

Virginia Beach Electoral Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 6, 2023, 5 PM
Virginia Beach Convention Center, Suite 5, Second Floor

Chair Jeff Marks called the Virginia Beach Electoral Board Meeting to order at 5 PM, Tuesday, February 6, with Board Members Vice-Chair Marvin Weniger and Secretary Lauralee Grim present. Staff in attendance included Director Christine Lewis, Chief Deputy Christian Logan, as well as voter registration and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) staff. Chair Marks asked each of the 7 Virginia Beach citizens in attendance to introduce themselves and the group they were representing which they did as follows: the Republican Party of Virginia Beach (Bill Curtis), the Virginia Beach Democratic Committee (Susan Loesberg and Susan Potter), the Second District Democratic Committee (Sandra Brandt), and citizens Nanette Randell and Vincent Smith. These minutes form the account of proceedings as required by the Code of Virginia (Code or COV), §24.2-107.

On a motion by Vice-Chair Weniger, the Board adopted the agenda which will be reported in the order of occurrence in these minutes. Vice-Chair Weniger pointed out that the election official process will be covered in part in closed session. Chair Marks noted that the item would remain in the agenda order for an overall description presented in open session.

Secretary Grim moved the adoption of the Board meeting minutes from January 9 through 12, 2024. Chair Marks reminded all that this meeting coincided with the Canvass of the Special District 1 election. He also explained that only Secretary Grim and himself will be signing these minutes as they were the only Board members in attendance. The COV specifies that two (2) Board members do constitute a quorum, COV §24.2-107. The minutes were approved as printed unanimously.

Chair Marks and Director Lewis provided an update on the plan to secure a permanent location for all voter registration and election functions which now are conducted in 5 different locations due to building constraints. Both reported that Clerk of the Circuit Court Tina Sinnen has been actively involved in this process given the key responsibility her office has in the election process. Chair Marks reported that he toured the location in question with Director Lewis and Chief Deputy Logan and was impressed with the opportunity the site presented to effectively combine election functions into one facility. During the City Council Informal Session on February 6, Assistant City Manager Monica Croskey and Tim Copeland from the Department of Public Works presented an overview of the process utilized to reach the point of deciding that the purchase of a property was the best option and then subsequently identifying a location to house election operations. It was pointed out to Council that the present location of the office for Voter Registration and Elections in Building 14 is within fifteen (15) minutes for 50% of the city's population. Whereas the new proposed location provided the opportunity for 80% of the city's population to reach it within 15 minutes. The City Council forwarded the item to the formal agenda and public hearing process.

As the COV §24.2-107 requires the Electoral Board to meet during the first week of February to appoint officers of elections pursuant to COV §24.2-115, the Board received general information from Deputy Registrars Jennifer Halpin and Donna Jordan in open session. Individual discussion regarding election officers will occur during closed session.

COV Section 24.2-604.3 allows a locality to implement an election day page program for high school students. Ms. Halpin and Ms. Jordan presented a summary of the program implemented in Virginia Beach and shared a handout showing data regarding program participation from 2018 forward. The student page program experienced a reduction in the number of seniors participating from 195 in 2018 to 64 in 2023. In a conversation with the school division's curriculum supervisor who provides contacts at each high school, it was noted that the division has moved to a 4 by 4 schedule. This change meant that students were completing 4 classes in a semester which could have impacted attendance. It was suggested that perhaps selecting another grade level might gain differing results. Ms. Halpin and Ms. Jordan noted that not every public high school in Virginia Beach participated in this project. The issue of student security while performing outside poll activity and other tasks was part of the Board's discussion. Following the discussion, the Board voted not to offer the program in November 2024. (Grim)

Officers of Election must receive training consistent with standards established by the Virginia Board of Elections as noted in COV §24.2-115.2. Ms. Halpin indicated that the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) provides specialized election training which could be used for all returning officers in the June Primary since they will have all received in-person training prior to the 2024 Presidential Primary, March 5. The issue of new election officers was discussed. The Board approved the use of ELECT's training modules for returning officers of election and in-person training for all new election officers for the June 2024 Primary.

Director Lewis provided an overview of a proposed voting machine expo as the lifetime effective use for the current voting machines is close to reaching that time. She noted that funding had been secured from the 2024 Capital Improvement Project funds. Approved ELECT Vendors (COV §24.2-629) received an RFP for the equipment and three of the four ELECT approved vendors have responded to date. Options discussed included the following:

- conducting an all-day expo where vendors would share their equipment to invited guests; or,
- inviting vendors to make a presentation at a Board meeting.

The initial motion offered (Weniger) was for an all-day vendor expo. This motion did not receive a second. A second motion was made for each vendor to make a presentation or no more than thirty (30) minutes at a Board meeting to be held on March 26 in building 19 beginning at 9AM and ending by noon. This motion was adopted (Grim/Marks).

Chair Marks lead a discussion with Director Lewis regarding the City's 2024-2025 budgetary process. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to have the highest pay rate for election officers in the area. While most election officers view themselves as a volunteer, reducing the payment would have caused some to go to another locality. Chair Marks with Director Lewis offered to staff precincts at a maximum level of 12 election officers so that the reimbursement can remain

at its current level. There is an intense focus at the City level to reduce costs for the next fiscal year.

Secretary Grim reminded those in attendance that when she started her service on the Board in 2014, the Director already had assigned staff to verify vote totals entered into ELECT's system by using Tape #4 as opposed to this process being part of the Canvass. This delegation had occurred prior to 2014. Vice-Chair Weniger commented about the need to have an up-to-date list of any function that had been delegated to staff. Ms. Grim also briefly discussed ELECT security requirements and reporting schedule, COV §24.2-410.2 B.

Mr. Joe Varbero, representing OEM, shared an overview of the polling place locations and office security review that his staff conducted. Specific information will be shared with the Board and staff in closed session, as required by law. (COV §24.2-625.1 B and COV §24.2-410.2 D)

No old business or other business was offered at this time.

The next Board meeting will be held as part of the Presidential Primary Canvass, commencing on March 6, building 19 in the Courthouse Complex beginning at 9AM. Following that meeting, the Board will meet on March 26 at 9 AM in Building 19 to conduct business including presentations where vendors will showcase their products within a thirty-minute period.

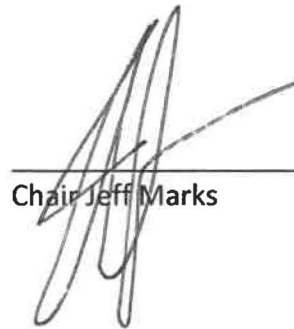
The Chair entertained a motion to recess into a closed meeting pursuant to the exemption from open meetings allowed by the Code of Virginia for the following purpose: Election security (§2.2-3700 et seq.) , and discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals (COV §2.2-3711(A)). After the motion (Grim) had been made, the Board voted as follows to go into closed session to discuss personnel and security matters.

At the conclusion of the closed session, Secretary Grim made a motion that in accordance with COV §2.2-3712(D), each Board Member certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge that (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were conducted in the closed meeting and (ii) only such public business as was identified in the motion for the closed meeting, by which the closed meeting was convened, was heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting of the Electoral Board. The vote was as follows: Chair Marks voted Yes, Vice-Chair Weniger voted Yes, and Secretary Grim voted Yes.

Regarding officers of elections, Assistant Registrars Halpin and Jordan shared information regarding the annual reappointment of officers of election, Code of Virginia COV §24.2-115. There were 401 officers who will be retired from the pool of election officers leaving a listing of

1618 election officers on the Active Master List, including 143 new officers of election. The Board approved the reappointments, accepted the retirements, and authorized staff to approve additional officers of election, as needed, throughout the remainder of this cycle.

Having no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned 6:25 PM. (Grim)



Chair Jeff Marks



Vice-Chair Marvin Weniger



Secretary Laura Lee Grim

Attachment: Student Election Page Statistics Summary Report