

MINUTES

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTION November 12, 2013

35 W. Washington Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
240-313-2050

Present:

Board

John Benchoff, President
Carroll Earp, Vice President
Tammy Downin, Secretary
Bruce Field, Member
William Blazes, Member

Staff

Kaye Robucci, Election Director, I
Sharon Mackereth, Election Deputy Director, I

Visitor

Peter Perini, Democratic Central Committee, Member

John Benchoff, President, called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM; as pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.2(A)1. Roger Schlossberg, Attorney, was absent. There was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes of October 15, 2013:

John Benchoff, President, asked if the Board had any corrections or modifications to the minutes of October 15, 2013 Board of Elections meeting. Approved as submitted by Bruce Field; seconded by Bill Blazes. Unanimously approved. As pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.3(A)2.

Addition/Changes to the Agenda: As pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.3(A)3.

Kaye Robucci, Director, requested the following additions –

Old Business – B. Social Media Presentation will be presented first – then A. Early Voting Site.

New Business – C. Poll Book testing.

Correspondence

A. Confidentiality Report -

Kaye Robucci, Director, informed the Board that we have a confidentiality request from a local Circuit Court Judge. Instructions from the State office, is that we do not have to go into a "Closed Meeting" to approve a confidentiality request. Tammy Downin made motion to accept this request for voter registration confidentiality status; Carroll Earp seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

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Reports

A. Hagerstown Lions Club. October 29, 2013 -

The Director, reported on her visit to a meeting of the Hagerstown Lions Club. In an effort to test their knowledge of elections – Kaye asked the members questions related to local elections. The responses she got showed how important it is to continually get the information out to the public regarding elections. There was no knowledge of Early Voting, what the next election will be or when it is. It reinforces our efforts to develop a Social Media presence.

Old Business:

A. Social Media Presentation -

Pamela Byrd, Supervisor/Social Media Coordinator, presented to the Board additional information regarding Social Media. The Governor's office and the State Board of Elections recommend that all Local Board of Elections (LBE) make a presence in Social Media – Facebook, Twitter and other applications. In doing this, we utilize new technology in an effort to get election information out to the public.

The State intentionally has not set up precise guidelines for us to follow. They want each LBE to create their own standard practices and agreements to control their own sites.

Facebook will give us an additional avenue for providing correct information to voters. It will also cut down on misinformation that is out there.

Currently we are not allowing the public to make comments on our Facebook, it is not live, yet. Twitter is live and we have approximately 49 different active contacts following us.

At election time, the County PR office has offered to help monitor the responses received on Election Day.

HootSuite is an electronic bulletin board that will allow us to schedule our election calendar a year in advance. With Twitter we can make "Pre-Canned Tweets" that can be written months in advance to be posted when we wish. With Facebook we can advertise the need for election workers in certain locations – such as, "We need two election workers at a specific polling place." We need to let the public know that we are humans working to institute correct and honest elections – not just a government agency.

B. Early Voting Site for 2014 – Site Selection Form completed and sent to SBE and agreement -

Washington County Early Voting Center – the Director has sent the required information and photos of our Early Voting Center to SBE. The State Board will approve new Early Voting sites at their November 21, 2013 meeting.

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The Board discussed the need and requirement for an Early Voting agreement. The full Board agreed that we need to have an agreement accepted by both sides. For no other reason than to protect ourselves against being made to evacuate the facility for another department needs. Also, there are issues - such as, cleaning the facility, security of the equipment, additional lighting, and alternate power source. The Director will send information to Jim Sterling, Facilities Director, and a list of things that need to be done before we even sign an agreement. Should we copy the County Commissioners and Greg Murray, County Administrator? "Yes" - so that they are aware of all the issues that need to be addressed.

C. 2014 Polling Places –

The Director informed the Board that Bester Elementary School will not be completed until - Fall of 2014. She questioned the Board of Education of any other school construction that might hinder our use for 2014.

D. Open Meeting Act & Required Training -

The Director brought to discussion the "Training Requirement for Public Bodies". There was a bill passed and made effective October 1, 2013, that each public entity must appoint a member to receive training on the requirements of the Open Meeting Act. A member designated to take this training and once completed will receive a certificate showing completion. The Board designated Kaye Robucci, Director, Washington County Board of Elections.

E. Christmas Party -

The annual Christmas Party will be held on Monday, December 16th – the Fireside Restaurant at 6:00PM.

New Business:

A. Talking Points -

The Board discussed several issues regarding strong talking points for pursuing a permanent Early Voting site and incorporate it into a combined facility. This facility would include the Washington County Board of Elections Office, large enough to accommodate candidates at a respectable distance for election night results. Also to include, our warehouse for equipment and Logic and Accuracy Testing; ample space for an election worker training center; and especially a permanent Early Voting center with ample parking and Handicap assessable with alternate power source. Should our Director make an appointment with Greg Murray, County Administrator, regarding the Capital Improvement process? Possibly have him here by himself for us to ask questions and understand the Capital Improvement process. How do we go about this – What does he need from us?

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It was brought to the Board's attention that the Board of Education just recently went through this process. We should contact someone on the Board of Education to see what steps they had to take in order to proceed with this endeavor.

B. Election Worker Training -

The Director informed the Board about Election Worker Training for the 2014 elections. The scheduled training will be in the months of April and May 2014, keeping in mind that Easter falls in that time period.

A suggestion was made by the Director to change the process for paying the election workers for attending training classes. Instead of waiting until after the General Election - it would be better to pay them after the training class. It has been budgeted for payment in each fiscal year, if needed.

C. Poll Book testing next week, Version 3 –

Dean Robucci, County Tech, will be testing Version 2.7.12.3 Poll Book software next week. The Director asked the Board if anyone would have time to assist with this testing. We could use two helpers. The testing will be for the full week November 18th through November 22nd. Testing would be Tuesday through Thursday – following a script. Kaye will e-mail a schedule to each member.

Members Remarks

Scheduling of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Washington County Board of Elections will be held on December 10, 2013. The location is Washington County Board of Elections, 35 W. Washington St. Room 101, Hagerstown, MD; as pursuant to the Bylaws of the Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.3(A)8.

Distributed Information

Legislative Map

2013 Fall Newsletter

Registration and Election Laws of Maryland 2013

Social Strategy for Maryland State Government

Designing Social Media Policy for Government: Eight Essential Elements

10/10/2013 Election Directors' Meeting Minutes

Maryland LBE Social Media Usage Spreadsheet

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Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Bruce Field made a motion to adjourn at 3:25 PM; Tammy Downin seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. As pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.3(A)10.

The Bylaws, with advice of counsel, shall follow the requirements of the Open Meetings Act as specified under Title 10, Subtitle 5 of the State Government Article.

Compiled by Sharon C. Mackereth
Election Deputy Director, I

Respectfully Submitted,



John Benchoff, Board President

12/12/13

Date



Bruce Field, Assistant Secretary

12/12/13

Date