

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
August 16, 2017

Present:

Board

Joseph H. Secrist, President (R)
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

Desvin Gabbidon, Regional Manager, Field Support Division

Public

Walter Johnson
Susan Harrald

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on August 16, 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 July 19, 2017

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

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

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

Public Comment

Ms. Harrald asked what procedures were used to remove deceased voters and residence who had left the State from the list of eligible voters. Ms. Cook described several procedures: (1) an inactive voter who has not responded to any written communication "confirmation mail", will be cancelled if that voter does not vote or try to vote in the next two federal election cycles; (2) the local boards regularly receive information from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene concerning those who are deceased; and (3) through Maryland's participation in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)¹ and, (4) when a voter notifies the local board in writing of the changes to their registration.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook explained her plan to obtain "golf" style shirts bearing the logo of Talbot County, in the purple of the Talbot County seal, for staff and Board members when attending statewide functions. as well as conducting canvasses at election time. She presented a sample shirt to the Board. She asked the Board members to provide their shirt sizes.

Ms. Cook has let the board know there are several purchases that must be made by the Election office that were not figured into the current budget. She would like to present the needs to the County Manager once there has been a complete list so that there will not be a need to go back a second time. She will have the information to present to the board at the September meeting.

She stated that, to improve staff productivity and ability to readily communicate with the office and other local boards, she would like for the warehouse space to have internet connection, and a telephone land line. The reason for both of these is cell phone reception does not work for Regina who is at the warehouse quite often and it would make it more efficient for her to communicate with other local boards as the election gets closer with both means. It is also important for Regina's security to have a mode of communication that will be more reliable. It will also allow the election judges to return everything to one location and for the staff to get the required information to SBE on election night. Ms. Cook will reach out to the county for assistance in this matter of connecting these two lines. Mr. Gabbidon discussed the process of securing the transmission of voting results through a dedicated "T-1" line connection.

¹ A multi-state partnership under which states can compare official data on eligible voters—such as voter and motor vehicle registrations, U.S. Postal Service addresses, and Social Security death records—to keep voter rolls more complete and up to date.
<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/election-initiatives/about/upgrading-voter-registration/eric> (E)

Ms. MacKinnon and Mr. Bulman requested more information about the current security process for the warehouse since it is a wireless system. Ms. Cook said that she would reach out to Terrapin Security for more clarification. She did say that the system works very well.

In response to a question by Mr. Secrist, she stated that access to the warehouse was only through an overhead "bay" door into an area which provided parking. That parking area is just outside the warehouse space. Ms. Cook would like for the board to go to the warehouse following a future board meeting.

Mr. Secrist also inquired about the amount of time which staff spent at the warehouse. Ms. Cook responded that, currently, Regina Carpenter is conducting the mandatory maintenance schedule on all the equipment as well as setting up the supply area for the election judges' supplies. She will have less time in the warehouse for a short while and then return as the election gets closer.

She reported that the computer assigned to Regina Carpenter had ceased functioning and that the State Board is in the process of purchasing a new computer. A new computer has been purchased in FY2017 for Teresa Goode.

She stated that the petty cash system was funded and in operation. She is in the process of requesting a VISA purchase card.

Mr. Secrist asked about the response to letters to returning election judges. Ms. Cook stated that a little over one-half of those contacted had responded. Ms. Goode is in the process of entering those returning judges' names into MDVOTERS. Such judges are currently being reassigned to the polling place where each had previously worked, according to their responses. Once all election judge positions had been filed, Ms. Cook will review the polling place assignments to see if adjustments were needed. Mr. Secrist asked that the election judge brochure, letter and interest form be made available to the Board members for distribution to those who might be interested in serving as election judges.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Cronan had no report.

Old Business

Ms. Cook brought to the board's attention the July budget report sent by the county, in which the contractual payroll had been included in the line item for part time employees. She pointed out there is no money in that line item. Because the contractual employee was being utilized as a full-time position, she had requested the county take it from the permanent employee line item. Further, salary expenses from FY2017 had been placed in FY2018 budget. She is reaching out to the county to try to get those funds returned to the FY2017 budget.

Ms. Cook stated that she had received the certifications of qualification by two board members to serve as the "open meeting" designee. Mr. Hall suggested that she forward those immediately.

She noted that Ms. Carpenter had begun work as a full-time employee on August 2.

As yet, the agenda for the required October 23, 2017 state-wide meeting at the Double Tree Inn in Annapolis, has not been finalized. It will be forwarded to the board members as soon as it is received from SBE

New Business

Ms. Cook discussed the result of her polling site reviews and noted that several of the facilities will need to have to take measures to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. A concern was the cost of mats that are placed in an unpaved parking area to assist the voter with a wheelchair easier access. The mat, made of metal mesh, is quite costly. She noted not only the expense of such mats, but the difficulty of handling bulky, weighty objects, likely requiring the hiring of people for that purpose. She was working with Erin Perrone, who, serves as ADA compliance officer, to address the cost.

Regarding the expense of the mats, Ms. MacKinnon asked if they could not be used repeatedly. Ms. Cook said that they could, but the expense of installing and retrieving them would be ongoing.

Ms. MacKinnon asked for an explanation of the comment regarding exterior doors. Ms. Cook responded that, in order to be ADA compliant, the door must have a lever rather than a conventional knob.

In response to a question, Ms. Cook explained that the pavement cutout for wheelchair accessibility at Easton High School was not located in an area which would be available to the voters for the general election. As a result, a temporary ramp would have to be installed to accommodate voters. Ms. MacKinnon and Mr. Secrist suggested that the lack of availability of the cafeteria for the General Election, and the greater expense of gaining access to the auditorium, should be brought to the attention of the School Board, in support of a request that the schools be closed on Election Day.

Ms. Cook displayed the Board's webpage and discussed her proposed improvements. She requested that the Board provide her with any suggestions for other improvements, noting that hers would not be made until Ms. Goode returned from vacation.

Ms. Harrad left the meeting at 8:20 p.m.


Mr. Secrist announced that the next meeting would be September 20, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. Ms. MacKinnon and Mr. Bulman each noted that they would not be able to attend.

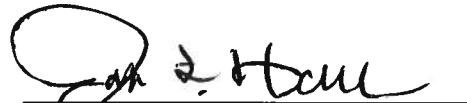
Mr. Bulman disclosed that he had contributed \$50.00 to the Hogan re-election campaign.

Upon motion to adjourn by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Bulman, and approved unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Attested,

Respectfully submitted,


Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President


John F. Hall, Secretary