

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
December 21, 2016

Present:

Board

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

Staff

Teresa Goode

Attorney

Philip T. Cronan

State Board of Elections

Michelle Holland, Director, Finance & Budget Management and
Procurement Division (who left the meeting at 11:20 a.m.)

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on December 21, 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 December 12, 2016

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of December 12, 2016, a copy of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bulman asked that a correction be made at the bottom of page 4 by the deletion of the surplus word "of" in the first line of the first paragraph. Upon motion duly made (Mr. Bulman) and seconded (Mr. Black), the minutes, as amended, were approved unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

Mr. Secrist asked if there were any requests for changes to the agenda. Ms. MacKinnon asked that the wording of the purpose of the Closed Session be expanded to fully state that the topic to be discussed was the performance of a contractual employee. Upon

motion duly made (Mr. Hall) and seconded (Ms. MacKinnon), the agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

December 12, 2016 Closed Meeting Statement

Mr. Secrist announced that, since the Closed Meeting of December 12, 2016, at which all members as well as Ms. Sylvia Brown of the office of the State Board of Elections, were present, Ms. Mitchell had voluntarily resigned, in accordance with Maryland law and regulations. Such voluntary resignation superseded the action taken by the Board at the December 12, 2012 closed meeting. Mr. Cronan added that it was not necessary to hold a closed session to acknowledge the resignation.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Goode said that she had contacted Parker Durham of the County's Information Technology department, requesting that the local election Board Office be added to the County's voice mail system.

She provided the Board with a copy of emails from the State Board and from the Circuit Court assuring the canvass results had been appropriately filed.

She said that two more ballots had been received after the deadline. Ms. MacKinnon suggested that this Board delegate the duty of refusing to accept such ballots to the staff. She asked Mr. Cronan to research whether such duty might be delegated.

Mr. Secrist suggested that the ballots received after the deadline be accumulated for several months, thus obviating the need for adjourning and reconvening as a Board of Canvassers at every meeting of the Board.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Cronan had nothing further to report.

Selection of Election Director

Ms. Holland explained the process to be following in recruiting a replacement Election Director. That process includes:

- a. Requesting Ms. Sylvia Brown to publish a notice of the job opening;

- b. Selection of a panel to interview candidates;
- c. Preparation of questions to be submitted by the panel to the candidates;
- d. Submission of those questions to Erin Perrone, Director, Election Management and Reform, State Board of Elections;
- e. Receipt and review of the panel's ranking of the candidates.

Ms. Holland stated that the panel must be diversely composed. She recommended that the panel be no larger than three and that one panel member be the election director of a county of comparable size. She said that any potential candidate should be excluded from the room where questions were being composed, in order to prevent such person from gaining an unfair advantage from such advance knowledge. Usually, all members of the Board would be able to attend the interviews, although only the panel would ask questions.

She further assured the Board that (a) Ms. Sylvia Brown would be available to furnish guidance; (b) that all board members would participate in preparing the interview questions and the review of questions suggested by the State Board; (c) although the panel would make a recommendation, the final decision selecting from among the candidates would be made by the full board.

Mr. Bulman asked for a time line, specifically, for the preparation of questions. Ms. Holland stated that Ms. Brown would provide a time line once she had received a request to begin advertising for the job. Ms. Holland said that it was not necessary to prepare the questions at this meeting.

Mr. Bulman further asked if the position could be filled only by people currently employed by the State. Ms. Holland recommended that the position be open to all. Mr. Bulman then moved that recruitment be open to all people. Mr. Secrist asked that the motion be amended to require that the notice of job opening be published in a local paper. Mr. Bulman agreed. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion, as amended, which carried unanimously.

Job Description Update

The Board reviewed the "Position Description" for the job of Election Director I. Mr. Black pointed out that the document nowhere explicitly stated that the Election Director's duty of conducting an election. After discussion, the consensus of the Board was to change the wording of Item 1, at the top of page 2, to include the following:

The Election Director plans, organizes, and implement actions necessary to conduct elections within Talbot County (except for municipal elections), consistent with State law and Board policies;

Mr. Bulman noted that the State form, in Item 2 on page 2, calls for a weighting of the importance of each duty, but that the current document does not contain that weighting. Following discussion of the weight of each listed duty, Mr. Bulman moved, and Mr. Black seconded, that the first duty, beginning "Manages, supervises" *etc.*, be assigned a weight of 50%, and that the other five duties, beginning (a) "Demonstrates the ability to analyze," *etc.*; (b) "Asserts a high level" *etc.*; (c) "Demonstrates the ability to originate" *etc.*; (d) "Directs the preparation" *etc.*; and (e) "Provides clear and concise" *etc.* each be assigned a weight of 10%. The motion carried unanimously.

Following discussion, Mr. Bulman moved, Mr. Hall seconded, and the Board unanimously agreed, that, on page 5, the section beginning "Knowledge of Computers and software programs," *etc.*, should include an additional statement following the list of equipment to read as follows:

Examples of software include internet software utilized by the State Board; software utilized to make updates to the Board's website; the entire Microsoft Office suite; Google Sheets; and Google Docs.

Old Business

Budget 2017-2018.

Mr. Secrist reminded the Board that Ms. Lane of the County Finance Office had said that the deadline for submitting a proposed budget was February 10, 2017. The Board members were provided with a copy of Mr. Hall's proposed changes to the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017. Mr. Secrist had obtained the County report of expenses through November 30, 2016. Since the expense for telephone included an amount much higher than budgeted, Ms. Goode said that she would review the telephone invoices in search of an explanation.

Ms. Goode said that the total cost of compensation for election judges was \$38,450, which should be a reasonable projection for that cost in the Primary Election to be conducted in 2018 before the close of the upcoming fiscal year.

Election Judges

Mr. Bulman said one person who did not work as election judge had been paid, while another who had worked had not been paid. Ms. Goode said that the time sheets were still in the possession of Ms. Mitchell, as was a State-provided laptop computer.

The Board reviewed a document entitled "Become an Election Judge" to review the levels of compensation for election judges. A discussion regarding whether provisional judges should be paid as much as chief judges, and whether stand-by judges should receive compensation in addition to the pay received for attending training and whether judges for early voting should receive the same pay as those who work on Election Day. Following discussion, Mr. Bulman moved that the per-diem pay

for election judges, for both those serving during early voting and those serving on Election Day, should be as follows:

Chief judges	\$300.
Provisional judges	\$275.
Regular judges	\$250.
Standby judges	\$ 25. (in addition to compensation for training)

Training: \$25.00 for each of the Chief Judges, Provisional Judges, Regular Judges and Standby judges.

Such change requires an adjustment of the election cost.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

No responses had been received since the last meeting.

Status of Voting Equipment

Ms. Goode reported that the machines had not yet been released to the lessor.

New Business

Polling Place evaluations

Ms. Goode distributed the completed polling place evaluations. Mr. Black stated that the polling-place workers seemed to be enthusiastic and upbeat to be participating. Mr. Secrist noted Mr. Black's earlier concern regarding inadequate lighting at Easton High School and suggested renting portable lighting.

Mr. Bulman noted the lack of signs at Oxford Community Center and suggested that, in the future, a checklist of the necessary signs and equipment be prepared and used to verify that the package provided to each polling site be complete.

Mr. Hall repeated his request that, since the 100' foot "No Electioneering" sign requirement cannot be met, because the property was not wide enough to do so, the requirement be waived in favor of posting the sign at the edge of the property of the polling site, there being no satisfactory alternative site in that precinct.

Mr. Secrist asked Ms. Goode to forward the evaluations to the State Board before the expiration of the time for doing so.

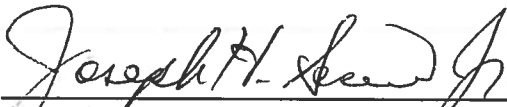
Upon motion by Mr. Bulman, seconded by Mr. Black, which was unanimously approved, the Board entered into Closed Session at 11:58 a.m., for the purpose of discussing

a personnel matter. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 12:28 p.m. Mr. Secrist announced that the action taken in Closed Session was the scheduling of a special meeting on either January 4 or January 11, 2016, depending upon the availability of Ms. Sylvia Brown, to discuss a personnel matter.

Upon motion to adjourn by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Black, and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph H. Secrist, Jr. President



John F. Hall, Secretary