

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of October 16, 2017

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 5:47 p.m. in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar. Those present were Electoral Board members Anne Hemenway (Chair), Jon Bright (Vice Chair), and Jim Nix (Secretary), General Registrar, Rosanna Bencoach, Deputy Registrar Katie Mauller and Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton.

On a motion by the Secretary, seconded by the Chair, the agenda was approved unanimously with the addition of a single item, the appointment of election officials.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the September 15, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Stephen Harvey, Chair of the Charlottesville Republican Party, was the only member of the public present. He had no comments.

Report of the General Registrar

The registrar provided a written report on several issues most important of which were ballot printing and a review of the budget. At the previous Board meeting the Registrar recommended printing 18,000 Election Day ballots with an additional 10,000 spooled and ready to print; the Board members agreed with this decision. Since that date, however, the Registrar and the Chair have been pressured by Elizabeth Howard, Deputy Commissioner of Elections, to print a quantity of ballots equal to the total of active registered voters in the City, or approximately 29,000 ballots and the Chair agreed to do so. While the Board members feel that printing this number is excessive and unnecessary they recommended that the Registrar comply with the request in an effort to avoid conflict with the office of the Commissioner.

The budget discussion focused on election official (EO) staffing levels for the current fiscal year, projections for the next year, and the impact of implementing the City Council mandated living wage for EOs. This topic had been addressed in the Registrar's report at the September Board meeting but the Board members were confused by the analysis presented and requested additional information. The Registrar presented a refined analysis that showed a budget shortfall of approximately \$26,000 for the current fiscal year, roughly 30% of which can be attributed to the

increases generated by the living wage mandate. The remainder results from an underestimate of funding requirements for election staffing in the budget presented to the City in November 2016 partly due to increases in projected staffing. The current estimate assumes that there will be a dual primary in June of 2018 but it is possible that there will only be a single party primary, an outcome that would significantly reduce the number of election officials required. Additional funds will be requested from the City to cover the shortfall.

A related issue is the potential for a special election to fill a School Board vacancy should Amy Laufer be elected to the City Council. It is possible that a special election could be scheduled by the School Board for as early as January 2018 to fill such a vacancy but a more likely decision would be to hold the special election in conjunction with the Federal general election on November 6, 2018. Should this vacancy occur, the remaining School Board members would appoint an interim member to serve until the special election.

Appointment of Electoral Board Representatives

At a previous meeting Assistant Registrars Melissa Morton, Paul Boggs and Ann Shingledecker were appointed to serve as representatives of the Electoral Board for critical activities conducted when Board members could not be present. The key activity is ballot printing, which is now done in-house over a period of a number of days. Since this occurs during the heaviest period of in-person absentee voting and election preparation additional representatives are required. On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair and unanimously approved the following were appointed as additional Board representatives: Jeff Greer, Katie Mauller, Raenell Lockley and Joyce McKenney and Jaime Virostko

Appointment of Election Officials

Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton presented applications from two individuals seeking to become election officials. These were reviewed by the Board and approved unanimously on a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-chair. The following individuals were appointed:

Joseph Fisher
Peyton Lester

Modifications to Election Procedures

In light of the fact that the newly hired voting equipment technician is on extended medical leave and the two additional technicians have very limited experience, the Board members have been asked to assist the staff with resolving any equipment

issues that arise on Election Day. To that end, each member will be given an equipment trouble shooting guide, and will attend equipment training on October 24.

Another change will be to officially open the canvass at 7:00 p.m. on election night in order to allow the staff and Board members to open envelopes and review documents with the chief election officials when they bring them to the office. This will allow problems to be addressed at once saving time during the canvass. The canvass will be suspended after all precincts have reported in and will be reopened at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday morning, November 8.

In a further effort to expedite the canvass the Board members decided to adopt a greatly simplified Statement of Results (SOR) form that was promoted at the Department of Elections annual training in June 2017. To this end the Secretary made the following motion:

That the simplified SOR, containing only information on the number of voters checked in and the number of ballots scanned, be used at all precincts. Both zero and tally tapes for each scanner will be attached to the form along with the zero and closing tapes from the EPBs and a tally of manually counted votes, should there be any. The tally of votes cast for each candidate will be compiled on forms held at the Registrar's office as they are called in from the precincts by election officials reading them from the tally tapes and the hand count form if there is one. The SOR will also have space to report other data required by the State, such as the number of curb-side voters casting ballots.

This motion was seconded by the Vice Chair and approved unanimously.

Update on Missing Equipment

The Registrar reported that a careful inventory of all equipment confirmed that no lap-top computers used as electronic poll books (EPBs) were missing. Melissa Morton conducted the investigation and discovered that the assumed total number of EPB computers on hand was based on the number of licenses (31) for EPB software that had been purchased. Her investigation revealed that this software had been applied to 30 computers plus one tablet used as a look-up device. That device has been identified and the current inventory of 30 computers on hand has been confirmed. The conclusion that a computer was missing had been based on the number of licenses held. While it has now been confirmed that no computers are missing, the missing look-up device remains unaccounted for. A comprehensive serial number inventory for election equipment has been established and will be rigorously employed in the current and all future elections.

Executive Session

At 7:15 p.m. there was a motion by the Chair to close the meeting for the purpose of conducting a discussion of personnel matters. This motion was seconded by the Secretary and approved unanimously.

The board reconvened in open session at 8:35 p.m. and the Chair moved to certify, by recorded vote, that only matters exempted from the open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed session. This motion was seconded by the Vice Chair and approved unanimously. Copies of the motion closing the meeting and the certification following the closed session are attached to these minutes.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 7, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair