

**ELECTION BOARD**  
**September 9, 2024**

**Present at the meeting were:**

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

**Present from the Public:** Andrew Burke, Jeff Garman, Kathy Garman, Jerry Philpott, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock, Robbyn Metz, Jedd Nessinger, Jack Sternberger

The Election Board met on Monday, September 9, 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 August 19, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Sarah Geesaman, Election Director, stated that her office is getting very busy as mail-in ballot applications are being processed daily.

Ms. Geesaman said that "go bags" were discussed during a conference she had attended. She explained that if there is an emergency and poll workers needed to go to another location, this bag would have the documents they need in order to continue the election in a new location. Sarah Geesaman asked the Board to consider the purchase of two bags that would be used for this purpose and said the cost was \$422.76 per bag.

Sarah Geesaman talked about a quote she received from ElectSure regarding online poll worker training. She said the cost was \$9,500 but she commented that she prefers in person training for the poll workers.

Ms. Geesaman stated that during a recent conference, she met with Clear Ballot and they now have a program called View Now that would show cast mail-in and absentee ballots. Solicitor Bunt stated that until a final legal decision is made regarding viewing cast ballots, this item should be placed on hold. Ms. Geesaman noted that ballot design software is something she would be looking into in the future.

Sarah Geesaman distributed a map regarding a new traffic pattern and procedure for poll workers returning equipment and documentation on election night. She explained what would happen at each stop and said poll workers will not need to get out of their vehicles until they park to come into the Veterans Memorial Building.

Ms. Geesaman said that she was informed from Department of State that a person may bring in more than one ballot for others, as long as they have a designated agent form for each ballot. She noted that this was a change from the State's previous guidance.

Sarah Geesaman said watcher names are needed by October 24<sup>th</sup> and stated that party chairs were alerted of this.

Ms. Geesaman commented that L&A testing would take place on October 15 and 16 from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. She stated that she will be alerting the party chairs of these dates and said people in attendance are observers only.

Sarah Geesaman stated that a public Election Education Form would be held on September 26, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room. She said the process from registration to final count will be explained and she noted that the Election Board, election staff, IT staff, Judges of Election, and Solicitor would be participating. Commissioner Campbell questioned room capacity if there is high attendance at the forum.

Ms. Geesaman said that pre-canvas for the upcoming election would be held in the Extension Office meeting room. She stated that the opened ballots will then be securely stored in the Freedom Building until canvas time.

Sarah Geesaman noted that there was a question about chain of custody training she had attended. She clarified that she did not attend a training on chain of custody, instead it was a topic of discussion at a conference she had attended with other election directors.

Solicitor Bunt said a Commonwealth Court decision on dating of ballots was recently released. He stated that per the decision, it was decided that dating violated the equal protection clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution. He noted that guidance was immediately received after the decision, from the Department of State to not change ballot envelopes. Solicitor Bunt said that today the envelopes do not need to be dated, but anticipated that this decision will most likely be changed. He said it is frustrating as there should be a definitive standard on this issue.

**Public Comments:** Faith Pundock asked if chain of custody would be discussed at the election education forum.

Jeff Garman asked how the forum will be publicized. He asked if there is a thumb drive holds with election results on it. He questioned if the thumb drive is put into a computer and loaded to a secure server where the results are then delivered. Mr. Garman said all the effort put in prior now evaporates because the thumb drive is loaded and results are transferred over the internet which is bound to be hacked. Solicitor Bunt stated that the IT person will be at the education forum to explain the process and was not saying the results could not be hacked. He said the County has definitive election results on paper as well. Mr. Garman questioned who checks the election results and questioned the election night results pertaining to mail-in/absentee ballots. Solicitor Bunt explained election night procedures and final count procedures. Mr. Garman said the designated agent form probably came from the movie 10,000 mules and he said it is now legal to put more than one ballot in the drop box. Mr. Garman questioned who checks the designated agent form as people bring in ballots. He reiterated that once data is sent from a secure server to another secure server all the work done prior does not matter.

Faith Pundock asked if the education forum will be advertised in the newspaper.

Jedd Nessinger asked Solicitor Bunt if he was saying that the election can be hacked. Solicitor Bunt said he would not comment on whether the election can or cannot be hacked, but he said we can confirm what we sent to the State is what they received. Mr. Nessinger said the Ukrainian national anthem was found in a New Hampshire voting database due to using a Ukrainian third-party company for coding work on the database. He further stated that it is not only a problem sending results to the State via a secure server, but also there could be bugs implanted in the machines possibly years ago. Mr. Nessinger asked if there is a way to verify that the machines do not have any coding on them that would change the results. Solicitor Bunt said to address that question to the Department of State. Mr. Nessinger asked when the chain of custody for the 2019 election would be received.

Kathy Garman said her husband addressed a lot of her concerns. She stated that there would not be any issues if paper ballots were used and hand counting was done. She commented that it was interesting that Solicitor Bunt mentioned China which means the machines are online, a tech person will be participating in the education forum, and there are thumb drives. Ms. Garman stated that the Secretary of State changed all the voting rules in 2020 when instead the State Legislature should be doing that. She questioned how people can trust the FBI, CIA, and the Department of State regarding a secure election. Ms. Garman said we as a County can do the election how we believe it should be done.

Commissioner Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.