

MINUTES
Fairfax County Electoral Board
July 26, 2018

The Fairfax County Electoral Board met on Thursday, July 26, 2018, in Conference Room 315/319 at the Fairfax County Government Center located at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Chairman Stephen M. Hunt, Vice Chairman Bettina M. Lawton, Secretary Katherine K. Hanley, General Registrar Gary Scott, Election Manager Eric L. Spicer, IT Manager Travis Potter, Election Officer Manager Ravi Udeshi, Assistant Registrar Viki Kinsman, and Clerk to the Board Beth Dixon Methfessel were present. Keith Damon representing the Fairfax County Republican Party (FCRC); Brian McConville representing the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC); Therese Martin, Maggi Luca, and Rachael Hamlet representing the Fairfax League of Women Voters (LWV); Christopher Schäffer, member of FCDC, and Fairfax County residents Cameron Sasnett and Jean Thoensen also attended the Electoral Board meeting.

Mr. Hunt called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and introduced himself, Vice Chairman Lawton and Secretary Hanley (Board). Mr. Hunt called for a motion to approve the July 26, 2018, meeting agenda. Ms. Hanley moved to approve the agenda, and by a vote of 3-0, the July 26, 2018, meeting agenda, was adopted.

Mr. Hunt asked for approval of the Draft Minutes of the Electoral Board meeting held on May 29, 2018, June 5, 2018, June 12, 2018, and June 13, 2018. FCDC pointed out an error on pg. 2, para. 11, of the Draft Minutes on June 5, 2018. The word “not” was removed from the second sentence. The spelling of Fairfax County resident Jean Thoensen’s name was also corrected. Without further corrections, and by a vote of 3-0, the May 29, 2018, June 5, 2018, June 12, 2018, and June 13, 2018, Minutes were adopted.

Mr. Scott presented the General Registrar’s (GR) report (see attached July 25, 2018, GR Report).

The finance clerk, Kiran Sharma, left the office to work in the Consumer Affairs agency. Stephanie Davis assumed the position of the new Human Resources/Finance assistant on July 23, 2018.

Mr. Scott asked the Board to reopen the discussion to alter the Office’s hours by going to a uniform 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., thus eliminating the late Thursday hours. Once absentee voting begins, and the satellites are in operation, the office will extend closing hours until 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. As requested by the Board motion at the February 6, 2018 Board meeting, Mr. Scott provided statistics on office traffic on Thursdays after 4:30 p.m. Very little foot traffic or telephone transactions occurred on Thursday evening, with most being election officers completing paperwork. Ms. Hanley pointed out that the reason the Board changed the office hours on Thursdays was to match the extended hours offered by the tax department on Thursday. Ms. Lawton expressed concern that reducing hours on the one day the office stays open beyond normal business hours sends the wrong message. It restricts the

opportunity for people who work regular hours and do not have flexibility. It gives them no alternative but to use the online system. She commented that unless there is a compelling reason to change the current office hours, she would be reluctant to change them. Mr. Hunt agreed, and asked if the issue is one of scheduling. Mr. Scott replied that seasonal staff usually work the additional 2.5 hours, and according to county policy, a supervisor must be present. He explained that this coordination will become increasingly difficult when the current office manager retires. No action was taken on the proposal.

In order to reduce voter confusion, provide enhanced hours closer to elections, and conserve financial resources, the following schedule for satellite operations was proposed:

1. Satellite Saturday hours to begin on October 13th.
2. Satellite weekday hours to begin on Wednesday, October 10th (approximately 3½ weeks prior to the election.)
3. Satellite weekday hours expanded to run from 3 p.m. until 7 p.m.

This proposal removes two Saturdays from the previous schedule, however, it will add four additional weekdays, with an expanded time window. Because voters expect weekday voting to occur once Saturday voting begins, the proposal mitigates this confusion as voting at weekday satellites and the Saturday satellites would begin at the same time.

During discussion, Ms. Kinsman provided additional turn-out information for the first three days of absentee voting. LWV suggested that offering a consistent schedule for absentee voting at the satellites and the Government Center would be less confusing for voters. It would also be easier to advertise. Ms. Lawton commented that most voters probably do not recall the absentee voting schedule from year-to-year, so minor tweaks based on the when the November election occurs may not confuse voters. FCDC pointed out that the proposal does not include October 6, the Saturday of the Columbus Day weekend when college students may be home and available for in-person voting. FCDC also asked if neighboring jurisdictions offer the same opportunities for absentee voting. The Board responded that Fairfax County opens their multiple satellite locations earlier and keeps them open longer than any other Virginia locality. FCRC supported the proposal, as absentee voting at the satellites will be continuous after it begins.

In order to increase the number of hours of in-person absentee voting and allow for more consistent hours between the Government Center and the satellite locations, Mr. Hunt moved to begin in-person absentee voting at the satellites on Saturday, October 13, 2018, until Saturday, November 3, 2018, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. As required by law, in-person absentee voting will begin at the Government Center on Friday, September 21, 2018, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and on Thursday from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. However, once absentee voting begins at the satellites on Saturday, October 13, 2018, the Government Center will be open until 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Mr. Hunt further moved that the Government Center be open on Saturday, October 6, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to accommodate college students who may be home for the Columbus Day weekend. The motion passed by a vote of 3:0.

The following steps will be taken to ensure that Herndon Town voters receive the correct ballot:

1. "Herndon" will be written on the application # line spot on the application. Voters will then be asked to confirm.
2. A list of the precincts in Herndon will be placed on a table top sign at the VERIS check-in table as well as the ballot table.
3. There will also be wall signs listing the three town precincts.
4. The ballot face will indicate it is a Herndon Town ballot.
5. At the ballot table, the ballot manager staffer will turn the application around and present the application and ballot to the voter confirming the ballot style.

At the direction of the Electoral Board, other jurisdictions conducting municipal elections in November were surveyed. All use an alert on the application and uniformly report that training of election officers is the most important component to ensure that voters receive the correct ballot.

Public Interest Legal Foundation (PILF) has submitted a FOIA request on voter cancellations for non-citizen status. This was referred to the County Attorney, and a meeting will be set early next week to discuss the response.

Twenty-two (22) DS200s are currently out-of-service for various reasons and of this number, six (6) machines will be sent to ES&S for repair. A service and maintenance plan is being developed to track the history of each machine. Additionally, service, repair, and maintenance will be performed on an ongoing basis, as opposed to just once a year.

There were no Chairman or Vice Chairman reports.

Under the Secretary's report, after the June primary, a post-election survey was sent to all election officers. The feedback showed twenty precincts reported security concerns, primarily relating to free access to the polling location versus secure access for students. Sixty precincts reported that end-of-school activities affected voting. A number reported that bus drop-off and delivery impeded voters. As a result of these findings, and to ensure these concerns were presented prior to the meeting of the General Assembly's School Safety Committee, Ms. Hanley composed a letter summarizing her opinion on why the June primary should be moved from the second to the third Tuesday. She distributed it to the Fairfax representatives that serve on the General Assembly's School Safety Committee, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the School Board (copy attached and made a part of this record). Office staff met with Fairfax County Public School administrators responsible for school facilities to discuss these issues and concerns, and they fully backed the recommendation to move the primary to the third Tuesday in June. Ms. Hanley made a motion that the Board take an official position to move the June primary to the third Tuesday, and requested that the Board of Supervisors and the School Board also support this action. Additionally, copies of the letter will be sent to all members of the Fairfax delegation to the General Assembly. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Ms. Hanley presented a report from Public Information Officer Lisa Conners summarizing communications outreach over the past several months (copy attached and made a part of this record).

Under Old Business, Ms. Hanley moved that according to established policy, the Board authorize twenty-two (22) assistant registrars to serve in the satellite locations for a term to expire on November 3, 2018. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Under New Business, Mr. Spicer distributed a summary of election officer statistics for the June primaries (attached and made a part of this record). Approximately 200 additional Republican leaders were needed to meet optimal assignment requirements, and a goal was set to reach 15-20% of that number, or 30-50 new Chiefs or Assistant Chiefs. This original target was doubled with 97 new Republican leaders recruited and assigned. Ms. Lawton thanked the staff for their outreach efforts leading to this successful result.

Under Public Comments, LWV thanked staff for sending to election officers the “Save the Date” notice for the November election. LWV asked if election officer training could start as early as possible given that election officers who did not serve in the June primaries will need the mandatory training before serving in November. LWV inquired if Fairfax County will receive any part of the 2018 distribution of HAVA funds. Mr. Scott replied that Fairfax County will not be receiving any of the grant.

Mr. Hunt moved that the Board enter into a Closed Session to discuss specific personnel matters, as permitted by Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1). Without objection, and by a vote of 3-0, the Board entered into Closed Session at 5:32 p.m.

At 6:58 p.m. the Board concluded the Closed Session. Chairman Hunt read the following statement:

“In accordance with *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3712(D), I am asking the Secretary of the Electoral Board to conduct a roll call vote to certify that to the best of each member’s knowledge that (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were conducted in the closed meeting and (ii) only such public business as was identified in the motion for the closed meeting, by which the closed meeting was convened, was heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting of the Electoral Board. That roll call vote shall be recorded and included in the minutes of the Electoral Board.”

Secretary Hanley then called the roll for the vote on the above statement:

Voting Yes:	Chairman Hunt
	Vice Chairman Lawton
	Secretary Hanley

There being no further business, Ms. Lawton made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried, and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Attachments

Stephen M. Hunt, Chairman

Bettina M. Lawton, Vice Chairman

Katherine K. Hanley, Secretary

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