



MINUTES

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS January 14, 2014

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

Present:

Board

John Benchoff, President
Carroll Earp, Vice President
Tammy Downin, Secretary
Bruce Field, Assistant Secretary
William Blazes, Member
Roger Schlossberg, Attorney

Staff

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

John Benchoff, President, called the meeting to order at 2:05PM; as pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.2(A)1. There was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2013:

John Benchoff asked if the Board had any corrections or modifications to the minutes of December 12, 2013, Board of Elections meeting.

Bruce Field, Assistant Secretary, asked for a correction on page 3, A. Redistricting Resolution, middle of paragraph. The sentence should read "Request for a motion was made by John Benchoff, President, of the Board of Elections."

Approved as submitted with correction by Carroll Earp; seconded by Bruce Field. Unanimously approved. As pursuant to the Bylaws of Washington County Board of Elections, Article 3, Section 3.3(A)2.

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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 under:

Correspondence – MAEO Theme – E-mailed

Old Business – City of Hagerstown Annexation

Correspondence

- A. Timeline from Keith Ross, SBE, regarding the New Voting System Replacement Project – E-mailed to the Board.

The Board discussed several issues with the New Voting System Replacement Timeline –

- SBE will be awarding the Voting System Hardware contract in December, 2014.
- Governor's 2015 Budget is due January 15, 2014, money for new system needs to be in the budget.

- B. Article from Capital Gazette, regarding the return to paper ballots – E-mailed to the Board.

The Board discussed the issue of returning to paper ballots –

- There are no safe guards in place to keep voters from overvoting.
- Paper ballot system would make recounts more of a possibility.
- There is still the possibility that the General Assembly could say "No" to a new voting system.

- C. Memo from Keith Ross, SBE, regarding the NVSR Project and an opinion from the Attorney General.

Attorney General's office does not want a system that requires a "segregated ballot" for the voters with disabilities. The ballots could be easily distinguished from the ballots cast by other voters – all ballots need to be the same type.

- D. E-mail from Stuart Harvey, Frederick County, regarding the proposed change to the write-in filing deadline.

The Board discussed possible legislation for the 2014 General Assembly to change the deadline for filing of write-in candidates – changing the date to deadline for registration. The Board agrees the deadline should be before the first day of early voting, so that we will not be updating the write-in list after voters have voted.

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E. Article from Herald Mail, regarding the deadline to file for office.

Kaye Robucci, Director, brought to the Board's attention, an article in the Herald Mail on December 20, 2013. Kaye provided information to the newspaper regarding candidate filing activity. The filings have been slow to this date, but we believe it will increase once we get closer to the deadline of February 25, 2014 for 2014 Gubernatorial Elections. In 2010 we had 40 local candidates file in the last two months.

F. MAEO Conference theme –

The Board received information regarding the 2014 MAEO Conference theme contest - entries are due January 27, 2014.

Reports

A. Meeting with Robert Slocum, Director of Engineering and Construction, and Jim Sterling, Director of Facilities, regarding a combined office, warehouse, training and early voting facility.

The Director reported on our meeting with Robert Slocum, Director of Engineering and Construction, and Jim Sterling, Director of Facilities, regarding the use of the Phoenix Color Building as our Office/Warehouse/Training/Early Voting Center. They are allowing us to utilize the facility only as a Training/Early Voting Center for 2014 and possibly 2016. We will be allowed to use it with the understanding that if something catastrophic would happen to another County department's building – we would have to vacate or share the space. Board President, John Benchoff, explained that this would not be a possibility if we are close to the start of Early Voting or Election Day. The County does not have numerous vacant buildings not being used. Mr. Slocum stated that we should find some money somewhere – possibly through grant funds with the help of Jim Hovis, Community Grant Management.

After this meeting, we came away with a definite approval for the use of the facility for this year's elections and possibly for 2016. We were told that if there are any repairs or cleanup that needs to be done - there is minimal amount of money. Kaye Robucci, Director, informed Mr. Sterling that any improvements would have to be completed by March 1, 2014, Mr. Sterling accepted this date.

The Director informed Mr. Sterling and Mr. Slocum that we tried to get acceptance for an early voting center at the new Senior Citizen's Center.

Mr. Sterling informed us that the low intensity center had strong opposition from the local community. They did not want the center in their community because of the activity and parking issues and now, certainly - no expansion in any way.

What is our next step? Talk with Jim Hovis about how to pursue grant money.

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Old Business:

A. Early Voting Agreement -

The Director informed the Board that she received a copy of a MOU from Allegany County – which is what they use for their County. It is a one page document with not much detail about insurance.

The previous early voting centers we have used - PNC Bank Building was County property and the Red Cross had an agreement.

Once an agreement is signed by all parties it is sent to SBE within 30 days.

B. 2014 Polling Places, update –

New Bester Elementary School will be completed in time for the primary election.

The new facility would need to be surveyed. Election Districts 17-1 and 17-2 would be in this building. Once we are allowed to get into the school, we can see how it is laid out to determine if there is enough space to combine both districts into one.

This would have to be done by February 25, 2014. E. Russell Hicks Middle School will not be available for the 2014 Gubernatorial Primary Election. Both districts 10-1 and 10-2 would be in the gymnasium at South Hagerstown High School. The divider curtain is repaired and does work. The two Chief Judges agreed that it would work with both 10-1 and 10-2 at SHHS. There are two parking lots and some spaces are a distance away. The Washington County Tech High and Antietam Academy were considered but have parking issues and not suitable for a large number of voters. SHHS is the best solution for 10-1 and 10-2. The voters and SBE would need to be notified.

The Director presented to the Board a “Resolution Designating and Establishing a Temporary Polling Place for Election District 10-1” (copy attached to these minutes). The Board proceeded to accept this resolution; Tammy Downin made a motion to accept this resolution; Carroll Earp seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

C. FY15 Budget –

The Director brought to the Board’s attention the proposed FY15 Budget. An extension was granted to January 24, 2014.

Our largest expense would be a new printer to replace the HP8150, which is beginning to have issues. Roger Schlossberg, Attorney, suggested calling Cochran Auctioneer, Jimmy or Leslie Cochran 301-432-2844 for chairs and tables for use at Early Voting and Election Worker Training.

D. E-Pollbook Testing: January 14 – 16, 2014 –

The final testing is in progress for the electronic pollbook software. There have been no major issues with the software. Thank you - to those able to help.

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E. Annexation – City of Hagerstown –

The Director informed the Board of issues with the City of Hagerstown annexation lines. The annexation and legislative lines do not follow each other. This causes some properties to be located between the legislative lines and new annexation lines. Last summer when Nasrin Rahman, State Department of Planning, was here, we did not notice these areas. We will be sending this information to Nasrin for her assistance.

Donna Duncan, SBE, suggested making new precincts. The Director will ask other counties how they handle this issue. The deadline to create new precincts is February 25, 2014.

New Business:

A. Election Worker Training Schedule -

The Election Worker Training schedule is set up but there may be some revisions. We would like to set up two classes a day instead of just one, to cut down on the traveling. Any help from the Board with assisting in the training would be helpful. The date range on classes is - April 1, 2014 through May 9, 2014.

B. MAEO Meeting, March 25 – 28, 2014 in Ocean City, MD –

Roger Schlossberg, Attorney, will not be able to attend.

Members Remarks

None.

Scheduling of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Washington County Board of Elections will be held on February 11, 2014. 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

Minutes from the November 12, 2013, Director's Meeting
FY15 Proposed Budget

Tammy Downin and Roger Schlossberg, Attorney - Registration and Election Laws of Maryland 2013 (Black Law Book)

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Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Tammy Downin made a motion to adjourn at 3:34PM; Bill Blazes 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 2/11/14
Date



Tammy Downin, Secretary 2/11/14
Date