

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of April 24, 2017

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 11:32 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, Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton and Assistant Registrar Patrick Cory.

On a motion by the vice chair, seconded by the secretary, the agenda was approved unanimously without change.

On a motion by the vice chair, seconded by the chair, the minutes of the March 8, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously. The vice chair then moved approval of the March 20, 2017 minutes. The secretary seconded and the minutes were approved without dissent. The April 5, 2017 minutes were then discussed. A few very minor changes were made and they too were unanimously approved on a motion by the vice chair seconded by the chair.

Public Comment

One member of the public, city resident Rebecca Quinn, asked for the method used by Charlottesville election officials in establishing the official time for opening and closing polls. Acknowledging that there was no written policy on this the chair suggested that the Board discuss this question at the next meeting and establish such a policy. Ms. Quinn also asked if there was still a requirement to post paper notices of Electoral Board meetings on the door of the registrar's office. The General Registrar was not sure of the answer but agreed to return to the policy of posting paper notices in addition to the notices posted on the Board website.

Report by the General Registrar

The registrar presented a written report and commented on several items in it, the first of which was the decision on the number of Democratic and Republican ballots to procure for the June 13 primary. Ms. Bencoach provided a detailed review of the rationale she had followed in deciding to procure 7000 Democratic ballots (24% of active voters) and 2400 Republican ballots (8% of active voters). Additional ballots will be electronically prepared for printing at a later date should that be necessary. Ms. Bencoach advised the Board members of the possibility that the State Board of Elections might impose a requirement that the number of ballots printed be increased.

On campaign finance, the registrar reported that all local candidates have filed finance reports but some corrections had been required and a few forms were submitted late and would possibly result in fines. In addition, five letters had been sent to previous candidates with open campaign accounts who had neglected to file reports. On a related issue, the board had previously asked what the procedure was for enforcing the requirement for disclaimers on local campaign advertisements. The registrar advised that the GREB Handbook states, "All complaints related to failure to properly disclaim political advertisements should be referred to the State Board of Elections which has sole authority to assess civil penalties and refer possible willful violations to the appropriate Commonwealth's attorney for investigation."

The final item discussed from the registrar's report was the potential application of state rules on electronic meetings to the Electoral Board. It appears that the rules require that two Board members must be physically present in order to conduct a meeting but that a third member can participate electronically if a local policy governing this procedure has been established. The chair suggested that, at a future meeting, we should consider whether or not to establish such a policy.

Appointment of Officers of Election

Although active recruitment of election officials has been suspended because we already have a sufficient number on the roster for this year's elections, a few applications have recently been received. Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton presented the Board with six such applications for consideration. The chair moved that five of these be approved and one (Shirley Early) be deferred pending receipt of additional information. The motion was seconded by the secretary and approved unanimously. The following were appointed as Charlottesville election officials:

Joy D. Sabol
Joseph G. Sabol
Donnell Lee Norman
John B. Clark Jr.
Kate Stephensen

Review of Training Materials for Election Officials

Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton provided extensive information packets to the board members that included the schedule for preparation for the June 13 primary and training materials for election officials. Several items were discussed and the Board members were asked to undertake a detailed review of all the printed material and respond to Ms Morton with comments and suggestions by the end of the week (April 28). One item discussed was the updated election official evaluation form. The new version includes

identification of all the functions performed by the rated official but the vice chair requested that it be further amended to indicate the shift worked (a.m., p.m. or all day).

Concerning the issue of animals in the polling places, the chair suggested adding a clarification to the notice on this subject that only actual service animals be exempted from the prohibition of animals in the polling places and that therapy and emotional support animals are not allowed. A change was also suggested to the emergency relocation instructions for Johnson Precinct. The three Board members agreed that an emergency relocation to Buford rather than Tonsler would be preferable in light of the fact that the former offers more space.

Central Absentee Precinct (CAP) Planning

Deputy Registrar Katie Mauller discussed preparation for the conduct of absentee voting and the functioning of the CAP on election day. Among the items presented were two alternative drafts of a Statement of Results form for use by the CAP. Ms Mauller requested detailed review and comments on these from the Board members. Additional material was presented including two alternative organizational plans for the CAP team with job descriptions for each team member. Other changes in CAP procedures still under consideration were discussed with the board.

Appointment of Electoral Board Representatives

There is an established requirement for the Board to appoint one or more individuals to represent the Board during the conduct of routine steps in the preparation for the election when no board members are available. Ms. Morton recommended that she, and Assistant Registrars Anna Shingledecker and Paul Boggs, be appointed for this purpose. On a motion by the chair, seconded by the vice chair, these appointments were unanimously approved.

Logic and Accuracy Testing

At 12:30 p.m. the Board members joined Assistant Registrar Patrick Cory for the conduct of logic and accuracy testing of the equipment to be used for in-person absentee voting, which is to start on April 28. Representatives of two local TV stations were on hand to observe and record the testing. The process was paused at 1:05 p.m. and resumed one hour later. The testing was successfully completed with no problems and the voting equipment was sealed by the Board in preparation for absentee voting.

Executive Session

At 1:05 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 2:05 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.

Other Business

One of the candidates in the Democratic primary for City Council, Heather Hill, has requested that changes be made to the voter registration website highlighting the in-person absentee voting schedule, location and procedures. She also requested that the deadline for registering to vote in the June 13 primary also be highlighted. The General Registrar reported that these changes have been made to the website.

The vice chair raised the question of procuring souvenir pins commemorating the June 13 primary for issue to election officials working in this election. These have been in use in other localities for some time and the one designed for the upcoming primary features an image of Monticello and thus is particularly appropriate for Charlottesville. The Board members were in agreement that these tokens would be appreciated by the election workers and could be procured at minimal cost.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place at 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, May 15, 2017 in the Charlottesville Office of Voter Registration.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair