



## BOARD OF ELECTIONS MINUTES

Thursday, April 30, 2020, 11:30 A.M.

Willowbank Office Building  
420 Holmes Street, Room 146  
Bellefonte, PA 16823

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### I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Elections was convened at 11:33 AM by Chair of the Board Elections Steven Dershem.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator Margaret Gray, Director of Elections Joyce McKinley, Elections Coordinator Jodi Nedd, Voter Registration Latisha Stefanko and Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

### III. MINUTES

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins the Board voted unanimously to amend the minutes of April 21 to say that the County will not pay for return postage on ballots and approve the minutes of the Board of Elections meetings held on April 7 and April 21.

### IV. NEW BUSINESS

#### A. Polling Places

Jodi Nedd reported that at least 53 polling places have confirmed their availability for the June Primary. She would first like to see the locations that are available then work to combine precincts and decide where poll workers should be placed. Those who have responded have also provided alternate locations to look into if their usual precinct is unavailable. Commissioner Pipe suggested identifying the number of locations the Board is comfortable with and then combining precincts as necessary, limiting voter travel to a certain distance. The goal would be to have a specified number of well-staffed precincts, Commissioner Dershem agreed.

#### B. Poll Workers

Close to 15 individuals have submitted online interest forms to work for the June Primary. Jodi has confirmed that they are still willing to work due to the COVID-19 circumstances. They have agreed and are willing to work wherever they are needed. Jodi has also contacted poll workers who have volunteered in the past on an as needed basis. Commissioner Higgins reminded the Board that the County will need to have enough workers for 88 precincts, even if the precincts are combined.

Commissioner Pipe read an excerpt from The Department of State's Election Operations During COVID-19 Manual, Section 3.3.6 Assignment of Polling Officials, "The Department is exploring the most effective means by which consolidated polling places will allow fewer total and more flexible uses of poll-workers during the 2020 primary than in usual elections. We are developing the details of specific guidance and will provide it to the counties this week." He doesn't think that the Department will say that the County needs to have a separate board for every precinct. Additional guidance is forthcoming. In the last Presidential Primary, Jodi reported around a 30% voter turnout. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, she doesn't think there will be a great turnout or that the number of poll workers will be an issue.

Commissioner Dershem asked how many additional recruits are needed and Jodi said anyone who is interested in working can still apply. They may be needed in November. To be a poll worker, individuals must be Centre County residents, registered voters and at least 17 years of age. The Board discussed training for new workers. Joyce suggested in person training for groups of ten. Commissioner Pipe was not in favor of in person training. He is willing to help record or tape trainings, even work with CNET to prepare a video training. Jodi added that the election manual is step by step, this could be distributed to workers to review prior to Election Day. In addition, Commissioner Dershem recommended preparing FAQ's and Commissioner Pipe agreed. This would be a quick point of reference for poll workers before calling the Election Office for guidance.

Joyce has contacted the County Solicitor about the wage scale for poll workers. She reminded the Board that they should keep in mind the collective amount paid during the course of the year. If it exceeds a certain amount, the Controller will be required to complete a 1099 for each of them. Jodi suggested having an additional line item on the paycheck, one for the base pay and another for a COVID-19 bonus. Payment for the Judges of Election are broken out into four groups based on the voter turnout, a maximum payment of \$170 plus training and compensation for additional duties performed. Joyce noted that three individuals are elected and it is her understanding that their pay cannot be raised during the term. Of the individuals who have agreed to work, Jodi said none of them have questioned the pay. She did agree that the bonus would be a nice act of appreciation. Due to the extraordinary circumstances, Commissioner Dershem said he would like a \$100 - \$175 bonus included in their payment. Commissioner Pipe agreed that this would ensure that workers report to work and thank them for being there.

Commissioner Pipe stated that the Board received notice of grant funding totaling around \$160,000 for Centre County. The acceptance is due by Monday, May 11 and he suggested reviewing it at the next meeting after the County Solicitor has had a chance to review. Commissioner Dershem asked if the funding is designated for the Primary or if it can be used in the General Election as well? Joyce confirmed that it must be used by December 31, 2020.

The Board then discussed sanitizing precincts after Election Day. Commissioner Dershem suggested that the County perform the sanitizing. If a facility is needed the

following day, a contracted vendor may not be able to meet all of the need. Jodi asked if this would be done for all the precincts or only those that request it. At this time, only one precinct has expressed concern. Commissioner Pipe said multiple contractors may be needed and the maintenance staff may be needed to assist. It will not be offered to all precincts at this point.

V. ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monday, May 18, 2020

Last day to REGISTER before the primary.

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot.

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

GENERAL PRIMARY

Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots. Must be received by 8PM.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Pipe, seconded by Commissioner Higgins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Natalie Smith  
Executive Office Supervisor