



Carroll County Board of Elections



300 South Center Street, Room 212 Westminster, MD 21157-5366

410-386-2080

MD RELAY: Call 711 or 800-735-2258 (TTY)

Toll Free: 1-888-302-8978

ccboe@carrollcountymd.gov

elections.carrollcountymd.gov

FAX: 410-876-3925

Carroll County Board of Elections Board Minutes September 16, 2020

Present:

Board

Griffith Manahan, President

John Woodley, Secretary

Laura O'Callaghan, Vice President

Samuel Foster

Harvey Tegeler

Staff

Katherine Berry, Election Director

Paula Troxell, Deputy Director

Jay Gullo, Attorney

Guest

Muri Dueppen, by telephone

Jennifer Bartholow, by telephone

Confirmation of Oath

Heather DeWees, the Clerk of the Court for Carroll County, administered and recorded the oath of each member of the Board of Canvassers.

Call to Order & Welcome:

Mr. Manahan, President, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes:

The Board approved the minutes from the August 19, 2020 and September 3, 2020 meetings, on a motion from Mr. Woodley, seconded by Mr. Foster. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Report:

Mr. Gullo reported that the attorney conference calls will be held on September 30th, October 14th and October 28th.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was prepared by Mr. Gullo for the City of Taneytown to place a drop box at the Taneytown Police Station for the 2020 general election. The Taneytown Police department is excited to assist the office with the drop box. They are updating their camera

system so that the video of the drop box will be saved for an extended period in case the office would have a need for it. Ms. Berry reported that she posted Mr. Gullo's written legal language regarding the questions she is receiving from voters regarding signature requirements.

Staff Report:

Ms. Berry asked if the Board members would like to report on the outreach events that they attended. A recap was provided by each member that attended an outreach event. The Board members reported that informative discussions were had at each event and that they provided clarity on how the 2020 general election will be conducted. On September 1, 2020, Mr. Manahan attended the Carroll County Republican Women's Club meeting. On September 8, 2020, Mr. Manahan and Mr. Tegeler attended the South Carroll Republican Club meeting. On September 17, 2020, Mr. Manahan will attend the Concerned Women of America (CWA) at the Church of the Open Door. Ms. O'Callaghan attended the South Carroll Rotary Club event on September 1, 2020 and she attended the Carroll County Democratic Central Committee meeting. Mr. Woodley attended the Freedom District Lions Club meeting on September 9, 2020. Ms. O'Callaghan asked how residents in nursing homes will be able to receive assistance with voting if they need it. Ms. Berry explained that the Activity Directors at each facility handle voting for their residents. The office is required to provide procedures to the facilities which include how to assist a voter. Mr. Foster said that he has not attended any outreach events, but he will be attending a Lions Club meeting in a few weeks and will ask the group if they have any questions about the upcoming election.

Announcements & Important Meetings

Election Director's meetings are still occurring weekly.

The State Board will be meeting on September 24, 2020.

Voter Registration

True the Vote withdrew their PIA request.

Voter registration has increased to just over 125,000 voters.

The deadline to change a voter's status to "inactive" has passed for the general election. This means that when the office receives a notification from the post office from a yellow sticker or another method that a voter has moved, a confirmation card will be mailed. If the voter does not return the confirmation card, the office will not be able to make them inactive until after the election is certified. If the voter does not respond to the confirmation card within two weeks, the voter's status is changed to "inactive". There are approximately 7000 voters in an "inactive" status.

As a result of the postcard mailing, the office has received notifications from family members for voters that have died or have moved out of state.

The Libertarian and Green parties are now established parties in Maryland, so new voter registration applications are being created.

Ms. Berry provided a draft copy of the sample ballot. The sample ballot will only be mailed to voters that have not requested a mail-in ballot.

Vote by Mail

Ms. Berry provided a handout with statistics on the number of mail-in ballot request that have been received. A brief discussion occurred regarding the handout.

Ms. Berry provided a handout with the total number of voter centers for each county.

Mail-in ballot applications were mailed the week of August 24th. A press release was done to officially put the media on notice. Ms. Berry reported that she did not see it run in the local news outlets. The notice was posted to the office website and social media accounts.

Ballots will be delivered to the post office by the vendor on September 24th. The voters should begin receiving ballots by October. Ms. Berry stated that the Westminster post office has been fantastic to work with.

A drop box is available for voters that don't want to send their application in the mail. The office also receives mail-in ballot applications through OLVR and the office email.

The deadline to request a mail-in ballot is October 20th. This is a hard deadline, so the applications must physically be received in the office by 5pm. Ms. Berry is planning for limited curbside voting the following two-weeks because there will be voters that will wait until the deadline and it'll be too late for the office to mail a ballot to the voter. The curbside voting will be done by appointment only. Ms. Berry requested that this not be advertised because the office does not have enough staff to manage a large amount of request to vote at the office.

Ms. Berry reported that the office will not utilize the state's data processing center because they were only going to be processing the online request, there was a cost involved and a supervisory commitment requested.

Ms. Berry contacted Carroll Magazine about donating space for PSAs for the election, but they are holding the publication until further notice.

Ms. Berry contacted WTTR about free ad space to run PSAs. She is still awaiting further information.

Ms. Berry said that she talked to Bob Blubaugh from the Carroll County Times and he cannot provide free advertising, but he is hoping to begin running more front-page articles and frequent columns about the election. They are committed to getting accurate information out to the voters. Mr. Woodley said that he knew Carl Delmont that does a radio show on 105.7 and he asked Ms. Berry if she would be interested in being interviewed for his show. Ms. Berry agreed to have Mr. Woodley contact Mr. Delmont to ask if he would be interested in providing information on the upcoming election. Ms. Berry said she was interviewed by Commissioner Weaver for the weekly podcast.

Carroll Media Center is running the FAQs on their channels.

Ms. Berry reported that canvass can be conducted with in-person observation or it can be livestream. If there is in-person observation the office will be able to set-up the canvass room the same as was done for the primary election with a bipartisan team of judges. One judge will open the envelopes and the other judge will scan the ballots. If livestream is done, the office will be required to have a bipartisan team of judges opening envelopes and someone else scanning. The decision on how to conduct the canvass is up to the board. Mr. Turner from Carroll Media Center visited on Monday, September 14th to take some photos of the rooms and prepare to put together their business plan if the Board decides to livestream the canvass. A brief discussion occurred about how to conduct public viewing of the canvass. Mr. Tegeler made a motion to hold the canvass observation in-person; seconded by Ms. O'Callaghan. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Woodley asked if limitations could be made on the number of observers in the room at one time. Mr. Gullo said that if it was publicized the Board could limit the number of individuals in the canvass room. Ms. Berry stated that there is a policy for limiting Challengers & Watchers in the polling room so this same policy could be followed for in-person observation of the canvass. Mr. Woodley asked if livestream would still be required if in-person observation is allowed. Ms. Berry said that livestream is not required if in-person observation is allowed.

Ms. Berry is proposing that canvass begin on October 12th at 9am. Board Members should be present at 8:15am so that the canvass can begin promptly at 9am. Ms. Berry stated that the Board should meet once each week to make board decisions. She said that canvass may be held 7 days per week, if needed through October 22nd, and then it will resume on Thursday, November 5th through Friday November 13th. The dates are subject to change. Ms. Berry will post a schedule on the website, and she will alert the Board to any changes that were made and when the Board can expect to begin meeting to review decisions. She suggested that the Board meet on Fridays in the afternoons starting at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Manahan asked when the meeting should be held to organize the Board of Canvassers. Mr. Gullo said on the morning of October 12th will be fine.

Mr. Manahan asked how a voter that returns a voted ballot that is counted prior to in-person voting and then votes a provisional ballot in-person would be handled. Mr. Gullo stated that regulations have been changed that the first ballot would count, and the second ballot would be rejected. The issue of the voter voting twice would be discussed during the canvass. Mr. Gullo said he does not see a lead way from sending a voter that voted twice to SBE.

The postcards were mailed to voters. The postcard seemed to cause confusion for voters. The office received over 150 phone calls in the 3 days after the postcards were mailed because people didn't understand that they could only vote at the locations listed on the postcard, they didn't receive their mail-in ballot application or they didn't know why they hadn't received their ballot.

IT

All pollbooks have been upgraded.

Ms. Berry reported that ballots are coming next week.

The office is compiling small plastic bags to give to each voter as they enter the polling place that includes a pen and an "I Voted" sticker. The pen will be used at check-in and to vote. Having both items will eliminate a need to sanitize and have personal interaction with the voter as much as possible.

Ms. Berry stated that the Board can delegate the responsibility of checking supplies to the staff to complete prior to the equipment being delivered. Ms. O'Callaghan made a motion to have the staff check the supplies; seconded by Mr. Tegeler. The motion passed unanimously.

Logic and Accuracy (L&A) on the voting equipment will begin tomorrow. Ms. Berry reported that the office is officially out of space in the warehouse so the training room will be used to complete the L&A on the voting equipment.

Equipment delivery dates are still to be determined. Early voting delivery will occur either October 22nd or 23rd and election day either October 29th or 30th. Ms. Berry asked for volunteers to assist with the deliveries and she will keep the Board updated as she receives additional information on the delivery schedule.

Drop boxes from the State will be delivered to the Board of Elections office, Westminster Senior Center and South Carroll Swim Club between September 28th-30th and Liberty High School, North Carroll Senior Center and Taneytown Police Station between October 15th 17th. The temporary drop boxes that the office purchased for Liberty, North Carroll and Taneytown will be available for placement on September 28th. The Facilities department will assist us with moving and securing the boxes that the office purchased. Ms. Berry has received a quote of around \$700.00 for a design for the boxes purchased by the office that is the same design as the state drop boxes. Ms. Berry asked the Board if they wanted the state design, or would they prefer the boxes to be plain or painted. Mr. Tegeler made a motion to purchase the graphics for the temporary boxes purchased by the office; Ms. O'Callaghan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Berry reported that the county is in the process of installing cameras at the North Carroll Senior Center.

Ms. Berry provided the Board with a drop box schedule. Larry Shipley and Gail Riley have agreed to assist the board with the drop boxes. Mr. Shipley and Ms. Riley were former Board members. Ms. Berry stated that the times listed on the schedule must be kept because the Sheriff's office wants to be at the drop box locations when pick up of the ballots occur. A discussion regarding the schedule and the logistics of getting to the boxes was held. Ms. Berry provided a copy of the "Integrity Transportation Log" that will be used when picking up the ballots from the drop boxes. Ms. Berry reviewed how to complete this report. Mr. Tegeler made a motion that once the bipartisan team collects the ballots from the drop boxes and the ballot collection bin has been sealed by the bipartisan team only one team member will return the ballots to the office; seconded by Mr. Woodley. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Manahan asked if the pollbooks in the vote centers will be networked. Ms. Berry said that the office is working with SBE and the Board of Education to establish the networking. Mr. Manahan asked what happens if the network goes down. Ms. Berry stated that if the network goes down the contingency plan would be to have voters vote provisionally.

Polling Places & Election Judges

Ms. Berry reported that the election judge positions have been filled with an adequate amount of back up judges. She stated that the judge status for each vote center is included on the mail-in ballot handout that she provided earlier in the meeting.

The office will have in-person training for a limited number of judges over the next few weeks. Refresher and introductory training will be available on the office website. Ms. Berry will provide the Board with the password if they are interested in accessing the training videos. Ms. Berry stated that since there are many other tasks that are required to be completed for this election, the office is hopeful that these videos can adequately prepare election judges. The office assigns new election judges to work with returning election judges because real-life training is the best training. Quizzes have been created using google forms that the election judges must take to determine if the judge is adequately trained.

Ms. Berry reported that the office will do the best they can to report wait times during early voting and on election day on social media and the office's website.

Ms. Berry provided a copy of an email received from a voter regarding South Carroll High School.

Mr. Manahan asked if tenured chief judges were found to possibly open more vote centers. Ms. Berry explained the judges that have been hired. Mr. Manahan asked if Ms. Berry is satisfied with the number of vote centers. Ms. Berry responded that the number of vote centers is a decision for the Board. She explained that quality over quantity when it comes to staffing additional vote centers is a concern. Ms. Berry stated that if COVID increases, judges may quit which could mean closures of vote centers. She reported that the number of vote centers in Carroll is on point with other counties.

Ms. Berry said we followed SBE's guidelines when selecting the vote centers. A discussion occurred and no motion was made to increase the number of vote centers.

Ms. Berry reported that the polling place evaluations for early voting and the vote centers must be completed by the Board.

Personnel

Ms. Berry stated that the four high school interns have been fantastic. They are dedicated, work very hard and have learned a lot.

There are five additional people that are working in the office to assist with opening the mail, assist with the emails and phone calls. They are also scanning documents into the voter registration database.

Erin Perrone was selected as permanent employee. She will begin on September 23rd and she will be able to jump in and help wherever the office needs it.

The office has three additional laptops for the full-time staff so they can work from home if something would happen that the office would need to be closed.

HR has informed the LBE offices that after the election, we are all to go back to teleworking as much as possible and there is no anticipated return date to state offices on a permanent basis.

Ms. Berry continues to monitor the Commissioner's meetings for the charter government discussion.

Board Members Political Activities:

Ms. O'Callaghan donated \$100.00 to the Senate Pack for Schumer and \$350.00 to the Biden campaign.

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 October 7, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Tegeler; seconded by Mr. Woodley to adjourn the meeting at 11:46 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Closed Meeting Held on August 19, 2020:

Mr. Manahan requested a motion to close the meeting at 11:28 a.m. under General Provisions Article §3-305(b)(10), which exceptions permit closing a meeting to discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans. The Board closed the meeting to discuss a security plan for the drop boxes, early voting centers and Election Day vote centers. Mr. Woodley made a motion to convene in closed session; seconded by Ms. O’Callaghan. The motion carried unanimously.

Present:

Board:

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

Staff:

Katherine Berry, Election Director
Paula H. Troxell, Deputy Director

Attorney

Jay Gullo

Topic(s) of Discussion:

A discussion was held regarding a security plan for the drop boxes, early voting locations and Election Day vote centers.

Action(s) Taken:

Several motions were made and approved to implement a security plan, disclosing the contents of which would compromise the plan and pose a security risk to the public.