

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
November 18, 2105

Present:

Board

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

Staff

Patricia L. Mitchell, Election Director

Board Attorney

Philip Cronan

Guests

Mary-beth Goll
Eugene Goll
Michelle Holland, Director, Finance & Budget Management and
Procurement Division, State Board of Elections
Teresa Goode, Talbot County Board of Elections staff

A meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on November 18, 2015 in Conference Room # 2 at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m, noting that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes of September 16, 2015

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of September 16, 2015, a corrected copy of which had been forwarded to the Board Members by email in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bulman asked that the minutes be corrected to state the actual day of the meeting, that is, the 21st of October. He moved the approval of the minutes, as corrected; Mr. Hall seconded. The motion to approve the minutes, as corrected, was carried unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

There were no additions or amendments to the agenda. Mr. Black moved the approval of the agenda, and Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Secrist asked if the members of the public present wished to make any comments. There was no response.

Reports

Mrs. Mitchell provided her report in writing, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A. Mr. Bulman asked for additional information regarding the staff training. Mrs. Mitchell stated that it had to do with MDVOTERS software and with reactivating inactive voters. Mr. Hall asked when Mrs. Fishell would be restored to eligibility to access the State Board's data base. Mrs. Mitchell said that eligibility might be restored as soon as the coming Friday.

Mr. Bulman asked Mrs. Mitchell whether the Mock Election had been planned. Mrs. Mitchell responded that, as present, the State Board was testing the poll books. The training at this point consisted of feeding blank ballots into voting machines. The Mock Election might take place in December, but, as yet, no date had been set.

Mr. Bulman asked if any member of this Board could participate in the Mock Election. Mrs. Mitchell replied that they could.

Mr. Secrist asked if the city Elections which had been conducted by Rockville and College Park had provided any information. Mrs. Mitchell said that the main complaint was with those who are sight-impaired. Those people were accustomed to use a keyboard as in the past and required more instructions on the use of the new equipment.

Attorney's Report.

Mr. Cronan had no report.

Old Business

Early voting center

Mr. Secrist asked if everything that needed to be done with regard to the early voting site had been done. Mrs. Mitchell said that it had.

Review of Invoices.

Mr. Bulman asked to see a corrected budget print-out showing the correction of the erroneous monthly charges that had been included in the October report. Mrs. Mitchell explained that Mrs. Asche, at the County Finance Office, had only recently discovered the source of the error, but that the correction would be reflected in the next monthly budget report.

Mr. Secrist asked for information concerning the invoice for "Election Administration Reports." Mrs. Mitchell said that it was a monthly publication. Mr. Secrist asked if he could be provided with a copy of that publication. Mrs. Mitchell said she would do so.

Mr. Secrist asked if the voter calendar magnets had been received by the local office. Mrs. Mitchell replied that they had.

Budget review.

Mr. Bulman reiterated the need to amend the "contractual services" budget item to reflect Mr. Cronan's attendance at monthly meetings. Mr. Cronan had previously indicated that a reasonable amount might be \$5,775, instead of the amount of \$2,000 contained in the current budget. Mr. Secrist repeated the availability of \$1,000 for the budget item "meeting expense," which provided for payment to substitute members, whose role had been replaced by adding two regular members. Mr. Bulman moved that the projected amount be increased to \$6,000, an increase of \$4,000 over the current budget, and the assignment of the \$1,000 meeting expense to contractual services, meaning a net increase of \$3,000. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. Mr. Bulman asked Mrs. Mitchell to provide that request for a correction to the budget to the County Council.

New Voting equipment

Mrs. Mitchell reported that the State Board would provide training on the new equipment to its contractual training employees on November 30.

Website

Mr. Secrist presented Mrs. Mitchell with a sheet printed from the local board's webpage under "Election judge information" which read "Object not found!" Mrs. Mitchell said that she would give the information to the webmaster for correction.

Mr. Secrist asked that the webpage include information that the election of a member of the School Board from District 4 would be for the remaining two years, and not for a full term. Mrs. Mitchell said she would do so.

Office evaluation process.

Mr. Bulman reiterated the difficulty of responding to question numbers 11 through 14 on the performance evaluation sheet, relating to the staff's interaction with the public. Mrs. Holland said that the State had an interview form by which subordinates could evaluate the performance of their superior. She stated that she would look into whether such a questionnaire was available for the public's interaction with the Board office.

Mr. Bulman asked if Mrs. Mitchell could estimate how often members of the public had direct contact with the local office. Mrs. Mitchell said that she would look over the records for the last six months in an attempt to determine the answer to that question.

Election Director's job description.

No Board members had prepared and circulated a job description. It was agreed that the matter be tabled until the next meeting. Before then, Board members should attempt such a description

Long- and short-term goal objectives.

Mrs. Mitchell presented the Board with her draft of such goals, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit B. Mr. Hall inquired as to specific plans for community outreach. Mrs. Mitchell stated that she planned to make the new machines available to the public at 216 North Harrison Street several days a week between the hours of 10:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. During those periods, a member of the Board office staff would be present.

Mr. Hall asked how information regarding such access would be made public. Mrs. Mitchell stated that a flier would be prepared which would be placed at the Amish Market, and in supermarkets. Further, information could be included with the School Board's newsletter, and a notice published in the newspaper. Mr. Secrist noted that Easton Cable and Atlantic Broadband might be willing to carry the information as a public service announcement.

Responsibility for signing Election Director's time sheet.

On December 12, 2014, Mrs. Holland had circulated an email which stated: "Beginning **PPE 12/24/2014** the Board President, or designee within the Board needs

to sign the Director's timesheet. " In response to a question from Mr. Black, Mrs. Holland said that the email was merely a guideline and not a requirement. She said that we could designate someone else, such as a subordinate, to be the person who would sign the election director's time sheets. Mr. Secrist pointed out that doing so would place that subordinate in an awkward position.

The Board discussed what was done in other counties where there was no deputy election director, such as Caroline, Kent, and Somerset. Mrs. Holland said that a subordinate signed in Kent and Caroline Counties, but she did not know about Somerset County.

Mr. Black stated that, in the absence of a deputy election director, we had an imperfect situation that we would have to deal with in an imperfect manner.

Mr. Secrist suggested the purchase of a time clock. Mrs. Mitchell stated that the Board already had three time clocks, by which she meant date-and-time stamps used to indicate when documents were received. Mr. Hall asked Mr. Secrist to take a look at the date-and-time stamps at this Board's office to determine if they were suitable as time clocks and to report back at the December meeting.

Distribution of County Bulletins

Mr. Secrist reminded Mrs. Mitchell of his previous request that the twice-monthly County Bulletin be emailed to him upon receipt by Mrs. Mitchell, so as to avoid having so much to review just before a meeting. In November, both had been sent just before the November meeting. Mrs. Mitchell said that it had been received just before she sent it out. Mr. Secrist pointed out that the earlier bulletin had not been sent when received.

Mr. Hall asked whether the memory sticks mentioned in the County Bulletin as having to be returned are the same memory sticks that were purchased by the Board, as shown in this month's invoices. Mrs. Mitchell said that they were not; the memory sticks purchased by this Board are used to transfer information between servers, because the servers are not networked.

Mr. Secrist inquired as to what was involved in completing "acceptance testing." Mrs. Mitchell stated that the phrase referred to testing the voting machines. Mr. Secrist also asked if the "Accessible Voting in Maryland" brochures had been received. Mrs. Mitchell stated that they had been received.

Mrs. Mitchell noted that the staff members participate in a fifteen minute review, monthly, on computer security issues.

New Business

The president announced that the next meeting was scheduled for December 16. Mrs. Mitchell stated that she would be undergoing surgery that day and could not be present, then or for a number of days following. Mrs. MacKinnon stated that she would be unavailable from December 5 through December 12. After a discussion of other possible dates, the Board rescheduled the December meeting for Wednesday, December 9, 2015 at 9:30 a.m.

Upon motion by Mr. Bulman, seconded by Mr. Hall, and duly approved by the Board, the Board entered into closed session at 8:16 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue. A copy of Mr. Secrist's statement regarding the purpose of the closed session, the statutory authority for closing the meeting and the listing of topics to be discussed is attached hereto. The Board adjourned its closed session at 9:06 p.m.

Mr. Black announced that he had attended the Kennedy-King Dinner on October 19, 2015.

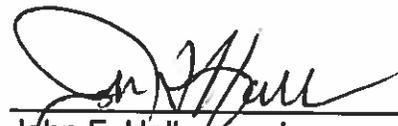
Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Attested,



Joseph H. Secrist, President

Respectfully submitted,



John F. Hall, recorder

NVSR Update

Meetings are still being held every week for instruction and inquiries to where the state is to date with the new system. It is getting easier to understand all the different parts of this voting system. There have been afternoon call in meetings just like the morning meetings.

Voter Registration

Attached is a copy of the Monthly Statistical Report

Dalley Data Entry

The office staff has completed their daily data entry each day. Each Tuesday one staff member goes to MVA and picks up the weekly work that they have and mails it to the appropriate county.

Critical Oversight Report

For the month of October, I audited Kent County. This month there was a new format of doing the critical oversight report. We are now exporting them into Excel.

ERIC Reports

Eric Reports for October have not been sent out. There seems to have been a problem and SBE will send them when the problem is fixed.

Meetings

Staff Trainings - Training has been held for the entire office. Mary Jo Waite and Roger Stitt came to the office and gave out some "How To" documents. Each of us had questions and they were answered. After the training, it was suggested that when each of us have issues in MDVoters to copy each other on the email to SBE. Everyone thought this would keep each on the same level. This is going to be ongoing until the next audit is done.

Mock Election

We have participated in the Mock Election. Not everything went according to plan, however issues that were found have been corrected and a new mock election is going to take place in early December. At this time we will be testing with the pollbooks. Will keep everyone updated on the exact dates.

EXH. A



TALBOT COUNTY ELECTION BOARD

142 N. HARRISON STREET

P.O. BOX 353

EASTON, MD 21601

PHONE: 410-770-8099 ♦ FAX: 410-770-8078

November 10, 2015

Long and Short Term Objectives

Objective: The Talbot County Board of Elections provides election services to County citizens in order to ensure registered voters are able to vote in accordance with Federal, State, County Election Laws and Regulations.

Short Term Objectives:

- Poll site identification
- Poll site operational management (during the early voting period/on election days)
- Voter registration, records management, and informational updates
- Voting equipment maintenance
- Candidate filing
- Community outreach
- Implementation of a new voting system for the 2016 Presidential Election
- Reduce the number of errors in data entry of voter registration records by training data entry clerks on registration procedures/usage of registration database

Long Term Objectives

- Utilize public service announcements, radio, television and print media to provide information to citizens regarding election, voter registration, online voter registration, voting equipment, and early voting
- Conduct same-day voter registration during early voting
- Train and support volunteers (both individuals/organizations) to host voter registration outreach events in the county
- Reduce the wait time for voters on Election Day and during Early voting by increasing the number of judges, polling places, and equipment disseminated to polling places and providing training to judges

ExH B

- Adjust the allocation of voting equipment and the number of election judges at polling places based on the size of historical voter turnout level of polling places
- Secure larger early voting sites and polling places that have space to set up additional equipment/can comfortably host a high number of voters during peak wait times

November 10, 2015

The Objectives for Talbot County Board of Elections Staff

Goal: To provide election services to citizens to ensure all eligible citizens have an opportunity to vote in a primary or general election.

Objective:

- Decrease the error rate found during the process of proofing the data entry transactions completed for all voter registration transactions.
- To use time efficiently and wisely
- Most importantly staff must work together as a team

Analysis:

- All agency staff will be required to participate in the training and outreach events for the new voting system. Additionally, all agency staff will be required to participate in the implementation of same day registration which will occur during the early voting period. This may impact further short term improvements in reducing the error rate.
- Hold weekly staff meetings to keep each other informed on day to day activity.
- Being able to compliment staff on the job well done.