

MINUTES
Fairfax County Electoral Board
July 18, 2017

The Fairfax County Electoral Board (Board) met on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, in Conference Room 315 at the Fairfax County Government Center located at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Chairman Stephen M. Hunt, Vice Chairman Seth T. Stark, Secretary Katherine K. Hanley, General Registrar Cameron Glenn Sasnett, Deputy Registrar Gary Scott, Election Manager Judy Flaig, Chief Information Officer Lisa Connors, IT Director Erica Newsome, Machine Custodian Chris Doherty, and Clerk to the Board Beth Dixon Methfessel were present. Keith Damon and Jim Lyle representing the Fairfax County Republican Committee (FCRC); Donna Rostant representing the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC); Olga Hernandez representing the Fairfax League of Women Voters (LWV); John Farrell, member of FCDC, and Jean Thoensen, Fairfax County resident, also attended the Electoral Board meeting.

Mr. Hunt called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and introduced himself, Vice Chairman Stark and Secretary Hanley.

Mr. Hunt called for a motion to approve the July 18, 2017, meeting agenda. Ms. Hanley moved to approve the agenda, and by a vote of 3-0, the July 18, 2017, meeting agenda was adopted.

Mr. Hunt called for a motion to appoint 50 election officers (EOs) (33 Democrats, 6 Independents, and 11 Republicans) for a term ending February 28, 2018. Ms. Hanley moved to adopt and by a vote of 3-0, the Board appointed 50 (33 Democrats, 6 Independents, and 11 Republicans) individuals to serve as EOs for a term ending February 28, 2018. Ms. Hanley again commented that PollChief's reporting function for the appointment of new EOs is still not providing standardized results.

Mr. Hunt called for a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the June 8, 2017, and the June 14, 2017, Electoral Board meetings. Ms. Hanley moved for approval, and by a vote of 3-0, the June 8, 2017, and the June 14, 2017, Minutes were adopted.

Mr. Sasnett presented the General Registrar's (GR) report (see attached July 18, 2017 GR Report).

Under Voter Registration Statistics, Mr. Sasnett noted that as a result of data generated by the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), the total registered voter count in Fairfax County dropped by approximately 4,500. Mr. Sasnett commented that some voters have cancelled their registration or requested that certain information be withheld. Some concerns received focused on the agenda of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity. FCDC asked if a log is being kept tracking the number and the various reasons individuals have cancelled their voter registrations. Mr. Sasnett replied that at this time, no data is being captured. FCDC asked that consideration be given to tracking this trend, and asked if there has been any pressure from outside groups or individuals on any of the Board

members or staff in the Office for purging voter rolls. The Board and Mr. Sasnett replied that no pressure has been received.

Under Accountability and Standards, fiscal year 2017 closed with a balance of \$374,308, and this amount will be carried over to fiscal year 2018. This carryover takes into consideration the August 29, 2017, Special Election for At-Large School Board Member.

Interviews for the Human Resources Manager will begin the week of July 24.

Under Technology and Innovations, three vendors responded to the Election Night Results Reporting Request for Information (RFI) and their submissions will be reviewed in August.

A verbal agreement between KnowInk and the Department of Elections (ELECT) has been reached allowing the transmission of personal information over a remote server not owned or leased directly by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although a written contract is pending, the Office will be piloting 21 precincts (10 non-Fairfax County facilities and 11 Fairfax County schools) using the Amazon Web Services (AWS), a Cloud-based server, for the August 29 Special Election. Mr. Hunt asked if the call-in of results will now be transmitted through the PollPads. Mr. Sasnett responded that the results will be sent to the Office of Elections (Office) from the PollPads, queued up for quality control, and then be released to the public. This process will eventually eliminate the paper call-in sheets.

The voter registration scanning project is nearing completion. All voter records have been scanned, and the final data files should be delivered by the end of August.

Deployment of the voting machines for the August 29, 2017, Special Election, will be the weeks of August 7th-25th.

Under Election Administration, for the August 29, 2017, Special Election, ballots were ordered for a 20% turn-out and 10,000 ballots were ordered for absentee voting. Approximately 1,200 election officers are needed for the Special Election, and the "Are you available?" emails were sent out to all EOs on July 10th. Staff has begun making precinct assignments and they will be posted on PollChief starting August 1st. Most precincts will have 5 EOs, adding a ½ day morning EO for the larger precincts.

Voting machine annual maintenance was completed prior to the commencement of Logic and Accuracy (L&A) testing scheduled to begin on July 17th.

Almost of the election materials will be printed in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean in time for the August Special Election. The phone system is set up for a caller to speak or leave a message in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, or Korean.

On July 11, 2017, the Board of Supervisors approved all requested precinct and polling place changes and these will be in effect for the August 29 Special Election.

Under Voter Registration, a total of 30,175 “moved voter” notices were mailed to individuals the USPS reported had moved out of Fairfax County. An additional 5,220 voters were identified as having moved within the county.

In lieu of voter registration information letters, the Office has switched completely over to a postcard format. All work stations are now configured with desktop scanners so that all new registrations and/or correspondence can be digitized and associated with each voter’s record.

The first mailing of absentee ballots for the August 29 Special Election was sent on Thursday, July 13, two days ahead of the deadline.

Under General Updates, Cameron Sasnett and Pat Ferguson graduated from the Certified Elections Registration Administrator (CERA) program.

Feedback has been solicited from both parties regarding the voting equipment rental policy.

Discussion ensued over the adequacy of the 5 election officers allocated to staff most of the precincts for the August Special Election. Because it is the second day of school, the Board suggested that Ms. Flaig consider adding a ½ day officer to those precincts that vote in schools. Ms. Hanley asked that within the next week, all of the comments generated from the June 13 primaries that dealt with issues in the schools be sent to the new Coordinator of Community Use of Facilities for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Since the School Board requested the special election for the second day of school, the Board expressed concern that an adequate polling location be chosen that will, if possible, allow for appropriate access for partial set-up the Monday prior to the special election. Reserving an appropriate number of voter parking spots for the entire day must also be prioritized. Ms. Hanley offered to communicate these concerns to the Chairman of the School Board. Additionally, to assist the new chiefs in setting up their polling location, workshops for new chiefs will be held in August. Refresher courses will also be offered to returning chiefs.

There was no Chairman’s report.

Under the Vice Chairman report, Mr. Stark attended, along with Mr. Sasnett and Ms. Hanley, the annual training by the State Board of Elections. Mr. Stark observed that it would be beneficial to group together the top ten jurisdictions in population for some of the break-out sessions. This would be useful as it would allow these localities to discuss issues that are relevant only to larger jurisdictions. Ms. Hanley mentioned that she has been asked to chair a committee as part of her role on the Executive Board of the Virginia Electoral Board Association (VEBA), and that committee will be “Large Jurisdictions.”

Under the Secretary’s report, due to the additional cost, Ms. Hanley would like to remove the regulation to report elections by congressional district, if no congressional contests are on the ballot. Smaller localities are not usually affected by this requirement because they are wholly situated in one congressional district. Fairfax County, as well as

several other jurisdictions may contain more than one congressional district. This supports Mr. Stark's suggestion that large jurisdictions deal with certain issues that do not affect smaller ones.

Ms. Hanley reported that the Joint Legislation and Audit Review Committee (JLARC) will perform a review of the operation and performance of the Department of Elections.

Ms. Hanley asked Mr. Sasnett if voters can now access the on-line absentee ballot application for the August 29 Special Election. Mr. Sasnett explained that although absentee balloting began for the August 29 Special Election on July 13, ELECT's website does not list it amongst the "Upcoming Elections." Additionally, the interface that allows voters in Fairfax County to look up their polling location, to view upcoming elections, and to see what is on their ballot, needs to be updated to include the August 29 Special Election.

An Order for a Bond Referendum in the amount of \$315,000,000 to finance school improvements was received on July 14, 2017, and will be on the ballot for the November 7, 2017, General and Special Elections.

Ms. Hanley also remarked that the Office is considering adding a caveat to the instructions that a Chief's payment may be delayed or reduced for failure to return certain items to the Government Center on election night. Erica Newsome, IT Manager, commented that 50 precincts did not return the PollPads to the Government Center after the June primaries. LWV asked if the Chiefs were informed of their error and if so, how they responded. Ms. Newsome said most Chiefs explained that they delegated the task but did not double-check the make sure they had all of the correct materials before returning to the Government Center.

Because Fairfax County now provides language in Vietnamese and Korean, Ms. Hanley moved to modify the current requirements of the High School Student Election Participation Program to the following:

- 1) enrolled in a high school government class; **or**
- 2) at least sixteen years of age, fluent in English and also fluent in either Spanish, Vietnamese, or Korean, and planning to take the World Languages exam.

After discussion, Ms. Hanley accepted a friendly amendment to her motion to strike the requirement for taking the World Languages exam. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Under Old Business, Mr. Sasnett is still compiling comments and suggestions from FCDC and FCRC in order to update the Voting Equipment and Usage policy.

Ms. Hanley opened discussion about the 2017 and 2018 dates and times for satellite hours. She moved the following dates and times be approved for satellite voting in 2017:

Government Center: September 22- November 4

Weekdays: September 22-October 13: Monday-Wednesday and Friday from 8am-4:30pm and Thursday from 8am-7pm

Weekdays: October 16-November 3: Monday-Friday, 8am-7pm

Satellite Locations:

Weekdays: October 16-November 3 from 3:30pm-7pm

All locations:

Saturdays: September 30, October 7, October 14, October 21, October 28 and November 4 from 9am-5pm. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Because there is still time to make or amend the reservations, Ms. Hanley asked for feedback on adjusting the 2018 schedule for the *satellite locations only* (emphasis added) by removing two Saturdays, September 29 and October 6, and replacing them with four weekdays, Tuesday-Friday, October 9-12. This would allow for continuous voting at the satellite locations after Monday, October 8 (Columbus Day), alleviating voter confusion. FCDC and FCRC asked for the turn-out numbers for the first two (of the six) Saturdays of absentee voting since 2013 in order to evaluate the proposed recommendation.

There was no New Business.

Under Public Comments, FCDC expressed concern about the choice of the Newington DVS Facility as the new polling place for Belvoir precinct. The reasons include 1) the main entrance has been re-located and is not on Newington Road, although the address indicates Newington Road; 2) it is “so far away from the voters who will be voting”; and 3) traffic is reported to be a problem. Staff reported that a new entrance has been opened with greater accessibility than the old one. Navigational assistance applications do not bring people to the old entrance because it is officially “closed.” Road improvements are almost completed to enhance the new entrance. Signage will be added to assist voters as well.

Jean Thoensen thanked the Board for supporting the polling place name change (to Mountain View High School) for Centreville precinct.

The pre-election meeting for the August 29 Special Election will be Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 4:30 p.m.

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), including the annual review of the General Registrar, as specified in Va. Code § 24.2-109.1.

Without objection, and by a vote of 3-0, the Board entered into Closed Session at 5:45 p.m.

At 7:52 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 Stark
 Secretary Hanley

Mr. Hunt moved to rescind the appointment of Christopher Doherty as Machine Custodian and that the Deputy Machine Custodian, Henry Rackowski, act as the Machine Custodian until the position is filled with a permanent Machine Custodian. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

There being no further business, Mr. Stark made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried, and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Attachments

Stephen M. Hunt, Chairman

Seth T. Stark, Vice Chairman

Katherine K. Hanley, Secretary