

The pre-election meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Ferrell at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 27, 2020.

Roll Call:	(D) Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman	Present
	(D) William J. Monaghan, Member	Present
	(R) Nicholas J. Smith, Member	Present
	(R) Jeffrey N. Krabill, Member	Present

Guests in attendance: none

Mr. Ferrell stated that tomorrow's election would be "ugly." He stated that we would likely have a lot of provisional ballots, and a lot of upset voters. Ms. Salyers stated that as far as running ballots through the high-speed scanner, we are current with that except for the ballots that we got today, and we would be scanning those after this meeting. Ms. James stated that there were 46 over-voted ballots that the board would need to vote on. However, Ms. Salyers explained that many of them were not true over-votes. Instead, they were "hesitation marks." The voter put their pen down momentarily, and then voted for a different candidate, but the high speed scanner read the little dot that the voter's pen made. Ms. Salyers also stated that since the repairman fixed the high speed scanner, it has been working normally. Yesterday, she and Ms. James scanned for about six hours, and scanned a little over 2,000 ballots. Right now we are at 7,709 ballots, and that does not count the 1,975 people who voted in person before March 17.

Ms. Salyers stated that tomorrow, we will be here by 5:45 a.m. The building will be unlocked per orders from the Secretary of State. We will also have a sheriff's deputy, and the floor will be marked off so that voters stand six feet apart from each other. Mr. Krabill mentioned that the only viable reason someone could vote tomorrow would be having a disability or not having a viable mailing address. However, if someone states that they have a disability, we are not allowed to question them as to what their disability is. Ms. Salyers stated that if someone properly requested an absentee ballot by Saturday, April 25 at noon but did not receive it in the mail, then those people can vote tomorrow as well, but vote provisionally. So far, we have about 400 provisional ballots out. However, many of them were mailed, so we may or may not get those back.

Mr. Monaghan inquired as to how much we had spent so far on part-timers. Ms. Salyers stated that she wasn't sure, but that the part-timers had been invaluable. We have had about five part-timers each day; however, one of them is a volunteer. Mr. Ferrell asked if everyone had been fitted for a mask for tomorrow, and Ms. James told him yes. Ms. Salyers explained that the part-timers would be assisting voters tomorrow, while she and Ms. James would be in the back scanning ballots. Mr. Smith asked whether the part-timers have sufficient protection, and Ms. James informed him yes. Mr. Krabill mentioned that even if the voters have a temperature or do not feel well, we still cannot deny them the right to vote. Ms. Salyers stated that the best we can do is to protect ourselves. Mr. Monaghan confirmed that we have plenty of cleaning supplies to wipe things down.

Mr. Smith asked if we would review over-voted ballots now. Mr. Ferrell asked if we could do that tomorrow. The board then discussed what time they would meet tomorrow to review over-votes, and they decided on 4:30 p.m. Mr. Smith suggested Ms. Salyers and Ms. James already re-make the ballots how they assume the board will vote, and then paperclip the over-voted ballot to the re-made ballot. That way, when the board meets tomorrow, everything will be ready to go, and that will save them some time.

Motion to recess was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried. Board recessed at 4:15 p.m.

On April 28, motion to reconvene was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board reconvened at 4:30 p.m. Ms. James explained that she and Ms. Salyers had remade the over-voted ballots how they believed the board would interpret them, and asked the board to please review them.

As the board reviewed over-votes, they discussed when the next meetings would be. They decided that the canvas would be on May 13 at 9 a.m., and that the certification would be on May 15 at 8 a.m. Ms. Salyers stated that she would send out an email to Gery Gross, WLEC, and the Sandusky Register to let them know. Mr. Krabill stated that Mr. Gross told him that he was trying to avoid meetings right now. Mr. Krabill stated that that was troubling, because on some of these issues we need legal counsel. Mr. Smith suggested inviting Sue Brown, the other attorney at the Prosecutor's office, to our meetings instead.

Mr. Smith then made a motion to accept most of the over-voted ballots the way that Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade them. Mr. Monaghan seconded the motion. Motion passed. The board then went on to discuss the over-voted ballots that weren't quite as clear.

One ballot had the circle next to Joe Biden's name colored in, and a slight scribble in the circle next to Elizabeth Warren's name. Mr. Smith stated that he believed the voter intended to vote for Joe Biden. Motion to remake the ballot with a vote for Joe Biden was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

The next ballot the overvote was for the Senate Second District. The board agreed that the voter intended to vote for Reem Subei, and simply put a hesitation mark in the circle next to Joel O'Dorisio's name. Motion to remake the ballot with a vote for Reem Subei was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

For the next ballot, Mr. Smith was not sure why it was in the "unsure" pile, as he believed the way Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade it was correct. The board took a few moments to review this ballot. Motion to approve the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

On the fourth ballot, the alleged over-vote was for Republican State Central Committee, Man. Mr. Smith believed the voter intended to vote for Bruce Saferin. Motion to remake the ballot with a vote for Bruce Saferin was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

On the next ballot, the voter filled in the circle next to Joe Biden's name and the circle next to Mike Bloomberg's name, but wrote "NO" next to Mr. Bloomberg's name. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade that ballot with a vote for Joe Biden, which the board agreed was correct. Motion to approve the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried.

On the next ballot, the voter marked the circles for both Amy Klobuchar and Mike Bloomberg, but put an "X" through Mr. Bloomberg's name, then put their initials. Mr. Smith believed that the voter intended to vote for Amy Klobuchar. Motion to remake the ballot with a vote for Amy Klobuchar was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

On the next ballot, three circles were colored in completely for the Democrat delegate-at-large. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade that ballot with no votes for Democratic delegate-at-large. Motion to accept the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

The last over-voted ballot was for the Erie Metroparks levy. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James were unsure how the voter intended to vote, so they remade the ballot with no votes for the levy. The board members were also unsure how the voter intended to vote. Motion to accept the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

Next, Ms. James explained that some of the ballots had to be remade, not because there were overvotes, but simply because the high-speed scanner could not read them. This could be for a variety of reasons. For example, perhaps there was a large crease on the timing marks, or the ballot accidentally got torn as it was taken out of the envelope. The board then took some time to review these ballots.

Motion to approve the remade ballots as is was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Next, the board looked at two ballots that were questionable. One had a large rip in it. The only issue was that the ballot was torn on the State Representative race, so we could not see if the voter voted for that race. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade this ballot how the voter voted, but simply left the State Representative race blank. Motion to approve the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

On the last ballot, the voter voted for a couple of unopposed candidates, but then crossed off the bubbles and wrote “error” next to their names. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James remade this ballot without giving the votes to the candidates with “error” beside their name. Motion to approve the remade ballot as is was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

Motion to return to recess was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board went into recess at 5:15 p.m.

Several hours later, motion to reconvene was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board reconvened at 8:45 p.m. There were three more over-votes that the board needed to look at, which they did. Once the over-voted ballots were remade by both a Democrat and a Republican, Ms. Salyers and Ms. James ran the re-made ballots through the high speed scanner.

Once all ballots were counted, results were uploaded to the Secretary of State. Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

Lori J. Salyers, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman