

ELECTION BOARD
March 18, 2024

Present at the meeting were: Brenda Watson
William Lyons
R. Franklin Campbell
Bill Bunt
Sarah Geesaman
Shannon Hines

Present from the Public: Jeff Garman, Jan Gibboney, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock, Wes Smith, Alyson Thebes

The Election Board met on Monday, March 18, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. 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

Meeting Business: Commissioner Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Sarah Geesaman, Election Director, had Wes Smith, Deputy Director EMA/911, speak about a tabletop exercise. Mr. Smith stated that he could coordinate a scanner malfunction exercise and invite all involved parties to participate in the simulation. He noted that the exercise would last about three hours and would help everyone be aware of all policies and procedures in place to deal with an emergency situation. Ms. Geesaman and Solicitor Bunt commented that it would be a great idea to hold this exercise. Mr. Smith stated that he was looking at a September timeframe for the tabletop.

Faith Pundock questioned why the tabletop exercise would not be held prior to the primary election. Wes Smith stated that the timeframe to coordinate the program through the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program takes a significant amount of time and would not be completed prior to the primary election.

Ms. Geesaman stated that she had received a disability rights email and had shared it with the Election Board. She said the email urged counties to allow individuals with disabilities to be able to cure their ballots. She commented that currently Perry County does not allow curing of ballots. Ms. Geesaman pointed out that there is an authorized designated agent form which, when completed, allows someone to bring in a disabled individual's ballot. Solicitor Bunt stated that past Election Boards have taken the stance that mail in and absentee ballots received by the County are a cast ballot and no changes are allowed. He further said if the Board wishes to make a change to this procedure a vote would need to occur, but if the Board does not wish to change the current procedure no action would be required. No action was taken.

Sarah Geesaman stated that Lieutenant Tallman of the Pennsylvania State Police had reached out to her about the upcoming primary election. She said he would not be available during that

election, but had provided her with the name of the acting commander in his absence. She further stated Lieutenant Tallman had provided her with information to provide to the constables and poll workers regarding things to be aware of during election day. Ms. Geesaman said the information will be presented during poll training and constable training.

Ms. Geesaman said that the Department of State had given County election offices the choice on adding additional steps to the scanning process on returned mail-in/absentee ballots. She said this additional step would alert voters that did not complete their ballot envelope correctly. She commented that voters that have an email address in the SURE system would receive an email alerting them to come in and fix their ballot envelopes. The Board brought up the fact that this would be curing of ballots and Perry County was not allow curing of ballots.

Ms. Geesaman stated that L&A testing had been rescheduled due to the ongoing dispute regarding two senatorial candidates. She commented that her drop dead date to send ballot test decks to the printer would be March 20th. She said that L&A testing was now scheduled for the week of March 25th. Ms. Geesaman further stated that if the dispute regarding the two candidates changed after the ballots were printed then her office would be alerting all polling locations of the change. She said that she is hoping ballots will be received by April 4th or 5th and then her office would work to get them out.

Sarah Geesaman commented that updated directives from the Department of State had been sent out. She said the biggest change was to L&A testing. She said the new directive indicated different variables should be tested during this process, but commented that Perry County already meets the testing standards of the new directive so no change is needed. Additionally, Ms. Geesaman said that emergency ballots were part of the new directives, but said her office orders enough extra ballots and stamps them inhouse so no change to the current process would be needed based on the updated directive.

Ms. Geesaman said that Constable Training would be held on April 10th and Wes Smith would be assisting with the hour-long training.

Sarah Geesaman stated that to date, 1,712 mail in and absentee ballot applications had been received and 7 military ballots had been sent out. She said the military ballots were sent out via the extranet which was a new process for her office.

Public Comments: Dave Pundock stated that he when he receives a walking list from the County or the State, he came to many vacant properties. He asked how to get this information back to the system.

Faith Pundock asked for the individual breakdown of absentee and mail-in ballots.

Jeff Garman asked how many registered voters there are in Perry County. He further questioned if there are criteria needed to apply for a mail in ballot.

Commissioner Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.