

## **MINUTES**

### **City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of December 18, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 5:50 pm on Tuesday, December 18, 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, Election Manager Melissa Morton, Project Assistant Joyce McKenney and former Deputy Registrar Dianne Gilliland.

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

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the November 19 meeting were approved unanimously without change.

#### **Public Comment**

City resident Patrick Cory was present for the meeting but made no comment.

#### **Registrar's Report**

There was no formal report but the Registrar informed the Board that, according to the Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP), based on statistics from the Department of Elections, the turnout in Charlottesville in the recent election came closest in the state to matching the turnout in the 2016 presidential election (97.3%).

#### **Appointment of Election Officials**

Project Assistant Joyce McKenney presented applications from five individuals wishing to become election officers. The board reviewed these applications and, on a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair and unanimously approved, the following were appointed:

Paula Fallon  
Rebecca Kathryn Hill  
Margie L. McPherrin McNergney  
Paula Sprague  
Miguel Valladares-Llata

### **Electronic Pollbook (EPB) Update**

Ms. Morton informed the Board that she had received a proposal from our poll book vendor for new EPBs that included hardware (tablets), software and training. The new software and hardware have not yet received the necessary state certification but the company expects to receive the certification by June 2019. A company representative, during a recent visit, conducted a demonstration of the new EPB highlighting its capability for faster check-in of voters. Faster check-in could offer the potential for a reduction in the number of computers required and the number of election officers needed to check-in voters. This new system may also be suitable for use in the central absentee precinct. Further discussion of this offer will be on the agenda for the January 2019 meeting.

During the visit, the poll book vendor provided an analysis of the poll book problems that occurred on Election Day. In his opinion, the difficulties resulted from programming errors in downloading the program files and in setting up the administrative functions. It appears that there may have also been some errors made by election officers in checking in voters. The Vice Chair brought up the fact that not all EPBs were programmed to require action by the Chief Election Officer to allow voters returning unused absentee ballots to vote on Election Day with regular precinct ballots. The Vice Chair wanted to reaffirm the established policy of the Electoral Board that only the Chief has the authority to make this change to absentee voter status.

### **Update on the Revised Statement of Results (SOR) for the Central Absentee Precinct (CAP)**

Ms. Gilliland distributed copies of a draft of a simplified SOR for CAP, based on one recently developed by the Department of Elections. She pointed out that this revision avoids duplication of information reported on other election documents. The Board members raised a number of questions that demonstrated the need for further work on this document before the next election. Ms. Gilliland will continue working on this issue and will review CAP SOR versions employed recently by registrars in Amherst and Prince William County.

### **Building and Equipment Damage Claims**

Ms. Morton presented an estimate of repair costs for floor damage in the Recreation and Carver polling places, which are under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Department. The damage reportedly was caused by Office of Voter Registration chairs and tables moved to these precincts for the election. It was suggested that, in the future, we use Parks and Rec tables and chairs, presumably selected to avoid floor damage. The issue of the damage is being pursued by the Parks and Recreation

Department and we are far from knowing how much of the repair cost will come from the Registrar's Office budget.

### **Discussion of Budget issues for the Current Fiscal Year**

Although no decisions will be final until February, for budget purposes it must be assumed that there will be at least a Democratic Primary for local candidates on June 11, 2019. A primary for House of Delegates, which would also normally occur on June 11, may be delayed until late summer due to court-ordered redistricting.

The General Registrar reported that, although the expenditure for election officers in the general election was higher than expected due to elevated turnout and pay rate increases to comply with City living wage standards, we should be within budget overall for the rest of the fiscal year.

### **Discussion of Budget issues for the 2020 Fiscal Year**

The 2020 fiscal year has the potential to include as many as three primary elections as well as the November 2019 general election. There may be a delayed House of Delegates primary in August or September 2019, a Presidential primary in March of 2020 and possibly a U.S. Senate and/or House of Representatives primary in June 2020.

There was an extended discussion on projections for the number of election officials that will be required to staff elections in the current and next fiscal year with the Election Manager making a strong case for increased staffing due to a combination of rising registration numbers and enhanced voter interest leading to high turnouts.

### **Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Issues**

At 7:24 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 Vice Chair and approved unanimously.

The board reconvened in open session at 7:50 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.

### **Board Oversight of Registrar's Office Operations**

The Chair expressed a need for the Board to be better informed with regard to the work conducted in the Registrar's Office and proposed that weekly staff leadership meetings

be held with one Board member present at each meeting. The other two Board members agreed and the Vice Chair proposed that these staff meetings be held at 8:30 a.m. on Monday or the first work day of the week, when there is a Monday holiday. A Board consensus was quickly reached supporting this proposal and the Chair directed that such meetings be held starting the first full week in January with Ms. Bencoach, Ms. Morton and Project Assistant (Acting Deputy Registrar) Jamie Virostko. The Vice Chair will attend the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Secretary will attend the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and the Chair will attend the following week. This rotation will continue for the next six months.

**Next Electoral Board Meeting**

The next meeting will take place in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar at 5:45 pm on Wednesday, January 16, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted:*

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair