



BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Thursday, January 21, 2021, 3:00 P.M.

Virtual – [Blue Jeans](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Elections was convened at 3:00 PM by Chair of the Board, Commissioner Steven Dershem.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Elections Supervisor Jodi Nedd, Latisha Stefanko, and Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith.

County personnel present included Jury Commissioner Laura Shadle and Jillian Savage.

Media present included Marley Parish.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no comment received by the public.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Shredding of inner/secretary envelopes from the 2020 General Election

Commissioner Dershem reported there have been discussions with County Solicitor Betsy Dupuis. Commissioner Dershem recommends holding on to the inner/secretary envelopes from the 2020 General Election for the near future. He asked Elections Supervisor Jodi Nedd if she had anything to add. Jodi agreed that if Betsy recommended keeping the envelopes that should be done

B. 2021 Petition Preparation and Process

i. Opening to the public.

Jodi Nedd asked how this election cycle would be handled with the building being closed to the public. Jodi asked if the Elections office would be open so people could come in and pick up their petition packets and file their paperwork.

Latisha Stefanko asked if appointments could be made to enter the office. Commissioner Dershem stated he didn't think appointments would be necessary if the paperwork was in the lobby and some sort of system was in place to limit interaction.

ii. Online petitions, paperwork and instructions.

Latisha stated other Counties were making their materials available online for candidates to print out. She asked if this was something Centre County could implement in addition to having hard copies available. Commissioner Pipe agreed with making the materials available online for download but stressed

the instructions must be clear. Commissioner Pipe stated letting as few people in the building as possible was important. Allowing people to pick up materials and then calling them to answer questions is a possible solution.

Latisha clarified that people are not required to sign when they pick up packets. The Elections Office uses the signatures to keep a count of how many packets are distributed from election to election. Jodi added that if the materials are made available online the signature count will be inaccurate anyway, making a signature book unnecessary.

Latisha stated that the filing of the petitions was not something that could be done in the lobby. People would need to come into the office to have the paperwork reviewed and filed. Commissioner Pipe asked about making it a requirement for people to call before they return the paperwork. Latisha agreed that given the circumstances people would be understanding if the information was online and in the packet. Commissioner Higgins agreed that as much should be done online as possible

Commissioner Dershem stated they should have a plan a week before February 16, when the petition period begins. He asked that recommendations be emailed.

Latisha asked if Chad could set up an appointment system similar to one used in VBM. Commissioner Pipe agreed.

C. Polling Locations for 2021 Primary Election and proposed changes.

i. Precinct 11 – Philipsburg Borough #2

From: First Lutheran Church

To: Philipsburg Fire Co. Rec Center

Reason: Continued unavailability because of COVID.

ii. Precinct 19 – State College South 1

From: Knights of Columbus

To: Would like to pursue South Hills School of Business as they expressed interest prior to the November election.

Reason: Building is being sold.

iii. Precinct 20 – State College South 2

From: Foxdale

To: State College Assembly of God

Reason: Continued unavailability because of COVID/assisted living.

iv. Precinct 22 – State College South Central 1

From: Knights of Columbus

To: Would like to pursue South Hills School of Business as they expressed interest prior to the November election.

Reason: Building is being sold.

v. Precinct 48 – Ferguson North 2

From: Elmcroft

To: Potentially Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, but still looking.

Reason: Continued unavailability because of COVID/assisted living.

vi. Precinct 53 – Gregg Township

From: Penns Valley EMS

To: New Hope Church

Reason: Continued unavailability because of COVID/poll workers request. The church is better suited per poll workers.

vii. Precinct 79 – Spring South

From: Pleasant Gap UMC

To: Potentially Nittany Valley Event Center.

Reason: Continued unavailability because of COVID

Jodi reported that the locations listed have reached out saying the County is not permitted to use them in the 2021 election just as they were not permitted to be used in the 2020 election. She asked for the Board's approval to move these locations permanently to the locations used in the 2020 election, which have agreed to be available for use again this year. The Board agreed.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Center for Tech and Civic Life Expenditure Report

Commissioner Pipe reported a Board of Election meeting will be held a week from today with the final report. Work is still being done with the Controller's Office to identify all money spent. Jodi asked for clarification on when the money needed to be spent, considering the original deadline was December. Commissioner Pipe reported the funding had been rolled over into 2021, no specific dates were given.

B. RLA Update

Commissioner Pipe reported that at a previous Elections Board Meeting staff had been given the green light to conduct a Risk Limiting Audit, partnering with Verify Vote, a non-profit that works with election offices across the Country.

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Jodi reported that a few ballots are left to enter into the State Department database. This should be finished tomorrow.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Latisha reported that the Department of State is planning to implement a new version of the SURE System, hardware costs may be coming down the line at some point in 2021.

The Board will meet next Thursday, January 28, 2021 at 1:00 PM.

Jodi hopes to have answers on permanent locations by the next meeting.

Jodi reported petitions have not been received yet by the Elections Office, but she is hopeful they will arrive in the next few days.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 3:20 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Jillian Savage
Staff Assistant, Commissioners' Office