

ELECTION BOARD

April 15, 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, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock, Larry Reisinger, Angela Schlegel, John Sledzinski, Ashley Weaver

The Election Board met on Monday, April 15, 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: Ashley Weaver stated that she was following up on comments from the Commissioners' meeting regarding ballots in Commissioner Watson's office. She said she got to see the photos between the meetings and they show bags and voting machine ballots and the pictures were handed to the Sheriff. Ms. Weaver noted the comment made by Jeff Garman at the previous meeting regarding having paper ballots and hand counting and said this should be considered.

Jeff Garman said he also saw the photos and was flabbergasted. He stated that the Board should go to Sheriff Hammar to see the pictures. He reiterated that paper ballots and hand counting for a safe election.

Larry Reisinger stated that in the Primary Election last year the mail in and absentee ballots were in his office. He said the fall General Election he cannot remember if the ballots were in his office. He commented that he would like to see the pictures everyone is talking about. Mr. Reisinger said he was the Chairman of the Election Board last year and felt that the County abided by all laws and held a fair election.

Dave Pundock asked about ballot chain of custody and how that worked.

Election Director, Sarah Geesaman, explained the process of ballots being returned to the Election Office, the precanvas process, and the canvas process.

Dave Pundock questioned if the ballots are under security camera or if people from the different parties are watching the ballots.

Sarah Geesaman stated that individuals from both parties are in the room during the process.

Jeff Garman asked how the ballots got to the Freedom Building if they were in Commissioner Watson's office.

Sarah Geesaman explained the precanvas process.

Solicitor Bunt stated that party representatives are in attendance on election night and final count day to view the process.

Dave Pundock asked if everything is locked down between election day and final count day.

Commissioner Watson stated that she was off on election day as she was a candidate on the ballot and ran unopposed.

Meeting Business: Commissioner Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 8, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Sarah Geesaman, Election Director, stated that Deputy Director Shrawder packeted all the poll kit boxes and are they are ready to be distributed next Monday. She said the pick of polling equipment is scheduled for April 22nd from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Geesaman said she will be finalizing her work assignment for precanvas, canvas, and final count.

Sarah Geesaman commented that constable training was completed and it went well.

Ms. Geesaman said that to date 312 mail in ballots and 37 absentee ballots had been returned. She noted that there are several mail flats of ballots to be processed yet.

Solicitor Bunt stated that the most recent court decision says that an undated or incorrectly dated mail in or absentee outer envelope invalidates the ballot contained therein. He said that this was not decided by the entire Third Circuit Court of Appeals and now the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in its entirety, must review this issue. Solicitor Bunt commented that it is not likely to be heard or decided on by election day of April 2024. He said that the County will not count undated or incorrectly dated ballots and segregate them in case they need to be counted in the future. Sarah Geesaman stated that there are 2 segregated ballots to date.

Sarah Geesaman stated that there had been a call about a write-in campaign for President for an uncommitted candidate. She said the State stated that neither party submitted a request for know preference to be on the ballot so therefore this is not considered a name as a write-in. Solicitor Bunt stated that this means that that name will not be certified.

Public Comments: Faith Pundock asked for the number of ballots that went out to date.

Sarah Geesaman stated that tomorrow is the last day to submit a mail-in or absentee ballot application and noted that her office will be open until 5:00 p.m. that day.

Larry Reisinger again said he had not seen the pictures being talked about, but stated that he felt Perry County held a fair and honest election.

Commissioner Lyons made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.