

Board of Elections
Office

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Carroll County Board of Elections
Board Minutes
August 14, 2020

Present:

Board

Griffith Manahan, President
John Woodley, Secretary, by telephone
Samuel Foster, by telephone
Laura O'Callaghan, Vice President, by telephone
Harvey Tegeler, by telephone

Staff

Katherine Berry, Election Director
Paula Troxell, Deputy Director
Jay Gullo, Attorney, by phone

Guests

Jennifer Bartholow, Staff, by telephone

Call to Order & Welcome:

Mr. Manahan, President, called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

Staff Report:

Ms. Berry provided a map that includes the 13 vote centers that she will be submitting to SBE for approval. All board members were in agreement with the location and amount of vote centers.

Ms. Berry reported that on Wednesday August 12, 2020, SBE changed the days and hours of early voting to begin on Monday October 26, 2020 through Monday November 2, 2020 from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. On Thursday August 13, 2020, Ms. Berry learned on the Director's conference call that the voting equipment must be changed on Monday night after early voting ends. This means that the ballot marking devices, pollbooks and scanners must be replaced with new equipment by the two IT staff members. Ms. Berry is concerned about resources to manage a third early voting site when the office only has two IT staff. Closing down the three early voting sites would mean a very late night for the staff and they would have to return to the office by 6:00 a.m. the next morning for Election Day. These required hours are in addition to working extremely long hours during the months leading up to the election. Ms. Berry stated her other concern is the shortage of election judges to staff a third early voting site for the required eight days. She stated that she supports having a third center, but due to the shortage of election judges, the days and hours of early voting being changed and the hours the staff would need to work to close down three sites is not manageable. Mr. Manahan reminded everyone that the voter registration number has not reached

125,000 as required by law to have a third early voting site. Ms. O’Callaghan suggested adding more drop boxes instead of opening a third early voting site. Ms. Berry explained that the board will have to manage the pick-up of the ballots from the drop boxes twice a day for 30-days. She said a drop box has been ordered for placement at the North Carroll Senior Center. Mr. Foster made a motioned to continue with the two early voting centers and not to open the third center; seconded by Mr. Tegeler. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Berry asked the board if they wanted to increase the number of drop boxes. She explained that the drop boxes will be available 30-days before the election and that a fourth box was ordered for the North Carroll Senior Center. The remaining drop boxes will be placed at the office, the Westminster Senior Center and the South Carroll Swim Club. Ms. Berry said that the drop boxes must be emptied twice a day and the ballots must be returned to the office. She stated that if more drop boxes are added that the board must go in bi-partisan teams to pick the ballots up. The additional drop boxes will be a 100% cost to the county, and she needs a commitment from the board to manage the drop boxes for 30-days. Mr. Foster asked how many vote centers will be opened on Election Day. Ms. Berry said that she is proposing 13 vote centers. Mr. Manahan asked if the Sheriff’s office will provide security for the drop boxes. Ms. Berry said she is working with the Sheriff’s office, but since the number of days has increased to 30 having them provide security for that amount of days may be an issue. Cameras/security will be placed at each drop box location. Mr. Manahan asked for the cost of the drop boxes. Ms. Berry confirmed with SBE that the cost of each box is around \$3,500.00. Ms. Berry offered to ask the county if COVID funds could be used to purchase the drop boxes. Mr. Tegeler said that would cause further delays since the order for additional boxes is needed today. Ms. O’Callaghan motioned to place drop boxes at Liberty High School, South Carroll Swim Club, Westminster Senior Center, the office, Taneytown Police Station and the North Carroll Senior Center; Mr. Foster seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 to 1. Mr. Tegeler suggested that either Ms. Berry or Ms. Troxell provide a spreadsheet with the dates and times that the ballots must be picked-up at the drop boxes. Ms. Berry will have the spreadsheet available for Wednesday’s meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Ms. Berry will provide an analysis of the staff’s overtime for a vote by mail election as compared to an in-person election.

New Business:

None

Scheduling of Next Meeting:

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday August 19, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Tegeler; seconded by Mr. Foster to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.