

# Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
May 17, 2017

## Present:

### Board

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

### Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

### State Board of Elections

Desvin Gabbidon, Regional Manager, Field Support Division

### Public

Judith Harrard  
Janet Frieberg  
Steven Frieberg  
Teresa Goode

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on May 17, 2017 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

## Approval of Minutes of April 19, 2017

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of April 19, 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 (Mr. Black), the minutes for April 19, 2017 were approved unanimously.

## Addition/Changes to the Agenda

Mr. Bulman asked that the agenda be amended to include a discussion of the Election Audit. Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Mr. Bulman), the agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously. Mr. Bulman further asked about the readiness of a report setting forth the number of election judges employed during the last election. Ms. Cook explained that the report was not yet available, but that she expected it to be ready in time for the June meeting.

## **Public Comment**

Mr. Secrist asked if there were any public comments. Mrs. Harrard stated that, in her experience with the League of Women Voters, the usual practice was to hold a debriefing of the election judges following an election. Mr. Secrist responded that a debriefing of the chief judges was the usual practice, but that none was done following the last General Election due to the illness of the Election Director.

## **Election Director's Report**

Ms. Cook reiterated the procedure for checking in at the hotel at the June meeting of the Maryland Association of Election Officials, explaining that the lodging bill was paid. However, Board Members should anticipate that the hotel would ask each Board Member to provide a credit card to cover charges not included in the lodging fee.

She explained that the Board packet included a document entitled "Equipment Information for Insurance" which listed all of the voting equipment assigned to Talbot County that was presented to the County for insurance purposes. The Board packet also included a report of precinct voter counts for the 2016 general election.

She discussed several legislative bills affecting the conduct of elections which had been passed which were mentioned in a document entitled "The 90 Day Report." One such change allows sixteen-year-old registered voters to serve as election judges. Another bill repealed a provision in the current law which formerly required a voter who wishes to register a change of address during early voting to show proof of residency. Neither bill had been signed by the Governor by the time of the meeting. Another legislative bill imposed new notice requirements for certain actions by both the State Election Board and local Election Boards. SBE will provide guidance.

Ms. Cook reported that a security system had been installed in the Board's warehouse, and will be activated as soon as the equipment is moved to the new space on May 22. In response to a question, she stated that the Easton Police Department would respond to any alarm which might be triggered, after allowing for a short time for the staff to respond if the signal were triggered unintentionally. She further reported that the T-1 telephone line had been moved and installed in the new warehouse space. She has received a cell telephone.

She reported that she intended to purchase shelving for the warehouse space to permit materials to be stored so as to be more readily accessible. She estimated a cost of approximately \$850.00, which was within the current year's fiscal budget.

Mr. Black asked if Ms. Cook had any information regarding the period of time that the warehouse would be available. Ms. Cook responded that it was her understanding that, at this point, the building will be available for ten years.

She reported that the Board had a "postage due" account with the United States Postal Service, but did not yet have a "business reply mailing account." She had been given differing reports of the cost of such an account and was awaiting clarification to determine if the anticipated savings would be available.

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

Mr. Cronan was absent.

### **Old Business**

#### Invoices

There were no questions or comments.

#### Budget 2016-17

While the funds available for salaries have not been used, the amount consumed for overtime is in excess of the amount provided for in the budget. Ms. Cook stated that Ms. Goode, while manning the office by herself, had worked overtime which had been approved by the State Board of Elections. Mr. Secrist commented that overtime should be avoided.

Mr. Bulman moved that expenditures for three budget line items which had been exceeded, namely, overtime (Line number 5020); office supplies (Line number 5160; and part-time salaries (Line number 5005) be approved. Mr. Black seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Budget 2017-2018.

There were no questions or comments.

#### County Bulletin

The Board made no remarks concerning the content of County Bulletin. Customer Satisfaction Survey

A copy of a recently-submitted "customer satisfaction survey" in which the voter gave Ms. Goode the highest rating throughout was distributed to the Board members.

#### Voting Equipment Status

Ms. Cook reported that all required tasks had been completed. Mr. Secrist asked for an explanation of the recent approval by the Board of Public Works of an expense

for electronic poll books. Mr. Gabbidon responded that the use of such equipment was being given a trial in only two counties, and that Talbot County was not affected.

June 7-8 MAEO Meeting.

Ms. Cook said that she would attempt to secure a table for the members at the MAEO meeting.

Mandatory October MAEO meeting.

No new information was reported.

Polling Place facility agreement

Ms. Cook presented two such agreements and recommended the agreement used by Worcester County. The Board agreed to study each agreement in detail for discussion at the next meeting. It was noted that Mr. Cronan would be asked to review the Board's proposal. Mr. Black asked whether the County or the host was responsible for premises liability insurance. Ms. Cook said that she would inquire of the County.

Petty Cash for the Election Office

Ms. Cook presented a proposed Petty Cash Policy to the Board in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A. She stated that Ms. Lane at the County Finance Office had been informed of the proposed change. She proposed that the policy become effective on July 1, at the beginning of fiscal year 2018. Mr. Black asked whether \$100.00 was an adequate amount, to which Ms. Cook responded in the affirmative at this time. Mr. Black moved that the Petty Cash Policy be approved; Mr. Bulman seconded; the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Cook will submit the information to the County for review.

## **New Business**

Full-time position

Ms. Cook reported that she was working with Sylvia Brown of the State Election Board regarding notice of an opening for employment for a third, full-time employee who would serve as Data Application Specialist II.

Voting Sites

Ms. Cook said that she and Mr. Gabbidon had visited the Easton Volunteer Fire Department facility and the Talbot Community Center. She found that only the small

room at the Community Center would be available for the primary election. She had some concerns about the use of the fire hall as the Early Voting site, but that it could be addressed, if needed. She had been told by the new owners of Elliott-Wilson Trucking that parking area which adjoins the Fire Hall would be available for continued use for Early Voting. Other possible sites were mentioned.

Mr. Black noted the school traffic congestion at the St. Mark's UMC site. He further suggested that perhaps a press release explaining the difficulties in finding a satisfactory site might appeal to a business owner's sense of civic duty.

(The members of the public left the meeting at 8:10 p.m.)

#### Election Audit.

Ms. Cook stated that the State Board of Elections understood that she was not the Election Director at the time of the Primary or General Election, and was satisfied with her representation that the items mentioned in the Election Audit would be properly addressed in the future. Mr. Bulman observed that the Election Audit recognized that Ms. Cook was not responsible for the matters noted therein for correction.

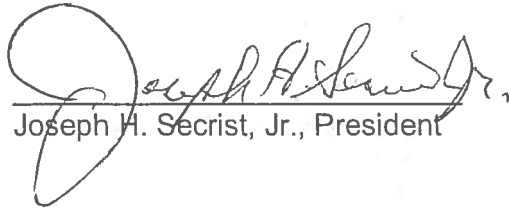
Mr. Secrist questioned why the Election Audit for the primary election had been delayed until after the General Election. Mr. Gabbidon responded that the usual practice was to perform the audit separately for each election. However, for the most recent primary and general election, the audit had been combined for both elections as a matter of convenience.

Ms. Cook explained that the term "ERM" mentioned in the Audit is the election reporting program used for different reports, including the verification that a voter did not double-vote. In response to a question from Mr. Secrist, Ms. Cook described Ballot Accounting Training as training given to election judges regarding their responsibility to complete the ballot accounting form showing the number of ballots received, the number of ballots used, and the number of spoiled ballots during the election. Ms. Cook said that she intends to emphasize that requirement in training election judges.

Mr. Secrist announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on June 21, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

Upon motion to adjourn by Mr. Black, seconded by Mr. Bulman, and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Attested,

  
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Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,

  
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John F. Hall, Secretary