

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
July 19, 2017

Present:

Board

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

Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

Board Attorney

Philip T. Cronan

State Board of Elections

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

Public

Sarah Sayre
Philip Sayre

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on July 19, 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 June 21, 2017

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of June 21, a copy of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Ms. MacKinnon), the minutes for June 21 were approved unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

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

Public Comment

No comments were received from the public.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook stated that, after soliciting bids for a lock to the storage room in which the voting equipment is stored in the warehouse, she purchased a simple padlock. She reported that she had replaced the copier with a model that was faster and could be used to prepare booklets. She stated that the cost was an extra \$10.00 per month. Regarding a replacement chair for Ms. Goode, Ms. Cooke said that, under the direction of the State Election Board HR Department, Ms. Sylvia Brown said that an ergonomic study plus a more detailed medical report would be required by the State Department of Budget and Management before the purchase would be approved.

Ms. Cooke directed the Board members' attention to the material in the meeting packet which addressed the new legislation regarding the Open Meetings Act, for which online training was available. Mr. Cronan recommended that each member take the training so that the absence of the designated member would not prevent compliance with the Act.

She explained that she was a member of the Election Judge Workgroup, a committee of the State Election Board. She said that the workgroup was currently working on a revision of the forms to be completed by election judges to make them more "user-friendly," and on revisions of the election judges' manual. Mr. Secrist asked if there were a separate manual for chief and provisional judges. Ms. Cook replied that there were separate chapters within the manual applicable to chief and provisional judges.

Old Business

Ms. Cook recommended that the Early Voting Site remain at the building occupied by the Easton Volunteer Fire Department.

Mr. Secrist noted the requirement that an alternate site for Early Voting be approved and said that he favored the Community Center, acknowledging the problem of directing traffic across the eastbound-lane, and the inability to access that voting site by walking. Ms. MacKinnon agreed that the traffic problem made the Community Center less than ideal. She reiterated her position that, on Election Day, the public schools should be closed. The Board then discussed other venues as the alternate Early Voting site, noting problems posed by each site. The library being closed on Sundays eliminated it. St. Mark's UMC operated a day-care, and traffic from the middle school was a problem at that site. Mr. Black suggested that the public be notified of the Board's need for such alternate site, in the hopes of a member of the public might have, or know of, a site which could be used. In response to a question from the Board, Mrs. Cook responded that the deadline for submitting an alternate Early Voting site to the State Board was December 26, 2017, according to the Election Calendar.

Ms. Cook asked that the Board consider compensation of the new full-time employee in Closed Session.

As to the new legislation regarding the changes in the requirements that meetings be open to the public, Ms. Cook stated that the effective date was July 1, 2017, but that the deadline for a designated member to complete the online training was October 1, 2017.

New Business

Ms. Cook stated that she planned to purchase a set of rolling shelves plus stand-alone shelving for storage of election materials. She anticipated that the cost would be between \$700 and \$800. She would postpone the purchase of shirts identifying staff and board members until August. Mr. Bulman moved, and Mr. Hall, seconded, that purchase of the shelves be approved. Mr. Bulman asked if there were a line in the budget to which such purchase could be assigned. Ms. Cook said that she would discuss such assignment with Angela Lane at the County Finance Office. The motion carried unanimously.


Mr. Secrist announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on August 16, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. He then noted the need to meet in closed session to complete the performance evaluation and to discuss the terms of employment of the new employee.

Ms. MacKinnon objected to the consideration of the new employee in closed session, pointing out that the agenda, which was published to inform the public as to what issues would be covered in closed session, did not mention discussion of the new employee. After consultation with Mr. Cronan, Mr. Hall moved, and Mr. Bulman seconded, that the agenda be amended to add the discussion of the new employee to the subjects to be discussed in closed session. The vote carried by four votes, with Ms. MacKinnon in opposition.

Upon motion duly made (Mr. Black) and seconded (Mr. Bulman), the Board went into closed session at 10:30 a.m. A copy of the "Written Statement for Closing a Meeting under the Open Meetings Act is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Board resumed its open meeting at 11:05 a.m. Mr. Secrist announced that, during Closed Session, the Board had completed the performance evaluation and had discussed the terms of employment of the new employee, and had voted to support Ms. Cook in her proposal.

Upon motion to adjourn by Mr. Black, seconded by Ms. MacKinnon, and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Attested,


Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,


John F. Hall, Secretary