

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
July 17, 2019

Present:

Board

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

Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on July 17, 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. He reported that Vice President Walter Black was attending a Convention in Ocean City and Board Attorney Phillip Cronan was in court this morning.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of June 18, 2019, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bulman 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. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook reported on the following:

- She met with the staff at St. Michaels Middle High School regarding polling place location. She concluded that remaining where the polls were located in the past in the gym is preferable to using the cafeteria.
- We have not yet received signed agreements from the Board of Education or the Easton Volunteer Fire Department to use their facilities for the presidential election cycle.
- Due to need to attend training in Annapolis and staff having an appointment out of the office, the office will close at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, July 23, 2019.
- Ms. Cook noted the requirement that at least one Board Member complete the Open Meeting training.
- Ms. Cook noted that the State Board asks that the Board act on its bylaws at this meeting or the next. Mr. Bulman questioned if we are the new Board and said he has other questions for our attorney. He suggested that in light of the absence of our attorney and Mr. Black, we defer discussion of the bylaws until next month. Ms. Cook asked the Board consider setting the start time for all meetings at 9:30 AM while discussing the bylaws.
- Ms. Cook reported on her attendance at a conference at the University of Pennsylvania. She was very pleased with the program. She met many election officials from other states and exchanged experiences and ideas with them.
- An updated election calendar has been prepared by the State Board. Copies were provided to the Board Members.

Board Attorney's Report

Mr. Cronan was unable to attend today's meeting.

Old Business

a. Budget FY2019

The Board discussed at length the expenses for the year that ended June 30, 2019, with concern that we were almost \$23,000 over budget for the year. While several expense categories were over budget, the largest was Voting Equipment Lease account which is primarily quarterly billing from the state but also includes billing for other items in addition to Equipment Leasing. The budget reflected the amount sent to us prior to the 2019 budget by the state. However, the actual billings exceeded the budget by over

\$66,000. In the future, Ms. Cook will propose we budget more than the estimate from the state prior to each budget year, especially in the general election process for any unknown variables that may occur.

b. Budget 2020

Given that we have not yet completed the first month of the new fiscal year, no financial information was available.

c. Review invoices

The Board reviewed the invoices and had no questions for Ms. Cook.

d. County Bulletins

Bulletins for June 21, 2019 and July 3, 2019 were provided in the Board packet in advance of the meeting. Ms. Cook responded to questions from Board Members.

e. Polling place update

ii. School Closing Update

Ms. Cook prepared a letter to the Board of Education thanking them for their action to close Easton High School and St. Michaels Middle High School on election day. It was prepared for signature by herself and all Board Members. Those present signed the letter.

i. Easton Firehouse update

Ms. Cook provided the Board with copies of a letter signed by the Secretary of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department dated July 10, 2019 in which the Department states it cannot accommodate our requests to use the Easton Firehouse for elections. Ms. Cook had met with Becky Caldwell, Sonny Jones, Rick Stacey and their IT person and believed there was agreement on using the Easton Firehouse for Early Voting during the upcoming Presidential Election cycle. This letter is not consistent with her expectations. Also, the letter is not clear regarding the use of the facility on Election Day. Ms. Cook said she will contact the State Board of Elections to seek guidance on the best way to handle this concern and then contact the county to make them aware of the financial impact this decision will have on our budget.

f. Facility for election office

There was no news regarding a future location for the Election Office and warehouse.

g. W-2 issues

Corrected W-2 forms have been sent to the Board Members and at least one election judge. No further action is expected.

h. Bylaw information from SBE

Ms. Cook provided the Board Members with draft form of Local Board Bylaws. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the bylaw consideration was deferred to the next meeting.

New Business

a. Audit report and response from 2018 Election cycle

Ms. Cook provided the Board her response to the post-election audit. The Board Members discussed it. Ms. Cook presented it for signature by Mr. Secrist and Mr. Black. Following signatures, it will be sent to the State Board of Elections.

Confirmation of next meeting

Ms. MacKinnon moved that the next meeting start at 9:30 AM rather than 7:00 PM. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Mr. Secrist then announced that the next meeting of the Board of Elections will be at 9:30 AM Wednesday, August 21, 2019.

Closed Session

The Board did not meet in Closed Session

Adjournment

Mr. Bulman moved adjournment of the meeting. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 AM.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,


Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President


Richard B. Bulman, Secretary