



BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11:00 A.M.

Virtual – [BlueJeans](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Elections was convened at 11:08 AM by Chair of the Board, Commissioner Steven Dershem.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator Margaret Gray, Elections Coordinator Jodi Nedd, Voter Registration Coordinator Latisha Stefanko, Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith and Staff Assistant Jillian Savage.

Guest present included Jenn Dellantonio.

Media present included Marley Parish and Geoff Rushton.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

III. MINUTES

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Board of Elections meeting held on Thursday, February 18, 2021.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Primary Election – May 2021

i. Mail-in and Absentee Ballot Envelopes

Latisha Stefanko reported a total of 18,000 outer envelopes were used in the last election.

ii. Postage for Mail-in and Absentee Ballots

The Department of State reported the ballot return postage, including late ballot postage, paid for by the Department of State for Centre County from October 10 through December 5, was \$5,610.79. If postage paid is done again, the County would need to obtain a Business Reply Envelope Permit. There are two different options for the permit:

1. Pay a \$245 dollar fee. The postage billed per piece for this option is approximately 63 cents. This is typically utilized when small volumes of mail are anticipated.
2. Pay two fees for a combined total of \$3,200. The postage billed per piece for this option is approximately 55 cents. This is typically utilized when large volumes of mail are anticipated.

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Latisha stated it does not seem beneficial to pay \$3,200 in fees. The cost for 54,000 envelopes from Grove Printing was \$4,016.88.

Commissioner Pipe reported that 32,000 mail-in ballots were returned in the 2020 General Election. Approximately 20,000 were returned by drop box, this means their postage wasn't paid. Utilizing drop boxes again in this election would not incur additional postage costs. He suggested inquiring if the State will allow the County to use their permit. The State could then bill the County for postage. Latisha has requested information regarding this but has not received a response.

Commissioner Dershem does not feel the County is responsible for paying the postage as it would be the voter's choice to use the mail service, not a necessity. Commissioner Pipe suggested moving forward with printing the Outer envelope used to mail ballots to voters, and the secrecy envelopes, while waiting to hear from the State.

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the printing of inner and outer outgoing envelopes, while awaiting word from the Department of State for the outer return envelopes.

B. Centre for Tech and Civic Life Grant

- i. Purchase of a time/date stamp without clock face from Time Clock Sales Pittsburgh in the amount of \$985.27.
- ii. Purchase of 120 ballot tote bins from Election Systems and Software in the total amount of \$28,650 for secure removal of ballots from vote-by-mail drop boxes.

Action: On a motion by Commissioner *Pipe*, seconded by Commissioner *Higgins*, the Board approve purchases from *Time Clock Sales Pittsburgh* and *Elections Systems and Software*.

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Commissioner Dershem stated he has received several questions regarding the petition process and notarization requirements. He asked for an overview of the process for those interested in running for office. Jodi Nedd explained petition packets may be retrieved in the main lobby at the Willowbank Office Building, or online at www.centrecountyvotes.com. Should someone have difficulty having the two sections notarized, a candidates' unsworn declaration may be provided in lieu of a signed candidates affidavit. An unsworn campaign finance statement may also be provided instead of a notarized waiver of expense. Petition filing is being done by appointment at the Elections Office. Appointments are available every 15 minutes and can be scheduled by calling the office, or by going to www.centrecountyvotes.com under candidates information.

VII. ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions.

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

First day to file nomination papers.

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Last day to file objections to nomination petitions.

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Last day for withdrawal by candidates who filed nomination petitions.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Jillian Savage

Staff Assistant, Commissioners Office