitchell stated that the greeters would first make the announcement. If there were a question regarding the meaning of the announcement, the matter would be referred to the provision judge, so as to insure consistency in response.

#### Use of Schools

Ms. Mitchell stated that the gymnasium at St. Michaels High School (2-1) would be the polling site. At Easton High School (1-2), the auditorium would be used.

#### Goals

Ms. Mitchell had distributed a copy of the goals adopted last year before the October meeting. Mr. Bulman asked that the Board Members review those goals for possible change. He urged that any such goals be stated with specificity rather than as a generality.

#### Election Judge Refresher Training.

Ms. Mitchell said that training was scheduled for Saturday, October 22.

#### Public Demonstration of Voting Equipment.

Ms. Mitchell said that the equipment had been demonstrated at the job fair held October 12.

#### Website

Mr. Secrist observed that the links under several of the tabs (for example Voter Registration and Presidential Election) on the local board's website to the State Board's website did not work and requested that the webmaster be asked to make any necessary correction.

## Visit to the Schools

Ms. MacKinnon stated that she and Ms. Goll had visited the two county high schools and had registered a few students. Ms. Mitchell stated that she had received a complaint from one parent about such registration, who had raised a fear of identity theft.

## New Business

### Agenda and Retention requirements

Ms. Mitchell said that under House Bill No. 217, the agenda needed to include the statement which was to be found at the bottom of this month's agenda. Further, under House Bill No. 984, the minutes would have to be retained for five years. However, as to the latter requirement, that burden fell on the State Board and not the Local Board.

### Polling Place Evaluation

The Board agreed on the division of responsibilities for performing the polling place evaluation on Election Day. Further, each member agreed to observe the voting process one day during Early Voting.

### Canvassing

The Board then reviewed the dates set for canvassing (November 10, 16 and 18) found on the 2016 Presidential Election Calendar available on the State Board's webpage. Mr. Secrist observed that November 16 was also the date of the Local Board's regularly scheduled meeting, but that the November meeting was also one of four evening meetings during each year. Ms. MacKinnon suggested that the Board meet at 9:00 a.m., rather than in the evening and suspend the regular meeting at 10:00 a.m. to conduct the canvas. Mr. Black so moved; Mr. Bulman seconded; the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Secrist asked Ms. Mitchell to have the change noted on the Local Board's website.

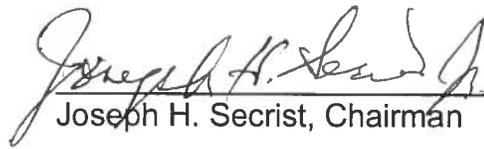
Mr. and Ms. Goll left at 10:40 a.m.

Ms. Mitchell stated that, based on the large number of requests for absentee ballots, she anticipated that the canvas of those votes would take more time than usual. Mr. Secrist suggested arrangements be made to have a break for a meal.

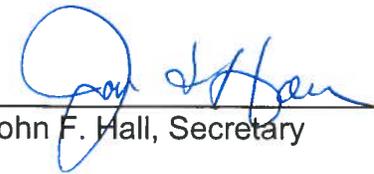
Mr. Hall announced that he had contributed to, but had not been able to attend, Senator Eckhardt's annual fund raiser.

Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Mr. Bulman), the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:49 a.m.

Attested,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph H. Secrist, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Hall, Secretary

NVSR Update

Meetings are being held on Monday mornings at 9 a.m.

Voter Registration

Attached is a copy of the Monthly Statistical Report. I have also attached the Precinct Voter Count Report which is used for the website page. (Exhibits A & B)

Election Judge Trainings

Refresher training classes have started. We are currently having classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays this month at the warehouse. We are going to have two make-up classes in October. Chief Judges and Provisional Judges will have their class on October 18, 2016. Make-up trainings will take place on October 15 and 29, 2016.

Daily Data Entry

All daily work is being processed and absentee application requests are coming in each day.

Daily Phone Calls and In-Person Visits

We have received 187 phone calls, 79 in person visits. Teresa and I take turns answering the phones and waiting on voters at the window.

Critical Oversight Report

For the month of September, I audited Garrett County.

ERIC Reports

We received a new ERIC Report and have finished it.

Meetings

Election Director Meeting - September 20, 2016, Minutes attached.

CandleLight Cove-September 26, 2016, explained deadlines and how to obtain an absentee ballot.

Early Voting

We are scheduled to deliver all equipment on October 26, 2016. Carol Prettyman will be there to assist us with set up.

Specimen Ballots

Specimen ballots are attached for each ballot style. They are going out this week.

Ballot Proofing

Ballot materials have been delivered and L&A has started.

ExH A