

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
January 24, 2018

Present:

Board

Joseph H. Secrist, President	(R)
Walter W. Black, Jr.	(D)
Richard B. Bulman	(R)
Wadella Thomas	(R)
Susan MacKinnon	(D)

Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

State Board of Elections

Michelle Holland, SBE Director Finance & Budget Management and
Procurement Division

Public

Chris Koch
Mark Cohoon
Scott Bachman

(Prior to the opening of the meeting, Wadella Thomas presented her appointment certificate that she received from the Clerk of the Court upon being sworn in to serve on the board. John Hall had previously submitted his resignation subject to the appointment of a replacement Board Member. President Secrist confirmed by telephone Ms. Thomas' appointment. Ms. Thomas, therefore, replaces Mr. Hall on the board.)

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on January 24, 2018 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present. He welcomed Ms. Thomas to the board.

Mr. Secrist noted that Mr. Hall had been Secretary. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Richard Bulman was elected Secretary.

Approval of Minutes of December 13, 2017

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meeting of December 13, 2017, 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 December 13, 2017 were approved unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

One correction was noted on the agenda as presented. The date of the February meeting is February 21 not February 15. With that correction, a motion was made (Mr. Bulman) and seconded (Ms. MacKinnon) to approved the agenda.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook reported on the following topics:

- Pre-election training was completed last week.
- Comparison of Election Board voter street files and EMS GPS based maps has disclosed the need for minor adjustments to voter street files. While doing routine checking of the county street files, there were administrative errors noticed which resulted in changes in voting districts/precincts and/or education districts to approximately 2,000 voters. These voters were sent new Voter Notification Cards to inform the voter of the changes.
- She will submit registration for MAEO conference on behalf of those from the board who are attending.
- Four more scanning units will be received at a later date, currently we have received four black transfer carts. They will be used at voting locations with the largest number of registered voters.
- She is in process of scheduling a meeting with County Manager Andy Hollis to discuss the board's supplemental budget request for the current year.
- Two candidates for County Council have registered and one candidate for Judge of the Orphans Court
- Ninety-two election judge candidates have been identified. Ms. Cook would like an additional 20 judges.
- The heat is now working in the office.
- Conversations with the Sheriff's office indicate that there should be no problem using parking spaces in the county building for election judge training.
- There will possibly be as many as 28 ballot styles in the primary.

Board Attorney's Report

In the absence of the board attorney, no report was made.

Old Business

Invoices

There were no questions or comments.

Budget FY 2018

Ms. Cook provided the board with reports on expenditures through December and responded to questions from the board members.

Request for Additional Funds for FY2018

Ms. Cook provided the board with a request to consider asking the county for additional funding in the amount of \$20,687. President Secrist inquired about the need for additional judges and the related funding, particularly for an average of 13 judges per day during early voting. Ms. Cook believes that, with potentially 28 ballot styles, we need to have election judges available to guide the voter through the process and alleviate long lines. She is planning to have several separate ballot stations for voters to pick up the proper ballot style.

Mr. Bulman asked why she had not considered using what appears to be surplus funds in other accounts to cover these newly identified expenses. He noted that there seems to be the potential for surplus in salary related benefits. Ms. Cook said she will bring up the suggestion when meeting with the county.

President Secrist asked if the number of judges could be reduced if there turns out to be a fewer number of ballot styles. Ms. Cook stated that that is possible and that funds for all the extra judges would possibly not be used and returned to the county. She did remind the board that there will be the addition of a chief judge to each polling place and early voting days to stay in compliance with state law.

Mr. Bulman then moved that the Election Director be authorized to discuss with the County Manager the reasonableness of transferring funds from salary and other personnel related accounts to fund the supplemental amount requested by Ms. Cook. If this is not practical, the board requests the county approve a supplemental budget amount as requested by Ms. Cook. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget FY2019

Ms. Cook presented the board with a proposed budget for FY2019 for approval and submission to the county. Discussion of the proposal centered around the following:

- Governor Hogan has proposed a 2% COLA salary increase for state employees.
- Questions were raised regarding the need for 60 new poll books. The board would like to see if that number can be reduced. Ms. Cook said she would look at the possible reduction. The lease cost for the added poll books and added printers from the state will be spread over 4 years.
- The postage request will not be based on a 20% increase in stamps.

- There was also discussion regarding large apparent surplus in this year's budget for retirement, health insurance and FICA.

Susan MacKinnon moved approval of the budget with the understanding that clarification regarding salary related items and the number of poll books and printers. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 4 for (Black, Bulman, MacKinnon and Thomas) and 1 against (Secrist).

County Bulletins

Ms. Cook distributed the most recent issue of the county bulletin and responded to questions from the board. She particularly noted the matter of Disaster Recovery Planning. A meeting with Jim Bass, Emergency Management Services Coordinator, will be held with the staff on February 14 at 10:30 a.m. to further develop plans. She welcomed the board to attend that meeting.

MAEO Conference Information

Ms. Cook noted the deadlines for attendees to register for the conference and for rooms. She will handle the conference registration, and she must know how many will be attending and whether for the entire session or one day. Regarding rooms, each attendee is responsible for reservations and to send the confirmation to Ms. Cook who will in turn send the information to the county for payment.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

No surveys have been received since the last board meeting.

New Business

Mark Cohoon – District and Precinct Lines and School Board Districts

Mr. Cohoon is the county Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager. He presented a series of maps showing the Election District and Precinct boundaries as they overlay with other GIS map features used by the County, such as roads and water. The Election Districts and Precinct boundaries did not line up with the map features they are intended to. He recommends current mapping techniques be applied to the District and Precinct boundaries, and Board of Education Districts so that these map features can be used for GIS analysis reduce confusion on large scale paper maps or interactive internet maps. He offered to modernize the boundaries and provide a large-scale representation suitable for use with current GIS mapping software. It was the consensus of the board that Mr. Cohoon be authorized to make the appropriate changes and to report back to the board with his findings for review before putting them out to the public.

Confirmation of Next Meeting

President Secrist noted that the next regular meeting of the board will be at 7:00 PM on February 21, 2018.

Closed Session

Mr. Bulman moved that the board go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Where upon the board went into closed session at 12:28 p.m.

At 2:10 p.m., the board returned to open session. President Secrist reported that the board performed the year-end review of the Election Director's performance and discussed related personnel matters.

Adjournment

Ms. MacKinnon moved adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:14 PM.

Attested,



Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,



Richard B. Bulman, Secretary