

MINUTES

May 5, 2021

MEETING OF THE ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS 701 Kelly Road, Room 230, Cumberland, Maryland

ATTENDEES: John Stakem, President
Armand Pannone, Board Attorney
JoAnn Spiker, Member
Timothy Donaldson, Member
John Fetchero, Member
Debbie Johnson, Member
Diane Loibel, Election Administrator

ABSENT: None

DECLARATION OF QUORUM PRESENT

Mr. Stakem called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M., and stated that there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Stakem called for alterations, corrections, and/or approval of the minutes. Mrs. Spiker made a motion to approve the April 7th minutes. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Pannone did not have anything to report.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

OLD BUSINESS:

Legislative Update

HB156/SB283 – Student & Military Voter Empowerment Act – This bill requires local boards of elections to contact and obtain input from large residential communities including institutions of higher education, continuing care retirement communities, senior communities, and military installations. A public institution of higher education shall designate a staff member as the Student Voting Coordinator and develop a student voting plan. The plan will include wide dissemination of information about voter registration, deadlines, returning a ballot by mail, early voting dates,

election day dates, and transportation options to voting locations. The plan also establishes a process for an individual to submit the FPCA electronically and use a common access card to sign the federal post card application.

HB206/SB596 – Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Hours of Operation

This bill requires that an early voting center shall be open for voting beginning the second Thursday before a primary or general election through the Thursday before the election and during the hours between 7 AM – 8 PM each day. Members are worried that it may be difficult to staff early voting because of the additional hours and no increase in pay.

HB222/SB224 – Election Law – Correctional Facilities – Voter Registration and Voting – This bill requires SBE to adopt regulations establishing a program to inform eligible voters of upcoming elections and how they may exercise their right to vote. Members were concerned over the safety of staff members who may be required to visit these facilities. Mrs. Loibel was instructed to keep members up to date regarding the new regulations.

HB738 – Election Law – Certificates of Candidacy & Ballot Questions – Revisions – This bill alters the deadlines by which a certificate of candidacy for a successor candidate for Governor or Lt. Governor must be filed. It also alters the day by which certain statements regarding certain statewide questions to appear on a ballot is required to be submitted.

HB745 – Election Law – Early Voting Centers – This bill alters the number of early voting centers certain counties are required to establish. For counties with fewer than 50,000 registered voters, a county shall have one early voting center. This change does not affect Allegany County. We still have the ability to add an early voting center if the local board, the County Commissioners, and SBE are all in agreement with the additional site.

HB1048/SB683 – Election Law – Permanent Absentee Ballot List, Ballot Drop Boxes, and Reports – This bill requires a local board to consider the following factors when determining the location of a ballot drop box: the accessibility of the ballot drop box to historically disenfranchised communities, including votes with disabilities, cultural groups, ethnic groups, and minority groups, proximity of the ballot drop box to dense concentration to voters, accessibility of the ballot drop box by public transportation, equitable distribution of ballot drop boxes throughout the county and maximizing voter participation, including through placement of ballot drop boxes at community centers and public gathering places. A local board shall ensure the security of ballot drop boxes through the use of security cameras at all times and periodic in-person visits by

appropriate personnel. The permanent absentee ballot list is available to all voters. A voter who requests permanent absentee ballot status must submit one of the following methods by which the voter chooses to receive an absentee ballot: mail, facsimile transmission or by the internet and must also select a method by which the voter chooses to be contacted by the State Board by either non-forwardable mail; email; or text message. 60 days before the statewide primary election in 2022 and 2024, each local board of elections shall send the State Board approved absentee ballot application to each eligible voter.

MAEO Conference

Mrs. Loibel provided all members with the confirmation email for the hotel reservations for the upcoming MAEO Conference. The MAEO Conference is scheduled for August 23rd – August 27th.

NEW BUSINESS:

Deputy Director Update

Interviews for the Deputy Director position were held on April 28, 2021. Currently, the selection has been provided to the County Commissioners and we are awaiting their approval. The new position will take effect on July 1, 2021. Hopefully, we will be posting the Registrar position in the very near future.

Municipal Elections

The Town of Lonaconing's election will be held on May 11, 2021 from 7 AM to 7 PM. We will be providing support for their election. Precinct registers and VACs were supplied to the Town of Lonaconing ahead of their election. This is the only scheduled municipal election for this calendar year.

Computer Systems and Software Security Updates:

Mrs. Loibel reports that office staff has successfully applied the Microsoft Security updates for the month of April on SBE workstations. We have also updated other third-party software applications to their latest versions on all workstations.

Registration Statistics:

Statistics as of April 30, 2021 were as follows: Total Active Registration 43,828, 12,561 Democrat, 22,589 Republican, 77 Green, 215 Libertarian, 32 Working Class, 22 Bread & Roses, 7,921 Unaffiliated, and 411 Others.

Board Members Report:

There was nothing to report.

Disclosure of Campaign Contributions:

There was nothing to report.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting will be held on June 2, 2021 at 9:00 A.M.

Adjournment:

Mr. Donaldson made a motion for adjournment. Mr. Fetchero seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Stakem adjourned the meeting at 10:07 A.M.