



BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Thursday, October 7, 2021, 11:00 A.M.

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

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I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Elections was convened at 11:16 AM by Chair of the Board Commissioner Steven Dershem.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator Margaret Gray, Deputy Administrator John Franek, Jr., Director of Elections Beth Lechman, and Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith.

County personnel present included Dave Lomison and Lee Sheaffer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received by the public.

III. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

IV. MEETING MINUTES

The Board will consider approving the minutes from the September 23, 2021 Board of Elections meeting.

Action: *On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2021 Board of Elections meeting.*

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Vote by Mail Pre-Canvass Plan

- i. Director Beth Lechman asked the Board to consider approval of the designation of The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center for pre-canvassing on November 2nd and 3rd, 2021.

Action: *On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Vote by Mail Pre-Canvass Plan and designation of The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center.*

BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021

PAGE 2

B. Ballot Return and Collection Plan

Beth explained that the plan presented is the same plan that has been used for previous elections. The ballot boxes will be dispersed/deployed this afternoon with defeater bars removed on Tuesday and collection to begin on Wednesday.

Commissioner Pipe noted that in discussions with the Sheriff, deputies will not be present for collection with the exception of Election Day. Security cameras are in place to cover all locations. Collection drivers will be sworn-in by Administrator Margaret Gray. Commissioner Dershem expressed that he still has reservations about utilizing ballot drop boxes.

***Action:** On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Ballot Return and Collection Plan.*

C. Temporary Change of Polling Locations

i. Precinct 32 – State College West

**Need a new permanent location.*

Previously at: Our Lady of Victory

November: Cedar Heights Church (old Knights of Columbus building)
850 Stratford Drive, State College

ii. Precinct 49 – Ferguson Northeast 1

Previously at: The Heights at State College

November: Discovery Space
1224 North Atherton Street, State College

iii. Precinct 50 – Ferguson Northeast 2

Previously at: Mike's Video and Appliance

November: The Rivet
1224 North Atherton Street, State College

Precincts 49 and 50 cannot accommodate the Election during the COVID-19 pandemic. Precinct 18 will also be presented for a temporary change once a new location is confirmed.

Beth asked the Board to consider working with Legislators to declare Election Day as an Act 80 day, so schools can be utilized as polling locations.

***Action:** On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to approve the temporary change of polling locations i-iii.*

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Administrator Margaret Gray noted that the Board of Elections approved the cleaning and disinfection of polling locations following the 2021 Municipal Election in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021

PAGE 3

VII. OPEN DISCUSSION

Municipal Election Office Updates

Beth reported that mail-in ballots were delivered. The Elections Office has started to prep envelopes for mailing next week. She added that in her former position with Westmoreland County, mail-in and absentee ballots did not have stubs and were pre-folded. This would be a significant cost and time savings.

Commissioner Pipe asked that following the Municipal Election, Beth present to the Board proposed changes for future elections.

Commissioner Pipe reported that there have been discussions around passing of a new Election bill regarding additional time for pre-canvassing. If this were to be considered and passed, Beth said the venue is already secured if needed.

VIII. ELECTION MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 14, 2021

Board of Elections – 10 AM – Willowbank 146

Thursday, October 21, 2021

Board of Elections – 9 AM – Willowbank 146

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Board of Elections – 10 AM – Willowbank 146

IX. ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday, October 18, 2021

Last day to REGISTER before the November election

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

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

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Last day for County Boards of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots. Must be received by 8:00 PM.

X. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Jillian Savage
Staff Assistant, Commissioners' Office