

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of January 12, 2022

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 12 in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar. Those present were Electoral Board members Jon Bright (Chair) and Jim Nix (Secretary), Director of Elections and General Registrar Taylor Yowell and Assistant Registrar Joshua Jenkins. Anne Hemenway (Vice Chair) attended by Zoom.

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

Review of the minutes of the December 14, 2021 meeting was deferred to the next meeting.

Public Comment

Ms. Bekah Saxon, representing the Charlottesville Democratic Committee and Ms. Sue Lewis representing the League of Women Voters were present by Zoom but did not make any comment.

Election of Electoral Board Officers

This being the first meeting of the new term it was necessary for the Board members to elect officers for the coming year. Following a brief discussion Ms. Hemenway nominated Mr. Bright as Chair. Mr. Nix seconded and the vote was unanimous. The Chair then nominated Ms. Hemenway as Vice Chair. Mr. Nix seconded and the vote was unanimous. The Vice Chair then nominated Mr. Nix as Secretary. The Chair seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Discussion Items

At the request of the Chair, Ms. Yowell addressed a report that some election officials had still not received their pay checks for working at the November 2 election. Ms. Yowell acknowledged that this was the case and attributed much of the problem to the Post Office. City policy allows for reissue of checks that do not arrive after fourteen days and approximately ten checks meeting that criteria had been reissued while other election officials had elected to wait for delivery without reissue.

For most of the remainder of the meeting, the Board discussed the possibility of revising the City precinct boundaries and the way forward. The goal is to bring the number of

voters in each into closer balance and to replace inadequate polling locations. The Vice Chair noted that there is no statutory requirement to move precinct boundaries but rebalancing precinct sizes and replacing the Tonsler voting location, and possibly one or two others, would be of benefit to the voters. Unfortunately, this would require the expertise of a GIS coordinator, which the city does not have at present.

A discussion guided by a map of current precinct boundaries and polling locations proved frustrating without a means to estimate the impact that moving boundaries would have on the number of voters in each precinct. Current registration statistics and a list of planned housing development projects provided some indications of where changes were needed but specific GIS data would be essential for a meaningful discussion of boundary changes.

It was, however, possible for the Board members, in conjunction with the Registrar and Mr. Jenkins to identify polling locations considered inadequate and to identify potential replacements that would better serve the voters. Candidates for elimination are Tonsler, Alumni Hall and possibly Key Recreation because of problems with space, access, location, and availability of parking. Potential replacements to be considered are Jackson Via, Greenbrier, and Burnley Moran elementary schools and Charlottesville High School.

The Board is directing Ms. Yowell to take steps to get the GIS support we need by first approaching the Director of Neighborhood Development Services. If NDS is unable to provide GIS support, Ms. Yowell should follow up with a request to the Deputy City Managers. Ultimately, if the city cannot provide GIS technical support it will be necessary to employ an external contractor and the office will request funding for this effort.

Any changes to precinct boundaries and polling locations must be reviewed and approved by City Council. This review will include holding several public hearings. While there is no deadline for making the necessary changes this is a matter of some urgency that should be addressed as soon as possible.

The next meeting will be held in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar starting at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Jon Bright, Chair

Anne Hemenway, Vice Chair