



## BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 2:00 P.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 2:00 PM by Chair of the Board Vicki Fong.

In attendance were Board Members Vicki Fong, Chris Exarchos, Chris Fowler, Administrator John Franek Jr., Director of Elections Beth Lechman and Staff Assistant Lisa Long.

Guests present included Michelle Schellberg and Mykhala Richner.

### II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michelle Schellberg made public comment on the proposal of prepaid stamps on return envelopes.

### IV. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions made to the Agenda.

### V. MINUTES

The Board will consider approving the minutes from the October 5, 2023 Board of Elections meeting.

*Action: On a motion by Chris Fowler, seconded by Vicki Fong, with Chris Exarchos abstaining, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from October 5, 2023 meeting.*

### VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion on the date range of valid ballots for the Municipal held on November 7, 2023. Recommendation is to set the range in compliance with prior court decision as follows: date of mail-in ballot distribution, August 29, 2023, to Election Day, November 7, 2023.

Beth Lechman stated that August 29<sup>th</sup> was the first date that they could send out the Military and Overseas Voters (UOCAVA) ballots.

Vicki Fong clarified if the ballots are dated between August 29<sup>th</sup> and November 7<sup>th</sup>, they are automatically acceptable, otherwise they will be brought before the Board for further review.

Chris Fowler questioned if this was what we did in the Primary Election and Beth Lechman confirmed that it was.

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Chris Exarchos asked when the first mail in ballot was sent out from the County. Beth Lechman stated that Oct 9<sup>th</sup> was the first date they were sent out from the office, but Military and overseas ballots went out on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

*Action: On a motion by Chris Fowler, seconded by Chris Exarchos, the Board voted unanimously to approve the date range of valid ballots for the Municipal held on November 7, 2023.*

B. Review additional documents Provisional, Ready to Vote, and Cards.

Beth Lechman stated that the Penn State HUB has requested certain documentation that can be handed out at the voting stations. It is factual information that can be given out to voters who have questions, particularly those who are casting provisional ballots and are first-time voters. The Penn State HUB staff asked that cards be provided to remind voters that if they change their address, they should check their voter registration cards online. Beth Lechman stated documentation doesn't need to be used, it is optional and are only if needed.

Vicki Fong stated that the documentation can also be helpful to Election workers.

Beth Lechman stated it is helpful for the provisional ballot voters because the voters are signing an affidavit stating that they can be legally held responsible for false information.

Chris Fowler asked why there was information regarding the Primary Election on the documentation and Beth Lechman stated it was because this flyer will be used in every Election going forward.

Beth Lechman stated that all precincts will be provided the documentation to hand out to voters.

Chris Fowler suggested adding additional language on the Everything You Need to Vote handout under provisional ballots bullet point number 4 to say "Your mail-in or absentee ballot was not returned to the Centre County Board of Elections and you do not have it to surrender today at the polling location."

*Action: On a motion by Chris Fowler, seconded by Vicki Fong, the Board voted unanimously to approve the use of additional documentation as amended.*

V. OLD BUSINESS

Vicki Fong thanked Beth Lechman for getting the drop boxes open.

Chris Exarchos asked how the Election Transportation of the voting equipment contract was coming along. Beth Lechman stated that they met with the company and went over the process to understand how to do everything. The company has submitted all the necessary paperwork as well.

Chris Exarchos asked if there was any update on the Sheckler petition.

Chris Exarchos asked how we are on poll workers for this election. Beth Lechman stated that they are good on poll workers but need more individuals to help count ballots at the Penn Stater.

Vicki Fong asked when the Centre Crest building would be habitable for Elections staff. Administrator John Franek Jr. stated 2025 is the projected date.

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VI. ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

- o The next scheduled Board of Elections meeting is Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at 1:00 PM at the Willowbank Building Room 146.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT

VIII. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

IX. ADJOURN

On a motion by Chris Exarchos seconded by Chris Fowler, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Long  
Staff Assistant