

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
January 18, 2017

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, Acting Election Director

State Board of Elections

Sylvia Brown, Director, Personnel Services Division
Desvin Gabbidon, Regional Manager, Field Support Division

Public

Walter Johnson
Kristina Herold
Bonna L. Nelson
Unidentified late arrival and early departure

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on January 18, 2017 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 January 4, 2016

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the special meeting of January 4, 2017, a copy of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Upon motion duly made (Mr. Bulman) and seconded (Ms. MacKinnon), the minutes were approved unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Mr. Bulman), the agenda was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Goode noted that a report of the total number of voters, broken down by precincts, was included as Attachment 7 to the materials she had distributed to Board members. She provided Mr. Secrist with an envelope which was addressed to Ms. Mitchell, containing the letter of December 15, 2016, which had been returned as non-deliverable. In response to a question by Mr. Black, she stated that the mailing address was "4230 Main Street, Trappe, MD." She reported that Regina Carpenter had begun work on January 11 as a contractual employee. Ms. Carpenter briefly joined the meeting in order to be introduced.

In response to a question by Mr. Bulman, Ms. Goode stated that Ms. Carpenter had been assigned to "close out" the voting equipment, and to organize items to be transferred to the Board's warehouse at Glebe Road and the Easton Bypass. Further, she was receiving training on MDVOTE computer software.

Board Attorney's Report

The distributed materials included Mr. Cronan's letter of January 16, 2016, giving his opinion that the Board could not delegate the duty of rejecting ballots which had been received after the deadline for submission. Mr. Bulman said that he had sent a follow-up question to Mr. Cronan, asking whether such ballots must be ruled on at the first meeting which followed receipt of such ballots or whether the Board could defer action in order to avoid having to repeatedly convene meetings of the Board of Canvassers. Mr. Hall asked how the confidentiality of such ballots would be preserved. Ms. Goode responded that any such ballots would be locked in her desk.

Old Business

Invoices

Ms. Goode explained that the delay in payment of the cost of shredding resulted from the County's having substituted one method of payment for another.

Budget 2017-2018.

Mr. Hall said that Mr. Secrist had provided him with the County's financial report through December 31, 2016. Nothing in that report gave him reason to change his proposed budget presented at the December 21 meeting.

He said that he had calculated the cost of election judges based on the proposed pay adopted by this Board at that December meeting. He had first based his estimate on the number of judges contained on the list which Ms. Mitchell provided this Board on October 18, 2016. However, Mr. Secrist had performed the same calculation based on a higher number of judges and had arrived at a figure just under \$42,000. Mr. Secrist's calculation was distributed to the Board.

Ms. MacKinnon asked if there were any figures available which would show what percentage of an increase in voters might be anticipated, over the last year. Mr. Secrist pointed out that the election which would be held in the fiscal year under consideration would be a primary election. He observed that the voter turnout was always lower than in the General Election, especially since unaffiliated voters would not be eligible to vote. He stated that his calculation based on the number of judges which he felt would be needed for a general election.

Mr. Hall said that he felt the Board should ask for a figure in excess of \$42,000 to provide for the unexpected. He therefore suggested \$43,500. Because his December projection had included a figure of \$46,000 for election judges, that would result in a decrease of \$1,500.

Ms. MacKinnon moved that an additional line item for staff training be included in the amount of \$1,500, to be used on an as-needed basis. Mr. Hall seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Upon Motion duly made (Mr. Bulman) and seconded (Mr. Black), the Board unanimously approved a budget request of \$423,006, containing those details contained in the *pro forma* budget prepared by Mr. Hall, adjusted as referred to above, by the addition of \$1,500 in staff training costs and the \$1,500 decrease in the proposed judges' pay.

Voting Equipment Status

Mr. Secrist suggested that one voting machine remain at the Board office, for use in demonstrating its use to the public. Mr. Gabbidon stated that some other counties held back one machine from storage for just such purposes.

Website

Ms. Goode reported that the link to the State Board's webpage had been restored.

New Business

2017 Maryland Association of Election Officials' Meeting

Mr. Secrist announced that the meeting dates were June 6 through 9, 2017.

Election Director Recruitment

At Ms. MacKinnon's suggestion, Mr. Secrist announced to those members of the public present that Ms. Mitchell had resigned effective December 15, 2016; that Ms. Goode had been named acting Election Director; that Mr. Bauer's contract had been terminated; and that Ms. Regina Carpenter had been employed as contractual employee, beginning January 11, 2017.

Ms. Brown announced that the position was being advertised on the State Board's website and notice had been published in the Star-Democrat. She stated that so far, twelve applications had been. While the deadline for submitting an application was January 26, 2017, likely it would take several days for her office to determine which of the candidates were among the most qualified.

She explained that there was no upper limit on the number of candidates who might be designated as most qualified. However, this Board is obligated to interview at least five candidates.

The questions which this Board selected to be submitted to the candidates were now being examined for suitability under equal employment opportunity standards. The member of the panel which would be a currently serving election director of another county would not be selected until it was known whether any such person had applied for the position.

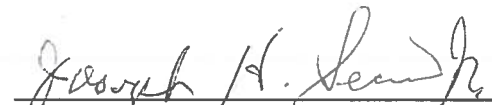
The Board and Ms. Brown then discussed when they might meet in a special meeting to review what must be done to review the State's list of the most qualified candidates. February 7, 2017 was the consensus date selected, it being understood that Ms. Brown's official duties might prevent her from being available on that date. It was agreed that Mr. Secrist would notify the Board of the actual date of such special meeting.

Mr. Secrist announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on February 15, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Upon motion to adjourn by Mr. Black, seconded by Mr. Bulman, and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President



John F. Hall, Secretary