

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of July 2, 2019

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 5:46 p.m. on Tuesday, July 2, 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, Melissa Morton and Acting Deputy Registrar Jamie Virostko.

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

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the June 4, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved without change.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the June 11-14, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved without change.

Public Comment

The following members of the public were present for this meeting: Ms. Molly Conger and Ms. Ivora Hinton. Ms. Hinton complimented the Board and staff on having conducted a well-run election on June 11.

Comments by the Chair

Ms. Hemenway spoke in recognition of Ms. Morton as the new Charlottesville General Registrar and reported on the introduction of Ms. Morton to the City Council and City Manager at the Council meeting July 1. In welcoming the new registrar, the Chair spelled out two goals for the coming year:

- 1) Conduct of secure, safe, organized and efficient elections.
- 2) Increase outreach to the community, including University of Virginia students, on registration and other voting issues.

High voter turnout is anticipated next year. We plan outreach to the community by multiple means to recruit additional officers of election. The Chair also discussed the merits of the new tablet-based electronic poll books planned for acquisition in time for the high-turnout primary and general elections in 2020.

Registrar's Report

Ms. Morton provided the Board members with a written report outlining several events planned for this summer as elements of an expanded voter outreach program. The report also noted campaign finance violations by independent candidates. The Secretary encouraged the staff to continue to provide all candidates with the information they need to avoid committing these infractions. The Vice Chair asked the Registrar about the status of the budget for the fiscal year that began on July 1. Ms. Morton expressed confidence that, as a result of recent personnel changes, staff salary expenses for the year were expected to remain within the amount budgeted. She also assured the Board that implemented and anticipated efficiency measures will keep other expense categories at or below budgeted amounts.

The Chair asked about the availability of capital improvement funds to cover the cost of the new electronic poll books. Ms. Morton explained that the combination of available carry-over capital funds, expected reimbursements from the State and a small supplement she is requesting from the City should cover the purchase of the new equipment. She sees a possible shortfall in funds for Officers of Election salaries in the final month of the current budget year as the only potential budget problem. This is because a June primary election was not anticipated in the budget when submitted in December of last year.

Appointment of Officers of Election

Ms. Morton presented applications from seven individuals wishing to become officers of election. The board reviewed these applications and, on a motion by the Chair, seconded by the Vice Chair, the following were unanimously approved for appointment to three-year terms:

Sarah Mullen
Sharon Yackso
Michael Van Yahres
Rebecca Van Der Heuvel
Christina Rees
Johnnie Falkins
Melvena Hill

Take-aways from the June 24-25 Training in Richmond

The Board members expressed generally positive views on the quality and usefulness of this year's training. Of particular interest were the sessions on complying with the mandates of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and open meeting regulations. In

addition, the information presented on implementation of the new early voting law generated some discussion. No local planning steps can be taken, however, before the Department of Elections issues a report to the General Assembly in December and the Assembly passes implementing legislation in its next session.

Other Business

In discussing the election schedule for the coming year concerns were raised about the difficulties of conducting the March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary while City schools are in session. The date for the primary is set by statute. The school system has been aware of the March 3 date for some time. The Chair asked the Registrar to contact the schools about the primary. Ideally schools should be closed on March 3. However, if this is not possible, efforts must be made to provide adequate space for setting up the election within the school buildings and enough parking for voters and to avoid conflict between school activities and the election.

The next meeting of the Board will take place in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar at 5:45 pm on Tuesday July 30, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Anne Hemenway, Chair

Jon Bright, Vice Chair