

MINUTES  
Fairfax County Electoral Board  
June 27, 2019

The Fairfax County Electoral Board (Board) met on Thursday, June 27, 2019, 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; Deputy Registrar Viki Kinsman; Election Manager Eric L. Spicer; IT Manager Travis Potter; Election Officer Manager Ravi Udeshi; Assistant Registrar Patty Reilly; Election Officer Training Manager Molly Green; Inventory and Supply Manager Kay Garrison; and Clerk to the Board Beth Dixon Methfessel were in attendance. Keith Damon representing the Fairfax County Republican Committee (FCRC); Christopher Schäffer, representing the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC); Lee Lipsey and Rachael Hamlet representing the League of Women Voters (LWV); and Jean Thoensen, Fairfax County resident, also attended the meeting.

Mr. Hunt called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and introduced the Board. Ms. Hanley moved to approve the agenda, adding under New Business the swearing-in of the General Registrar. By a vote of 3-0, the June 27, 2019, meeting agenda, as amended, was adopted.

Mr. Hunt asked for approval of the Draft Minutes of the Board meetings held on May 30, 2019, and June 12, 2019. By a vote of 3-0, the May 30, 2019, and the June 12, 2019, Minutes were adopted.

Under the General Registrar's update, Mr. Scott reported that the overall operation of the June Democratic Primary was successful. There was a problem that caused a delay in answering the results call-ins from the precincts, but the process will be corrected for the November election.

Deployment of the new carts will be delayed because after testing the prototype, staff found the new cart too wide and heavy with protruding locks that could be damaged when the carts are transported to the precincts. These concerns must be corrected before additional carts can be purchased.

Fiscal year 2019 concluded with the Office reporting in under budget. The surplus will be encumbered and used to purchase new batteries, carts, and additional permanent signage for the precincts. Savings in personnel funds will be pre-reserved for the March 2020 Presidential Primary.

Mr. Scott noted that the goals set in July 2018 have largely been accomplished. Goals moving forward in 2019 include addressing staff issues with the Finance and Human Resources departments in order to secure the funding for two to three additional full-time staff members.

Mr. Spicer distributed a summary of Election Officers (EO) and Training for the June Democratic Primary (attached and made a part of this record). A much higher rate of cancellations was reported with the biggest challenge being those cancellations that occurred the week before the election. Three chief EOs were replaced for medical reasons the day before the primary. Election management staff successfully filled all vacated positions as well as coordinated the transfer of election materials to the stand-by chiefs.

Ms. Hanley asked if the 43 training classes held for the primary was higher than normal. Mr. Udeshi responded that the final breakdown of training included 27 new EO classes and 16 new chief classes. The higher number of leadership classes was needed to train the 243 new assistant chief EOs needed for the June Democratic Primary. Additionally, the class sizes were reduced to allow more time for interaction. Ms. Hanley thanked staff for providing ample opportunities for training EO leadership, especially given the fact the March 2020 Presidential Primary will be Democratic only and the June 2020 Primary will most likely be Republican only. Mr. Hunt added that he spoke to a long-serving chief who favored the methodology behind dividing up the chiefs and assistant chiefs during the briefings in order to provide more time for new chiefs and new assistant chiefs to ask questions.

Under the Chairman's report, Mr. Hunt attended the mandatory state training held in Richmond, VA, for new or reappointed Board members. Mr. Hunt stated that legislation passed this year requiring security standards to be implemented for VERIS (Virginia Election and Registration Information System) by March 1, 2020. Mr. Scott responded that all input for the first draft of the standards should be submitted in September. Mr. Potter added that once the standards are established, all localities must revise their security policy to confirm compliance.

With the advent of early "no-excuse" voting, Fairfax County offered support to any locality requesting guidance about satellite voting. Mr. Scott mentioned that VRAV (Virginia Registrar's Association of Virginia) established a workgroup for early voting, and Viki Kinsman will represent Fairfax County in the subgroup for physical voting locations. Mr. Hunt mentioned legislation that created an RFP to modify or replace VERIS but with no authorization or funding mechanism.

There was no Vice Chairman's report.

Under the Secretary's report, Ms. Hanley also attended the state training in Richmond and reported that other localities struggled with the logistics of conducting the June Democratic Primary with school in session. In Fairfax County, the day went smoothly from an election standpoint, but in many schools, especially at the elementary level, there were end-of-the-year functions that utilized voter parking and obstructed access to the buildings. This situation frustrated parents and deterred voters. Additionally, trailers and rooms were utilized that contained too much school equipment or furniture to accommodate the voting equipment and provided adequate voter mobility. Adequately sized tables and chairs were in short supply. Ms. Hanley reminded the Board of the position letter sent to the northern Virginia delegation last year on moving the primary and proposed sending a follow-up letter

in September. She will prepare a draft for review at the next Board meeting. Mr. Hunt added that he brought up this issue during the new legislation session at state training, and many other localities experienced the same problems and supported moving the primary.

There was no Old Business.

Under New Business, Ms. Hanley moved that the Fairfax County Electoral Board appoint Gary Scott as General Registrar for a term commencing on July 1, 2019. The motion passed with a vote of 3-0, with both FCRC and FCDC expressing their support for the resolution.

Under Public Comments, Christopher Schäffer will be the official representative for FCDC. FCDC inquired about a previous Board meeting where a GIS review of Fairfax County voters was discussed. The project involved verifying that all voters are accurately assigned to the correct legislative districts and as such, the correct precinct. Mr. Scott responded that this research concluded, and approximately 300 voters' information was corrected. In preparation for redistricting, GIS is writing a program, expected to be completed in June of 2020, to help identify any additional problems and to place all voters in the correct precinct once redistricting is completed.

FCRC asked when preparation for the November election will begin. Mr. Spicer responded that availability letters will be sent on August 12.

Mr. Scott announced that July 5, 2019, will be Assistant Registrar Patty Reilly's last day. The Board recognized Ms. Reilly for her five years of service at the Office of Elections.

Gerarda Culipher, Deputy Clerk of the Fairfax County Circuit Court, administered the oath of office for Gary Scott.

Mr. Hunt moved that the Board enter into a Closed Session for the purpose of discussing specific personnel matters, as permitted by Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1), including the evaluation of the General Registrar, pursuant to Va. Code § 24.2-109.1. Without objection, and by a vote of 3-0, the Board entered into Closed Session at 5:57 p.m.

At 8:55 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

Ms. Hanley moved that the General Registrar's salary for 2019, fiscal year 2020, be established at \$122,500. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

There being no further business, Ms. Hanley moved to adjourn. The motion carried, and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Attachments

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Stephen M. Hunt, Chairman

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Bettina M. Lawton, Vice Chairman

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Katherine K. Hanley, Secretary