

MINUTES

City of Charlottesville Electoral Board Meeting of February 9, 2022

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:05 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9 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 Director of Elections and General Registrar Taylor Yowell.

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

On a motion by the Secretary, seconded by the Vice Chair, the minutes of the December 14, 2021 and January 12, 2022 meetings were unanimously approved without change.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present for this meeting.

Registrar's Report

Ms. Yowell informed the Board members that the anticipated training and voting equipment upgrade by Hart Intercivic has been scheduled for February 22-24 with the first day devoted to setting up the equipment. The actual training will occur on the following two days. The entire staff is to be trained on all aspects of the equipment and its employment. The Board members requested that time be reserved at the end of the training for a general review and question and answer session that would include the Board members.

In a review of the physical access control policy for the secure warehouse the Board agreed that Assistant Registrar Josh Jenkins should be added to the access list.

In an important cost saving measure, Ms. Yowell reported a change to the plan for cell phones at the polling places that would render the phones inactive except during the months that include elections.

For the past few elections, the Central Absentee Precinct (CAP) has been temporarily located in City Space instead of in the basement conference room in City Hall. In recognition of the superiority of this facility for accommodating the dramatic growth in CAP voting Ms. Yowell is seeking to make the change permanent. To do so requires passage of an ordinance by the City Council and Ms. Yowell is working with the

scheduling office to place this measure on the agenda for the March 7 City Council meeting.

The annual meeting of the Virginia Electoral Board Association is scheduled for March 18-21 at the Homestead and Ms. Yowell reported that registration fees have been paid and room reservations made for the Board and the General Registrar to attend. The two previous annual meetings were cancelled due to Covid concerns.

The final item on the registrar's report concerned the need to schedule a meeting with a representative of Dem Tech, the vendor supplying our electronic pollbooks, to discuss problems and concerns resulting from the last election. The Board members proposed an early morning meeting in late March and Ms. Yowell will make the meeting arrangements with Dem Tech.

Discussion Items

Document retention - Since 2018, the staff of the Charlottesville registrar's office has been scanning paper voter registration forms and other hard copy voter correspondence and loading the digital files into VERIS, the state voter registration system. Ms. Yowell pointed out that once the documents have been electronically filed in VERIS the digital file becomes the official record and there is no longer a need to retain the paper copies, which have become a significant storage burden. The Board members agreed, and recommended disposal of the paper documents once upload to the correct voter file in VERIS has been confirmed.

Election calendar – Ms. Yowell presented a draft calendar for the June 21, 2022, primary election for review by the Board highlighting events requiring Board participation. In a change from prior practice, she proposed that logic and accuracy testing for both the early voting equipment and the election day equipment be conducted on a single day shortly before the start of early voting. This sensible efficiency measure was enthusiastically endorsed by the Board.

Training dates for election officials (EOs) were agreed leading to a discussion of compensation for the officials. The current system of setting hourly rates for EOs and accounting for actual hours worked by each of them has resulted in complex record keeping and an excessive administrative burden. A return to flat rate pay for full-day and half-day EOs would greatly simplify the process and the Board suggested that Ms. Yowell approach city staff about restoring that system. As a cost saving measure, the Board also suggested that lunch be provided on election day only to those EOs who were working a full-day shift.

The final discussion item was a brief update on the plan to redraw precinct lines to balance voter numbers and replace unsatisfactory polling places. Ms. Yowell reported

that the city has filled the GIS position essential to support this effort and that the Department of Elections has recently provided on-line software that may be useful for mapping precinct boundaries. She will soon participate in on-line training on the employment of this software.

Appointment of Election Officials

Ms. Yowell presented applications from four individuals seeking reappointment as election officials along with fourteen new applications. On a motion by the Vice Chair, seconded by the Chair the eighteen listed on the attached sheet were unanimously appointed for three-year terms.

Legislative Review

The Secretary reported on the progress of legislation with potential impact on the conduct of elections in Charlottesville. The reporting of CAP results by precinct is likely to be instituted for the November 2022 election but details remain uncertain. There are also likely to be changes to the witness requirement for ballots submitted by mail and the conduct of risk limiting audits following elections.

The next meeting will be held in the office of the Charlottesville General Registrar starting at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

James Nix, Secretary

Jon Bright, Chair

Anne Hemenway, Vice Chair