

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of September 13, 2021

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11:09 a.m. on Monday, September 13 in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar. Those present were Electoral Board members Jon Bright (Chair), Anne Hemenway (Vice Chair) and Jim Nix (Secretary), and Acting Director of Elections and General Registrar Taylor Yowell.

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

Approval of the minutes for the Sept 1 meeting was postponed to the next meeting.

Public Comment

Ms. Bekah Saxon, Co-chair of the Charlottesville Democratic Committee was present but made no comment.

Discussion Items

The recent guidance from the Department of Elections regarding the schedule for pre-processing of ballots received by mail and the accommodation of authorized observers during in-person early voting was reviewed by the Board and Registrar. It was agreed that the established schedule for pre-processing meets ELECT's requirements to initiate processing at least seven days before the election and ensure that all ballots received by the Friday before the election are promptly assessed for errors and voters notified of any need for ballot cure. Regarding authorized observers for early voting, Ms. Yowell informed the board that the system employed in November 2020, which proved satisfactory for both observers and staff, would be used again for the upcoming election.

Planning for the November 2 General Election

Ms. Yowell updated the Board concerning the possible relocation of the Carver precinct within the Carver Recreation Center building from the second to the first floor. Other City departments consulted have responded favorably and the last remaining issue concerns whether the first-floor building entrance is large enough to admit the cage used to transport and secure the voting equipment. This will be checked in the next few days.

Ms. Yowell informed the Board of a few leadership changes at the precincts for the general election and confirmed that experienced leaders have been appointed to all the key positions

The Vice Chair asked about the plan for the collection of the precinct drop boxes on election night and Ms. Yowell informed the Board that the guidance has changed since the last meeting in that Board members now are authorized to pick up the drop boxes containing mailed ballots. However, two Board members, representing both political parties, are required to do this. The Chair and the Secretary will work out a plan for doing this efficiently on November 2.

A request from the Vice Chair regarding the withdrawal of a City Council candidate from the election prompted a discussion of its implications for the conduct of the election. Ms. Yowell informed the Board members that notices that Ms. Walker had officially withdrawn from the race will be posted at every ballot marking station both during early voting and on election day. In addition, notices with the same information, printed on a conspicuous color of paper, will accompany every mailed ballot.

There was also a discussion of the decision at the last meeting to extend voting hours on Thursday evenings during the early voting period and the Vice Chair asked about efforts by the Registrar to get the word out to the voters. Ms. Yowell responded with a list of the multiple options she will employ, and it was agreed to highlight this voting enhancement to the press during the public Logic and Accuracy testing scheduled to immediately follow the Board meeting.

Electronic Pollbooks (EPBs) for Early Voting

Ms. Yowell confirmed that the order has been placed for a set of EPBs to be used for early voting and noted that delivery was expected by the end of the week. DemTech, the pollbook vendor, is preparing an early voting template that should be available shortly enabling the use of EPBs for the first time in early voting for the November 2 election.

The next meeting will be held in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar starting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 18.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m. and was followed at noon by Logic and Accuracy testing in preparation for the start of early voting.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Jon Bright, Chair

Anne Hemenway, Vice Chair