

Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections
215 Bay Street
Easton, MD 21601
April 17, 2019

Present:

Board

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

Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

Board Attorney

Philip Cronan *

* Mr. Black arrived after the start of the meeting arriving after the determination of a quorum and approval of the minutes. Mr. Cronan arrived during the discussion of the minutes.

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held on April 17, 2019 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meetings of January 23, 2019 and March 20, 2019, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Secrist noted that the name of Ms. Paschall was misspelled in the minutes of March 20, 2019. With that one correction, Mr. Bulman moved approval of the minutes of both meetings. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda

No additions or corrections were offered.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Bulman moved approval of the agenda as presented. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Election Director's Report

Ms. Cook reported on the following:

- She has met with Brian Moore of the county staff regarding the need to make the Election Board offices more secure. He agreed that the cleaning staff and county employees will no longer enter the offices when Election Board staff are not present.
- She will be submitting the room reservations for the MAEO conference later today.
- She and Monae Butler will be working with the Towns of Easton and Trappe with their upcoming elections.
- She attended meetings regarding sexual harassment and Election Board best practices following the recent elections.
- She will meet with Tracy Elzey of the school Board over the summer regarding AP high school students serving as Election Judges.
- A meeting has been scheduled for the Board members to meet with the county council for a periodic update on our activities. That meeting is set for the Bradley Meeting Room at 6:00 PM on June 11, 2019.
- The airport manager has informed her that everyone should be relocated from the current County Business Center by the beginning of 2022 so they can begin the expansion of the airport. Our warehouse is located in this building.
- She will be out of the office on leave from noon April 19 through May 5.
- She has been invited to attend the 2019 Election Security Reform and Administration Conference at the University of Pennsylvania July 10-12. There is no fee to attend. Travel and board will not be covered, but Ms. Cook has received a grant from MAEO to cover some of that cost.
- Fred Gleockler took the lead and has completed the audit of the Board's inventory. The audit showed we account for 100% of the Board's equipment.
- At the Board's next meeting Ms. Cook would like to discuss the roles and pay for Election Judges.

Board Attorney's Report

Mr. Cronan reported that he has not spoken to Delegate Chris Adams since the legislature adjourned regarding the Board's request that the legislature enact legislation requiring all county Boards of Education to cancel classes on election days.

Old Business

a. Budget FY2019

The Board reviewed the financial reports for the current fiscal year and discussed the accounts where there were overages. Ms. Cook noted that her discussions with the county finance officer indicating her concern is not regarding individual accounts but that we not exceed the budget in its entirety.

b. Budget FY2020

There was nothing new to report regarding our requested budget for FY2020.

c. Review invoices

Following review of the invoices, there were no questions.

d. County Bulletins

The Board discussed the comment included in the summary of the Election Directors' Meeting of March 21, 2019 regarding the appointment of Election Board Members. Based on this report, Board Members will remain the same if there were no new appointments. This appears to apply to the Talbot County appointments.

e. Legislation for school closing

Legislation sought by this Board to close schools for students on election day was not acted upon during the recent legislative session. Board members discussed the situations created when students are in class on election day and the fact that Talbot County is the only school system that does not cancel class on election day. Ms. Cook suggested that we make an appointment with the local delegation to familiarize them with the many issues that the conflicting use of the schools causes for voters.

Ms. MacKinnon offered a draft letter to be sent to the Talbot County Board of Education requesting that they again consider our request to cancel classes on election day. Following discussion of the draft letter and suggested modifications, Ms. MacKinnon moved that the form of letter as drafted be approved with the addition that we offer to meet as soon as possible with the Board of Education to fully explain the importance of this issue with copies to local elected town officials, League of Women Voters, our Legislative Delegation, Chair of the State Board of Elections, Chairs of the local Central

Committees, and the Star-Democrat. Mr. Black seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Ms. MacKinnon then asked when the Board meets with the County Council to update them on the activities of the Election Board, we include polling place updates and the need to cancel classes on election day, pending loss of warehouse space and related security issues, and the impact recent legislation will have in preparing for the next election cycle.

f. Facility for election office

Mr. Bulman noted that the need for adequate space for the office and warehouse needs to be addressed immediately. In addition to security issues with regard to our current facilities, we are now aware that soon the warehouse area will no longer be available and a move must be planned. He pointed out several possible existing facilities that could serve as office and warehouse space which could be acquired by the county for the exclusive use of the Election Board. He asked that Ms. Cook explore possible locations and report back to the Board at our next meeting. Ms. Cook noted that she will be on leave through May 5, but will do her best to have a report at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Thomas asked about the status of the security measures to be installed at the office customer window. Ms. Cook reported that the county is working on the matter and pointed out that the county is also concerned about public access to other offices in the building.

g. Polling place rental agreements for 2020 election cycle

Ms. Cook presented draft agreements for polling places for the next election cycle at the previous Board meeting. Ms. MacKinnon moved approval of the agreements as presented. Ms. Thomas seconded the motions. It passed unanimously.

h. MAEO Conference

Ms. Cook summarized the status of the conference and responded to questions from Board members.

During the prior discussion concerning the County Bulletins, Ms. Cook noted the April 2, 2019 Memorandum from the State Board of Elections Chairman addressed to local Chief Elected Officials regarding a Salary Proposal. At this point in the meeting she referred to this salary proposal and how it impacted her. She asked that the Board consider action to revise her salary grade prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year to equitably recognize her status vis-à-vis other Election Directors. Mr. Black moved that Ms. Cook's salary be adjusted to Grade 19, Step 5, as previously approved by the Board in November 2018, effective April 24, 2019. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

New Business

- a. Draft letter to the Board of Education

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Confirmation of next meeting

During this meeting, the Board offered to meet with the Board of Education. The May Board of Education meeting is scheduled for May 15 in the evening. To make the Board of Elections available to meet with the Board of Education that evening, it was suggested that our Board meeting, currently scheduled for 7:00 PM that same date, we reschedule our meeting for earlier in the day. Ms. Thomas moved that the Board of Elections reschedule its May 15, 2019 meeting to start at 9:30 AM. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

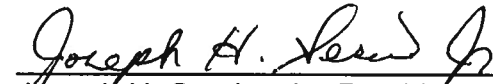
Closed Session

The Board did not meet in Closed Session

Adjournment


Mr. Black moved adjournment of the meeting. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:17 PM.

Attested,



Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,



Richard B. Bulman, Secretary