

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of January 23, 2018

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 5:55 p.m. in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar. Those present were Electoral Board members Anne Hemenway (Chair), Jon Bright (Vice Chair), and Jim Nix (Secretary), General Registrar, Rosanna Bencoach, Deputy Registrar Katie Mauller and Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton.

On a motion by the Vice-chair, seconded by the Secretary, the agenda was approved unanimously without change.

On a motion by the Vice-chair, seconded by the Chair, the minutes of the December 5, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously without change.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present for this meeting.

Rebecca Quinn could not attend the meeting, but had emailed a question inspired by issues which arose during recent election recounts in other parts of the state. She asked how the Registrar and/or Board ensure that voters are assigned to the correct districts. The Registrar explained that she had explored different ways of verifying district assignments for City voters using reports on the public state website and available from VERIS (including one check similar to a report provided when the pollbook is prepared). She had replied to Ms. Quinn (copying the Board) with a brief description of these methods and confirmation that all voters in the City of Charlottesville are currently assigned to the correct Congressional, State Senate and House of Delegates districts.

Report of the General Registrar

The Registrar distributed a written report to the Board members and several items in the report prompted questions. The Chair expressed concern about the fact that the three senior members of the staff, including the General Registrar, have been scheduled to participate in an eight day supervision and leadership class at PVCC. These all-day sessions will take place during seven weeks in February and March and the chair questioned the wisdom of leaving the office with no members of the full-time staff present during these training days. This concern was shared by the other two Board members and the Registrar was directed to reduce participation in this training to

ensure that at least one full-time staff member would be present in the office on each of the training dates.

The secretary asked why the Registrar had still not responded to the questions from the Lead Team Budget Review meeting held on January 2. While the Registrar assured the Board that a response would be sent by the end of the week (January 26), the Chair, who had attended the January 2 meeting with the Registrar, expressed alarm at the slowness of the response in light of the urgency of the review team's request.

The Registrar's report on office staffing also generated questions concerning the implementation of the upgrade of Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton's position to Election Manager and the level of compensation for this position. There followed a broader discussion on office staffing requirements and the distribution of responsibilities among the staff members. These issues will be addressed in the response to the Budget Review Team and discussed further at the next Board meeting.

Report of the Deputy Registrar

Deputy Registrar Katie Mauller briefed the Board on the scope and status of the ongoing effort to digitally scan key voter records. The scanning program is driven by a need to address limitations in secure storage space for paper documents in the office and a recognition of the accessibility advantages that result from converting records to digital form linked to VERIS. The material to be scanned includes absentee ballot applications, registration forms and confirmation notices. She requested a Board policy on the retention period for the paper records after they have been scanned. The Board members agreed to make a decision at the next meeting.

Report of Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton

Ms. Morton provided the Board with a summary of her meeting with the Deputy Registrar in Albemarle County and the pay structure and organization of their offices, particularly the use of equipment vendors and electoral board members to perform duties performed in Charlottesville by the voting equipment technicians. This visit was conducted at the Board's request made during the December 5 meeting during the discussion of the city's voting equipment technician positions.

Ms. Morton also provided the Board with a written summary of information on staffing levels and organization that she had gathered in discussions with registrars in other Virginia jurisdictions. This information was compiled to assist the GR in responding to questions from the Budget Review Team. The jurisdictions surveyed, with the exception of Albemarle County, were selected because they have a voting population comparable in size to that of Charlottesville. In general these offices are staffed at a

lower level than Charlottesville's and Ms. Morton reported that almost all expressed concern about inadequate staffing levels.

Ms. Morton also provided the Board with a draft of the office security plan that is due to the Department of Elections by January 31. This update of the 2017 plan will be expanded to address security of the warehouse under the physical security heading and will be reviewed by the Charlottesville Police Department before being submitted. The Vice-chair asked Ms. Morton to check with the Department of Elections on the recommended handling instructions and dissemination of this document.

Appointment of Election Officials

Assistant Registrar Melissa Morton presented applications from three individuals seeking to become election officials (EOs). These were reviewed by the Board and approved unanimously on a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-chair. The following individuals were appointed:

Doug Livingston
Leland Kent Merritt
John Michael Henrietta

Ms. Morton also reported that, to date, she has received applications for reappointment from 73 of the current EOs whose terms are coming to an end. In addition, eight current EOs have declined reappointment and 23 have yet to be heard from. The Board will act on these reappointments at the next meeting.

Executive Session

At 7:10 p.m. there was a motion by the Chair to close the meeting for the purpose of conducting a discussion of personnel matters. This motion was seconded by the Secretary and approved unanimously.

The board reconvened in open session at 8:20 p.m. and the Chair moved to certify, by recorded vote, that only matters exempted from the open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed session. This motion was seconded by the Vice-chair and approved unanimously. Copies of the motion closing the meeting and the certification following the closed session are attached to these minutes.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar at 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, February 7, 2018.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair