

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of September 13, 2018

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 12:06 pm on Thursday, September 13, 2018 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, Election Manager Melissa Morton, Project Assistant (Assistant Registrar) Joyce McKenney and Voter Equipment Technicians Raenell Lockley and Bob Hodous.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the agenda was approved unanimously without change.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the August 23 and September 5 meetings were approved unanimously without change.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present at this meeting.

Conduct of Logic and Accuracy Testing (L&A)

The purpose of this meeting was to conduct final testing to verify that the election equipment and ballots have been properly configured to ensure that voters' choices would accurately be recorded and to then set up and seal the voting equipment to be used for the in-person absentee voting that will begin on September 21. This meeting was originally scheduled for Friday, September 14 but due to a forecast of extreme weather on that date, the schedule was advanced by a day and the appropriate public notices were posted and emailed.

One ballot marking device and one ballot scanner will be used for in-person absentee voting. In preparation for the L&A, Ms. Lockley had programmed two sets of digital memory modules for these devices (one set in test mode the other in "official" mode) and printed a supply of test ballots for use in conducting the test. The three board members then marked the test ballots according to a test matrix designed to verify that all votes would be counted as marked in all contests. Two thirds of the ballots were marked by hand while the remainder were prepared using the Touch Writer accessible ballot marking device. The test included ballots marked with over-votes in each contest and a single blank ballot in order to verify that the scanner would alert the voter to such errors so they may be corrected. The votes were then tallied with the result that all ballots were counted exactly as marked.

Another element of the test was to verify that provisional ballots could not be scanned on the absentee scanner. A single ballot printed in the provisional ballot style was marked and a scanning attempt made but the scanner rejected it as invalid, which was the correct result. A single federal-only ballot was also marked and submitted for scanning but it too was rejected as invalid. In-person absentee voting by voters qualified to cast just federal-only ballots is possible but exceedingly rare. Since the absentee scanner was not programmed to accept federal-only ballots, should a federal-only voter seek to vote absentee in person, he or she will be given a federal-only ballot to mark, which will then be held with the mailed absentee ballots and scanned on November 6 on a scanner programmed to accept both styles of absentee ballots.

Following the successful L&A test, the two machines (Verity Scanner and Touch Writer ballot marking device) were loaded with the “official” memory modules and sealed by the board. They will remain sealed until the beginning of in-person absentee voting on September 21.

Office Staffing Update

The vacancy for a part-time Project Assistant (Assistant Registrar), to work primarily on absentee voting and voter registration, has been filled contingent on a favorable drug test. The projected start date for this new employee is September 17.

Ms. McKenney reported that all key election official positions have been filled for the November 6 election and all election officials have been assigned.

Other Business

Ms. Bencoach distributed sample ballots to the board members. She announced that sample ballots, explanations of party abbreviations on ballots, and explanations of the two Constitutional Amendments are now available on the office’s website, in standard and accessible text only versions.

Ms. Bencoach also reported that she and Ms. Lockley made a presentation to the City ADA Committee in the morning before this board meeting with Ms. Lockely conducting a demonstration of the Touch Writer ballot marking device.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar at 5:45 pm on Tuesday, October 16, 2018.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair