



BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Tuesday, September 15, 2020, 11:00 A.M.

Willowbank Office Building
420 Holmes Street, Room 146
Bellefonte, PA 16823

I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Elections was convened at 10:28 AM by Chair of the Board of Elections, Commissioner Steven Dershem.

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

Representatives from the news media included Evan Hinkley and Gary Sinderson.

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, September 10.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Preservation of Digital Ballot Images

Commissioner Pipe reported that the Board received an email regarding digitized ballots. He asked Jodi Nedd to speak to the County process for digital ballot images.

Jodi stated common practice is that the ballot images are not created until results are uploaded into the results manager. The images are saved and also stored on a backup. The data is retained for 22 months following a Federal Election and 11 months following a municipal election.

It was the consensus of the Board to have the Election Office respond to the inquiry.

B. Polling Location Eligibility Review

In the primary there were multiple locations that could not be used because of the Coronavirus. For the General Election, Jodi has contacted each of these locations to confirm. She has received seven responses that said no and she has an alternate location for five of them.

C. Change of Polling Location

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- i. Precinct 56 Harris East from the Zion Lutheran Church, 105 Old Boalsburg Road, Boalsburg to Calvary Fields, 150 Harvest Fields, Drive, Boalsburg.

Commissioner Pipe recommended that a letter be sent with the voter card to communicate the precinct change. A draft was provided to the Board for their review. Latisha recommended a change to the letter regarding the date that ballots will be printed and mailed.

- ii. Precinct 18 from the Weston Center to the HUB-Robeson Center

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ballot Certification and Printing Update

The challenges against the green party have all been settled with the exception of the Presidential candidate. Until the challenge is resolved, ballots cannot be printed.

B. Center for Tech and Civic Life Grant Plan Update

The grant application was submitted on Saturday for a total of \$863,828.50. Commissioner Pipe hopes to learn more regarding grant approval and award later this week.

C. Bryce Jordan Center to serve as polling location for Precincts 24 and 44-2

The concourse will be used for Precinct 24 and the Founders Room for Precinct 44-2 allowing for enough spacing between precincts. Penn State University will be able to provide tables, chairs, etc. An agreement is being finalized by the University, once executed the County can provide official notification to voters.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Satellite Elections Office at the Bryce Jordan Center

Commissioner Pipe reported that the County received new information regarding a satellite elections office. The Department of State has confirmed that a satellite election office would not be required to offer all of the same services as the County Election Office. Commissioner Pipe feels there may be benefits to having another location in the County. This location would strictly offer ballot services. The voter would need to be registered, the satellite office would only be able to accept and process ballot applications and then provide the voter with a mail in or absentee ballot.

With the number of COVID-19 cases increasing on campus, the ability for a voter to obtain a ballot and vote on campus would reduce community traffic to the Willowbank Election Office. To make the satellite office possible, IT and staffing arrangements must be made.

As the only satellite location, Commissioner Dershem expressed concern that this might be viewed as ballot harvesting not to mention there are only 49 days until the General Election.

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Commissioner Pipe reported that the Bryce Jordan Center is available October 7 through 10; October 14 through 17; and October 21 through 24. Latisha added that the office should be made available prior to the registration deadline so voters have time to register or update their information prior to requesting a ballot.

It was the consensus of the Board to have further discussion at their meeting on Thursday, September 17.

VII. ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday, October 19, 2020

Last day to REGISTER before the November election.

Tuesday, October 27, 2020

Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to move into executive session at 11:37 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Natalie Smith
Executive Office Supervisor