

ELECTION BOARD
October 23, 2023

Present at the meeting were:

Larry Reisinger
Shannon Hines
David Lanza
Bill Bunt
Sarah Geesaman

Present from the Public via Phone/In Person: Jan Gibboney, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock

The Election Board met on Monday, October 23, 2023 at 11:05 a.m. with a Pledge to the Flag and a moment of silence. The meeting was conducted virtually via WebEx video/telephone conference and in person in the Commissioners' Conference Room. The meeting was recorded by the County.

Public Comments: None

Approval of the Minutes: Shannon Hines made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Reisinger seconded the motion. David Lanza abstained. Motion carried.

Meeting Business: Commissioner Reisinger stated that the Judge of Elections of Newport provided positive feedback on the election training that Sarah Geesaman held last week.

Sarah Geesaman, Voter Registration/Election Director, commented that poll training happened last week and multiple sessions were held on each day. She said 102 poll workers attended and there was good discussion during the trainings.

Ms. Geesaman provided the following statistics as of Friday, October 20th:

- 2,076 mail-in and absentee ballots mailed out
- 701 mail-in ballots returned
- 44 absentee ballots returned

Sarah Geesaman stated that the proclamation for the November 7th election would appear in the newspaper this week and on the County website.

Commissioner Reisinger stated that today, October 23rd is the last day to register to vote for the November 7, 2023 election and October 31st is the last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot for the November 7, 2023 election

Ms. Geesaman stated that a roving constable pilot program has been started for precincts that do not have a constable on election day. She said constables interested in being part of the program must attend training provided by herself and Wes Smith. She commented that 11 constables have shown interest and one training has been held so far. She noted that only 1 constable showed up at that training, but said a second training would be held tomorrow. Solicitor Bunt said that they had broken up the County into designated areas for the roving constables to cover

and said they would be reimbursed for mileage. Ms. Geesaman again said the constables would need to attend the training to be in the program. She further commented that the Judge of Election at the precinct would have a sign in sheet for the roving constable to track time in and out, as well as mileage.

Sarah Geesaman stated that it had been brought to her attention that two voters no longer live in the precinct in which they are registered due to building and moving into a new home. She said she had sent a letter to the voters alerting them that they need to update their addresses.

The Board discussed the date to hold final count due to Friday, November 10th being a federal holiday. Solicitor Bunt stated that previously grant funding had been tied to final count being completed on the Friday following election day. Ms. Geesaman said that based on election law final count is to be held on the Friday following election day, unless there is a federal holiday on that day. She further stated that grant funding cannot be taken away if final count is not completed on the Friday date. Shannon Hines said she had asked the Election Director if the Department of State staff would be available on Veterans Day to answer questions that arise and she said no. Ms. Hines said it does not make sense to complete final count when there is no support from the State liaison should issues arise during the final count process. The Board further discussed holding final count on Monday, November 13th, and the need to reschedule the Commissioners meeting to a different date/time.

David Lanza made a motion to move official count to Monday, November 13th at 9:00 a.m. and reiterated that final count will no longer take place on November 10th. Shannon Hines seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Sarah Geesaman commented that she plans to visit a few polling locations on election day and plans to do this during further elections as well.

Solicitor Bunt stated that a recent directive from the Commonwealth recommended that a notice regarding provisional ballot reconciliation be provided to the parties and the public a week in advance. He said this notice, while not a legal requirement, is strongly recommended and he recommends that this notice be put out. Shannon Hines asked if the notice could be included on the new updated final count advertisement that would be going out. The Board agreed that this clarifying language should be advertised.

Dave Pundock asked what constitutes an executive session.

Solicitor Bunt stated that an issue had been brought to the Election Office's attention regarding a candidate's residency that could potentially require legal action.

The Board went into Executive Session at 11:34 a.m.

David Lanza made a motion to reconvene from Executive Session at 11:51 a.m. Shannon Hines seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Reisinger stated that the Board had discussed an issue that was brought to the Election Office's attention regarding a township supervisor candidate allegedly not living in the municipality he is running for office in. He said the Election Office had followed up with the individual regarding the allegations via certified letters and the deadline for him to respond is

end of day. Commissioner Reisinger further said that the next step could be to refer the issue to the District Attorney's Office.

Shannon Hines made a motion to refer the residency issue regarding Sam Lowe, township supervisor candidate in Carroll Township, to the District Attorney's Office if a response is not received from him by 4:00 p.m. October 23, 2023. She further stated that the notice to the District Attorney be provided in written form, with supporting documentation, by the Election Office Director. David Lanza seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Public Comments: Faith Pundock asked what cross checks are in place to alert the Election Office of residency changes. She further questioned how are these issues handled and how do names come out of the precinct signature books. Ms. Pundock also asked how moving final count to a different date will affect posting final election results. She questioned what the process is when a write-in candidate has multiple names and they have not established those different names with the Election Office.

Dave Pundock asked how long someone has, to provide other names to the Election Office. He also questioned what happens if someone wins 2 elected positions during an election. He said he wondered how it is determined which office the person fills.

Faith Pundock asked how the installation of the write-in software went. She also asked if it will be used in the upcoming election. She said in Luzerne County ballots had been mailed out with miscoding.

Shannon Hines made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:06 p.m. David Lanza seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.