

The pre-election meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Thomas Ferrell on Monday, May 1st, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| Roll Call: | (D) Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman | Present |
| | (D) William J. Monaghan, Member | Present |
| | (R) Lisa M. Crescimano, Member | Present |
| | (R) Nancy C. McKeen, Member | Present |

Guests in attendance: Amy Grubbe and Caleb Stidham

Mr. Monaghan motioned to approve the minutes from the April 21st meeting, with Ms. Crescimano seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried.

Adrienne James, Deputy Director, stated there are no overvoted absentee ballots for the board to review at this time. She then reviewed numbers for early and absentee voting. We mailed 205 ballots and have received 163, which means we have 42 outstanding. Of the 163 we have received, 160 are countable. For the three that are uncountable, we have sent those voters an 11-s supplemental form. We had 855 people vote early, in our office. We had two hand carry voters, three nursing home voters, zero military voters, and zero overseas voters.

Mr. Ferrell stated we need a motion to recess. Ms. Crescimano stated before we recess, she would like to make a few comments regarding the investigation by the HR director. She is going to read her statement because she doesn't want to forget anything.

Mr. Ferrell stated this is not on the agenda. We don't do this at pre-election meetings. Ms. Crescimano again stated she has a few words to say. Mr. Ferrell replied, "You can say it tomorrow night." Ms. Crescimano said, "I'm saying it now." Mr. Ferrell said, "We need to recess. Thank you for coming." He and Mr. Monaghan then exited the room. Ms. Crescimano read from her prepared statement, which is below:

"I would like to make a few comments regarding the HR director's report sent to the board last week. Director Wilson made clear that the accusations made against our Director by Mr. Ferrell were entirely unfounded.

The director, along with the citizens of this community, deserve to know what occurred. At our last board meeting, Mr. Ferrell indicated that a complaint had been made to him that the director spent four hours in the middle of a work day at a winery and was in violation of county policy. This was entirely untrue. Mr. Ferrell or this alleged complainant lied for the purpose of pursuing a political agenda.

The truth is that Mr. Jones took his lunch break on March 29th to assist another county department which he was previously employed. He went to a dilapidated structure to assist the county in a project that he spent months working on in his prior capacity with that department. According to Director Wilson, Mr. Jones's actions weren't just permissive, they are encouraged.

The most disturbing part of this story is that the board was not informed who the complainant was or what evidence they had that this event had occurred.

I have had the chance to speak with former board of elections employees who have felt harassed and uncomfortable with the behavior with current and former members of this board. I fear that Mr. Jones may have been followed by an agent of a political party in an effort to intimidate and undermine Mr. Jones.

This occurrence has been a fiasco and this board should be ashamed of its conduct. I apologize to our director on behalf of the board and demand that all four of us do better in the treatment of our staff. In particular, Mr. Ferrell owes our Director an apology for perpetuating falsehoods regarding his performance and leading the charge to subject him to an unfounded investigation. Additionally, we all deserve to know if there was a complainant and if so who. Mr. Jones may need to be extended protections to ensure that he isn't been (sic) stalked or harassed by unbalanced actors pursuing a political agenda."

Ms. Crescimano stated she would read her statement again tomorrow, when all four board members are present. Ms. McKeen stated she agreed with everything Ms. Crescimano said and that she is frankly a little annoyed by the whole thing. She said if you're going to make an accusation, the board should have gotten the name of the person making it. She then apologized to Mr. Jones.

Ms. Crescimano stated she was bamboozled at the last meeting because the investigation wasn't on the agenda. She noted that Mr. Ferrell just walked out on a non-agenda item, and that she should have walked out on a non-agenda item. Ms. McKeen said she should have, too. Ms. Crescimano then stated that in the future, she will walk out on every non-agenda item.

Ms. James stated it is now 2:06 p.m. and she guesses we are recessed now. We will reconvene tomorrow at 7:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, May 2nd at 7:04 p.m., the board reconvened with all members present. Amy Grubbe and MaryAnn Groot were present as guests. Ms. James stated there are no overvoted absentee ballots for the board to review. She also explained the process the board would follow once the polls close at 7:30 p.m.

The board members discussed rescheduling the official canvass and certification. Ms. James stated her recommendation is to conduct the official canvass on Wednesday, May 17th at 9:00 a.m. and the official certification/regular meeting that same day at 3:00 p.m. The board members agreed that should be fine.

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Jones and Ms. James checked the dropbox for absentee ballots. They then scanned the last of the absentee ballots, tabulated the absentee results, and posted the absentee results on the website. As the memory sticks came back from the polling locations, they tabulated and posted the election day results, too.

At 9:06 p.m., Ms. James reviewed unofficial results. She stated that voter turnout was 23.58%. According to unofficial results, both school bond issues failed, but the three local liquor options in Sandusky G passed. Mr. Ferrell asked how many people voted on the local options; Ms. James stated 87 out of about 1,300. Mr. Monaghan asked about voter turnout for Edison and Perkins Schools. Ms. James stated she would email the board that. The board members signed the Unofficial Results Certification page to submit to the Secretary of State's Office.

Mr. Monaghan made a motion to adjourn, with Ms. Crescimano seconding. All board members voted yes; motion carried. Board adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Alexander W. Jones, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman