

# Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
*September 18, 2019*

Present:

## **Board**

Joseph H. Secrist, President	(R)
Richard B. Bulman	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Wadella Thomas	(R)
Susan MacKinnon	(D)

## **Staff**

Jeri Cook, Election Director  
Monae Butler, Staff

## **Board Attorney**

Philip Cronan

Also present were the following:

Jessica Morris, Talbot County's Assistant County Manager  
Clay Stamp, Talbot County Emergency Service Director  
Geneva Harrison, Talbot County Department of Emergency Services  
Captain John Bollinger, Talbot County Sheriff's Department

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on September 18, 2019 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of August 21, 2019, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Black moved approval of the minutes as presented. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **Changes to the Agenda/Approval of the Agenda**

Mr. Bulman moved approval of the agenda as presented. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **Election Director's Report**

Ms. Butler presented the Board with a report on the Talbot County Board of Elections Facebook page she developed. Ms. Butler provided a demonstration of the many valuable uses that can be made of Facebook. Of particular note were its success in attracting Election Judges. Ms. Butler updates our page on a daily basis, providing useful information to Facebook users. The Board Members thanked Ms. Butler for her efforts. At this point, Ms. Butler departed the meeting.

## **Discussion with Clay Stamp**

President Secrist asked that the Election Director's report be paused to allow the discussion of security and operational issues with Mr. Stamp, along with the other county and Sheriff's Department officials. Ms. Cook, at the board's request, had discussions with the county in reference to several issues regarding the current space used by the Board and issues affecting the upcoming elections. Several topics were addressed, including Emergency Recovery, access to and security of Board office and equipment areas and the need to include the Board's space requirements following the closing of the Talbot County Business Center. Ms. Cook had provided a list of issues that the Board would like the county and the Sheriff's Department to consider. Mr. Stamp asked that the list of issues be further developed, with the items being prioritized along with the desired timetable for completion.

Mr. Secrist thanked the county and Sheriff's Department officials for their attendance and their interest in bringing the issues addressed today to the attention of the County Manager and the County Council. At this point the county and Sheriff's Department officials departed the meeting.

## **Election Director's Report (Continued)**

Ms. Cook reported on the following:

- She summarized her written report on her plans for recruiting Election Judges. In addition to the success of the Facebook page, she plans to contact local community-based organizations and work with the Board of Education regarding opportunities for 16 to 18-year-old students.

- The final report on the audit of the last election is in the materials sent to the Board highlighting the few items that need attention before the next election.
- She noted the material sent to the Board included the State Board response to a letter from most of the Congressional delegation regarding improvements they are requesting in the conduct of elections in Maryland.
- Among the issues discussed with the county officials was the poor quality of telephone service. Ms. Cook provided the Board and the county with an estimate of the cost for a new telephone system for the office provided by Telewire, Inc. Also discussed with the county staff was the need for a secure website separate from the county site. She provided cost estimates that another local board expects to incur for a secure website.
- Paperwork has been submitted to the State for the State Board's approval to change the Early Voting location within the Easton Firehouse to the Bingo Hall.

### **Board Attorney's Report**

Mr. Cronan had no issues to report, other than those related to the bylaw discussion later on the agenda.

### **Old Business**

#### **a. Facility for Election Office**

During the discussion with the county officials earlier in the meeting, the requirements for space were discussed. Ms. Cook asked the county officials that the Board be included in discussions regarding a new facility for the election office. No further discussion of the topic was held at this point.

#### **b. Biennial Meeting**

Ms. Cook distributed to the Board Members the draft agenda for the Biennial meeting scheduled for October 17, 2019 in Annapolis.

#### **c. Budget 2020**

Copies of the financial statement for the year through August were distributed. There were no questions regarding the reports from Ms. Cook or the county.

#### **d. Review Invoices**

Invoices received since the last Board Meeting were provided to the Board. Ms. Cook responded to questions from the Board Members.

e. County Bulletins

County Bulletins for August 30 and September 13 were distributed to the Board Members. Ms. Cook responded to questions from Board Members.

f. Bylaws review

At the previous meeting, Mr. Bulman presented and moved adoption of revisions to the bylaws. Mr. Cronan presented suggested changes to the proposed bylaw changes. The Board discussed each change offered by Mr. Cronan. In addition, Board Members and Ms. Cook offered suggested changes. After full discussion of the proposed changes, a consensus was reached by the Board and Mr. Cronan was asked to prepare a final version of amended bylaws reflecting the consensus at the next regular meeting of the Board for action.

**New Business**

No new business was on the agenda.

**Confirmation of Next Meeting**

Mr. Secrist noted that the next meeting of the Board will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, October 16, 2019.

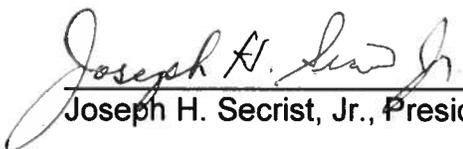
**Closed Session**

The Board did not meet in Closed Session

**Adjournment**

Mr. Black moved adjournment of the meeting. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM.

Attested,

  
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Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Richard B. Bulman, Secretary