

Board of Elections
Office

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Carroll County Board of Elections
Board Minutes
April 19, 2017

Present:

Board

Griffith Manahan, President
Laura O'Callaghan, Vice President
Harvey Tegeler, Secretary
Samuel Foster, Member
Larry Shipley, Member

Staff

Katherine Berry, Election Director
Paula Troxell, Deputy Director

Attorney

Terry Berger, Attorney (by telephone)

Call to Order & Welcome:

Mr. Manahan, President called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes:

The Board approved the minutes from the March 17, 2017 meeting, on a motion from Mr. Shipley, seconded by Mr. Tegeler. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Report:

Mr. Berger reported that HB353 would not change the way we currently provide notice. Ms. Berry said she received a copy of "The 90 Day Report" that describes what is now required since this bill has passed in session. She will email a copy of this report to Mr. Berger. Ms. Berry will discuss this bill in her report.

Mr. Berger stated that he is currently working on an agreement for Carroll Lutheran Village. He has contacted SBE with a question that has not been asked before. Mr. Berger is waiting on SBE to provide an answer to his question so that the agreement can be completed.

Staff Report:

Ms. Berry shared with the Board a list of individuals that have filed for office for the 2018 gubernatorial election.

Ms. Berry reported that SBE has decided not to use the ballot marking device (BMD) exclusively at early voting. Mr. Manahan asked if a BMD would be available for someone who has a disability. Ms. Berry explained that early voting would be conducted the same way as in the 2016 election and there would be one BMD available for anyone to use including a voter with a disability.

MAEO has formed a committee to discuss and possibly request a change to regulations regarding opening absentee ballots prior to Election Day. Ms. Berry is serving on the committee and explained that she wanted the Board to be aware of this discussion in case another LBE board member contacts them to provide input. A lengthy discussion occurred regarding information discussed at the meeting and the pros and cons of opening absentee ballots prior to Election Day.

Ms. Berry reported that Sine Die was April 11th. Ms. Berry stated that the county denied the Board's request to purchase five additional scanners and, since SB406 did not pass in this session, there is no legislation to support the LBE if they feel additional equipment is needed. The constitutional amendment for Same Day Registration (SDR) for Election Day did not pass. This bill will likely be introduced in next year's session which would mean a question could still appear on the 2018 ballot for SDR. The bill changing the time that campaign signs can be posted from 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. has passed. HB353 requires SBE and local boards to provide public notice in advance of a meeting if a change may occur for an administrative policy. "Administrative Policy Affecting Voting Rights" includes decisions made regarding polling places and early voting centers. HB353 requires that the notice be posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting and a posting after the meeting to include a description of the change, including the difference between the new and the old policy.

The office conducted voter outreach at the Senior Expo on April 5th. Ms. Jones and Ms. Bartholow handed out several pamphlets regarding voter registration and election judge recruitment. Ms. Berry asked the board to let her know if they had any suggestions on events they would like the office to attend to conduct voter outreach.

Ms. Berry stated that on April 4th, she attended a hearing with the Commissioners to request the additional IT position. She felt the hearing went well and if approved she will post the position in July. If the position is posted in July interviews will likely occur in August.

Ms. Bartholow attended an election judge meeting on March 31st. Mr. Seibel attended Election Technology Committee meeting on April 4th. Ms. Berry attended an absentee ballot MAEO meeting on April 12th and April 18th. She also attended a MAEO meeting on March 28th. Ms. Jones and Ms. Trester will be visiting nursing homes beginning on April 21st, to provide welcome packets for new residents that include information about voter registration and absentee ballot request.

Ms. Berry reported that she has decided not to split polling places for the 2018 election because of implementing the second early voting site and with the next election being a gubernatorial the turnout will be lower than a presidential election. She stated that there are two polling places that must be discussed and they are Pleasant Valley Fire Company and Mechanicsville Elementary. Ms. Berry began with Pleasant Valley Fire Company. She stated that the Commissioners voted to tear down Charles Carroll Elementary and build a new building. The earliest the new building will be available is 2020. Ms. Berry reminded the board, when they made the decision to use Pleasant Valley it was with the understanding that they would discuss whether to continue to use this facility for the 2018 election. Mr. Manahan stated he wanted to keep this location as a polling place for the 2018 election. Mr. Shipley said that this location was one that he visited during the election and he felt that it worked well. He agrees with Mr. Manahan to keep the location for the 2018 election. The board members were in agreement that if a new building is constructed that they will discuss moving the polling place back to the Charles Carroll area. Mr. Manahan requested that Ms. Berry contact the county to ask if she could engage in the planning of the new building so that it would meet the needs for a polling place. Ms. Berry said she will contact the county to ask if she could provide input to the construction of the new building. Mr. Shipley made a motion to continue to use Pleasant Valley Fire Company as a polling location with the understanding it is temporary and will be reconsidered at any time. Ms. O'Callaghan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Berry opened the discussion regarding Mechanicsville Elementary by stating that the two precincts in this facility could be combined, but there is not enough space in either room for over 6,000 voters. Parking is also a problem at this facility and voters are parking across the street on the carnival grounds that belong to the Gamber Fire Company. If a voter parks across the street, they must cross MD32 which can be dangerous. There are no other facilities in this area that could be used as a polling place. Ms. Berry reported that she reached out to a member of the Gamber Fire Company to ask if they would reconsider our request to use their facility as a polling place. Ms. Berry explained that the previous Election Directors' had requested to use Gamber Fire Company as a polling location, but were denied because Tuesday is their bingo night. The member offered to present the request to the executive board for approval. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to have Ms. Berry contact Gamber Fire Company to request the use of their facility.

Since the second early voting site is in the recommended budget, the office will be making visits to the facilities under consideration. On May 1, 2017, the office will be visiting the South Carroll Swim Club to ensure that nothing has changed with the facility since the last visit in 2015. Ms. Berry also stated that she plans on conducting connectivity test at the South Carroll Senior Center. Then in the afternoon a connectivity test will be conducted at the North Carroll Senior Center. The North Carroll Senior Center is under consideration for the third early voting location when the voter registration reaches 125,000. Ms. Berry plans on reporting her findings at the May board meeting. She stated that the final determination of where the second early voting site will be located will be a Board decision. Ms. Berry invited the Board to attend the visits so that they can see the locations under consideration.

Board Members Political Activities:

Ms. O’Callaghan purchased two tickets for \$140.00 to attend the Carroll County Democratic dinner.

Mr. Tegeler donated \$25.00 to Senator Justin Ready.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

None

Scheduling of Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Shipley; seconded by Mr. Tegeler to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.