

ELECTION BOARD
August 19, 2024

Present at the meeting were:

Brenda Watson
William Lyons
R. Franklin Campbell
Bill Bunt
Sarah Geesaman
Shannon Hines

Present from the Public: Andrew Burke, Rich Fultz, Jeff Garman, Jerry Philpott, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock, Kathy Garman, Wes Smith

The Election Board met on Monday, May 13, 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: Faith Pundock said at the last meeting it was decided that polling location tapes would no longer be posted. She asked if this was just for the upcoming election or for all elections moving forward, and if this applied to write in's. Sarah Geesaman stated that it would be for all elections moving forward, as printing out the tapes was a large expense. Ms. Pundock also asked if the write-in's will be posted on the website and Ms. Geesaman said that yes, the write in winners will be posted.

Meeting Business: Commissioner Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Sarah Geesaman, Election Director, commented that she and Deb Shrawder attended the Eastern Association of Election Personnel meeting in June. She said the afternoon focus was on poll worker training and was very helpful.

Ms. Geesaman stated that a Voter Hall of Fame event was held in June and it honored 17 individuals.

Ms. Geesaman said in July she conducted outreach at Transitions and Stonebridge homes. She commented that the outreach focused on registering to vote and filling out absentee or mail in ballot applications. She said each group had about 15-20 participants and noted that Perry Village declined.

Sarah Geesaman commented that she is working with William Penn Printing to streamline the polling location return envelopes so they are easy to fill out on election night.

Ms. Geesaman said she met with the FBI as they wanted to introduce themselves and asked about issues or concerns regarding the upcoming election.

Sarah Geesaman stated that there will be only one ballot drop box location and it is located in the Freedom Building in the Election Office. She noted that the ballot drop box has been updated and it will be easy for voters to utilize it.

Ms. Geesaman stated that there will be a new traffic pattern flow on election night. She discussed the traffic flow and the way in which poll workers will drop off their materials.

Sarah Geesaman said that she will be requesting more constables on election night as she would like to have one in the Freedom Building and one in the Veterans Memorial Building, as well as possibly more roving constables and deputization by constables. Solicitor Bunt stated that Sheriff deputies could be utilized for the County buildings.

Ms. Geesaman commented that the Department of State have alerted her that for the upcoming election, ballot return envelopes now need to have the entire year printed on the outer envelope. She said the outer envelopes will now be printed, by the printer, with the entire year. Ms. Geesaman also said the State informed election offices that the instructions on how to complete mail-in and absentee ballots must now be a full sheet of paper and the paper must be a different color other than white. She expressed concern regarding the cost to printing out full sheets of paper.

Sarah Geesaman stated that voter floaters are helping as needed in her office.

Ms. Geesaman commented that the UMOVA notice for military and overseas voters was posted on the County website. She said as information is updated the notice will also be updated.

Sarah Geesaman said she and Deb just attended the Election Personnel Conference last week and said it was the best conference she had attended to date. She said the breakout sessions were especially informative as she was with other 6th class counties and could hear how other counties of the same size did things.

Ms. Geesaman stated that the Election Integrity Grant program was signed off on. She said Perry County was awarded \$156,762.20 for election expenses for part of 2024 and part of 2025.

Sarah Geesaman said poll training will be held at the Parrish House on October 21 and 22 with three sessions each day.

Ms. Geesaman noted that a referendum had been received from Buffalo Township and it was sent to Clear Ballot for inclusion in the November ballot design.

Solicitor Bunt said he had contacted Ms. Geesaman regarding the date issue on ballot return envelopes and he requested that she get a definitive answer from the Department of State. He said they referred her back to their directive date April 2023, but he said an updated directive is needed regarding how the outer ballot return envelope should be completed.

The Board set up the following schedule for upcoming Election Board meetings:

September 9, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

September 23, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

October 7, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

October 14, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

October 21, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

October 28, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

November 4, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

November 5, 2024 continuous session beginning at 7:00 a.m.

November 8, 2024 9:00 a.m. until the completion of ballot tabulation
November 18, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

Sarah Geesaman stated that she anticipates that ballots will start to be mailed out the first full week of October. She noted that ballots will go out to precincts alphabetically. Ms. Geesaman said that there are approximately 2,500 ballots to go out at this time.

Public Comments: Faith Pundock asked if there was an update on the election education forum. She also questioned if the warranty that was expiring on the equipment and the lifespan questions from the previous meeting had been resolved.

Jeff Garman stated that Sarah Geesaman said she wanted constables, but Solicitor Bunt said deputies. He questioned the difference in utilizing these individuals. Ms. Geesaman stated that all polling locations are supposed to have constables per election code. Solicitor Bunt said during previous elections, roving constables had been utilized. Mr. Garman questioned the difference between voting precincts versus townships. He also asked why final count cannot happen on election day. Solicitor Bunt stated that State law mandates that it must happen on the Friday following election day.

Sarah Geesaman said she and Wes Smith attended a CISA training on security. She said she and Dean Lusby would be going to a training at the PEMA building on cybersecurity and harassment.

Kathy Garman questioned why Sarah Geesaman was going to a meeting on cybersecurity if the voting machines are not online. Ms. Geesaman said the training was on security and miscommunication of the public. Ms. Garman said if cybersecurity is involved then there must be a capability of the machines being online and said the vote tallies are transferred over the internet. She further stated that the notation on the County website indicating that voting machines are not connected to the internet should be removed.

Commissioner Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.