

The regular monthly meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Thomas Ferrell on Wednesday, May 25th, 2022 at 9:13 a.m.

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: Amy Grubbe

Motion to approve the minutes from the April 22nd and the May 2nd/3rd meetings was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried.

Lori Salyers, Director, presented the bills to the board. She stated there were two “Then and Now” certificates to sign for bills over \$5,000, one for Knowink support and one for ballots. Motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried.

Ms. Salyers then gave a summary of Election Day. She stated that overall, the day went well, and our numbers came out perfectly. She also stated that we had a post-election meeting with two VLMs, one who is a veteran and one who is a “newbie.” In the meeting, we talked about VLM training and how we can improve it. The veteran VLM stated that some of the training materials are very redundant, so Ms. Salyers worked on paring it down. She also created check-lists for the VLMs, such as a check-list for assisting provisional voters and a check-list for end-of-night procedures. Ms. Salyers also stated we would like to start video taping some of our classes. One suggestion from the new VLM was to have a training class just for newbies and limit it to five people per class so they can obtain more hands-on experience.

Next, Ms. Salyers gave polling location updates. She stated that the Huron Memorial Stadium for Huron A and C did not work out very well. Students parked along the street, so it was difficult for voters to find where to go. The restrooms smelled bad, there were no doors on the stalls, and the poll workers couldn’t use the restrooms when the track students came in. There were no kitchen facilities, either. Also, when it started raining, water came in under the door, and the poll workers had to move the voting equipment.

Ms. Salyers stated that the head VLM there contacted Huron United Methodist Church, which is where those precincts used to be. The church voted 9 to 0 to have us back. Also, the head VLM stated that four of the five women who worked at the Field House stated they would not return as workers if we continued to use the field house. Eliza Link, Clerk, stated we received complaints about the field house from voters, as well.

Ms. Salyers then gave an update on Stein Hospice, which hosts the precinct Sandusky E. Stein Hospice does not want us anymore, so we want to move those voters to the Sandusky Municipal Building, which already hosts Sandusky G. However, the Sandusky Municipal Building will be undergoing renovations soon. Adrienne James, Deputy Director, has been in contact with them.

Mr. Smith asked why Stein Hospice wanted us to leave. Ms. Salyers stated they didn’t give a reason. Mr. Smith asked if Stein receives federal funding. Ms. Salyers responded that she did not think so.

Mr. Krabill stated we may want to talk to the city manager regarding renovations at the municipal building. The area of the building that we use, which is the northeast corner, may not be having renovations done. Mr. Monaghan asked who at Stein wanted us to leave. Board staff was not sure. The board members commented that there is a new director at Stein and that they are undergoing a merger, which may be why they want us to leave. Ms. Link iterated that we want to combine Sandusky E and G at the municipal building. Mr. Monaghan suggested not speaking with Stein then if we want to end up at the municipal building.

Ms. Salyers stated it was her goal to continue moving to public entities as private entities continue to reject us. Mr. Smith suggested asking someone at the prosecutor's office to investigate whether Stein Hospice receives public funding. Mr. Krabill reminded Mr. Smith that staff wants to move Sandusky E regardless. Ms. James stated she would follow up with the city. Mr. Krabill commented that we might as well move the Sandusky E voters now if we can.

Ms. Salyers stated we needed a motion on Huron. Motion to accept the invitation to go back to the Methodist Church was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Mr. Krabill then asked about the advantages of combining precincts. Board staff indicated there was some cost saving, as you only need one head VLM, so you're not paying both VLMs to pick up and drop off supplies. Combining precincts also saves money on janitors and facility rental costs. It's also better because there will be more poll workers there to support each other if they have questions.

Ms. Salyers then asked about PEO training. We would like to waive training for poll workers this August if they trained and worked in May. The board members thought that was reasonable. Motion to waive PEO training requirements if they worked in May was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Mr. Smith asked if that was okay per the Secretary of State office. Ms. James stated it was. Ms. Salyers stated that for November, we would require PEO training.

Ms. Salyers then asked the board members about after-hours access to the office. She reminded the board members that she gave them a card with our code to disable the alarm if they come in after hours. However, this may not be a good idea. There are times, such as right now, that people can't come in the office unless they have a member of the opposite political party with them. She is not sure if the board members are aware of these dates. She then asked the board members if they would mind changing their access to the office to only be when we are open.

Mr. Smith asked what staff access is. Ms. Salyers stated her access is 24/7. Mr. Smith stated that if her access is 24/7, then the board members' access needs to be 24/7 too. Mr. Ferrell stated that if Ms. Salyers come in, then Ms. James should too. Ms. Salyers responded, "Absolutely." She also stated that she is usually the first one here in the morning, and she waits outside the hallway for a Democrat to come in. Ms. Salyers then reminded the board members if they want to come in after hours, they'll need to be cognizant of the dates they can't be here alone. If they're not sure, and they need to drop off paperwork, they can just slide it under the door. Ms. Salyers also stated that she does not want 24/7 access, but she has it because if the alarm goes off, the sheriff's department calls her. Mr. Smith stated that if that happens, the board members would like to know.

Ms. Salyers then asked about buying a postage scanner and a laminator. She stated that the SOS office gave us permission to use grant money to purchase a postage scanner. However, the company will not accept checks and we must pay with a credit card. Ms. Salyers stated she sent the board members an email regarding this matter, but Mr. Krabill was the only one who responded.

Mr. Ferrell stated to contact the auditor's office for the county's credit card. Ms. Salyers stated that she did but was told that credit card was only for Staples. Mr. Ferrell indicated that was not true. Ms. Salyers stated she was just going by what she heard. Mr. Ferrell stated he would speak with Janice at the auditor's office.

Motion to purchase the postage scanner using the grant money was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Ms. Salyers asked if it was okay for her to use her credit card for the scanner, and then get reimbursed by the board. The board indicated that was fine.

Ms. Salyers then stated we would like a laminator to laminate postings for the polling locations. This was a suggestion from one of the VLMS. Mr. Krabill asked how much it would cost. Ms. Salyers stated the cheapest one she found was \$80, while the most expensive one she found was \$3,000. The board members asked Ms. Salyers to obtain some quotes and get back to them. Mr. Smith asked if the SOS gave us permission to use grant money for the laminator. Ms. Salyers stated they did not. Mr. Smith then asked if the laminator was in our budget. Ms. Salyers stated yes, we could pay for it out of our supplies budget.

Mr. Ferrell asked if there were any other matters to come before the board. Ms. Salyers stated Summer Conference would be June 28th and 29th, and that the deadline to register is May 31st. The board members indicated they would all be attending. Ms. Salyers then reminded the board members to please check their emails.

Mr. Ferrell then made a comment about political signs. He stated he received a phone call from Perkins Township that they have a resolution stating political signs must be picked up seven days after an election. He asked Ms. Grubbe to pick up any Democratic signs, and asked Mr. Smith and Mr. Krabill to ask the chairperson of the Republican party to pick up any Republican signs. Mr. Krabill suggested adding something to a candidate packet when they turn in petitions to remind them to check with their local municipality regarding rules for political signs.

Ms. Salyers stated we are having A Frames made up to put out by the road for early voting. The A Frames will state the days and hours of early voting. Ms. Salyers also stated she checked on the rolling bags the board members discussed at a previous meeting. However, since the election is now over, we can no longer use grant money to purchase the bags, so we lost our opportunity to buy them.

Motion to go into executive session regarding salary of board staff was made by Mr. Monaghan. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Ferrell- yes
Mr. Monaghan- yes
Mr. Smith- yes
Mr. Krabill- yes

Motion carried. Board went into executive session at 9:44 a.m.

Motion to leave executive session and return to regular session was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried. Board resumed regular session at 10:20 a.m.

Motion to set the junior clerk salary at \$17.20 an hour, starting today, was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Next, the board began their official canvass, which was originally scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Link reviewed provisional ballots. There were a total of 77 provisional ballots this election. 22 were cast in our office during early voting, three were cast in our office on Election Day, and 52 were cast at polling locations on Election Day.

The first group was "invalid ID" and consisted of one provisional ballot. This person voted provisionally because they did not have a valid form on ID with them on Election Day. The ID that they wrote on their provisional ballot envelope did not match what was in the SOS portal. Per Chapter 8, Page 248 of the Elections Officials Manual, we cannot accept this ballot.

The second group was “acceptable” and consisted of 67 provisional ballots. 19 of these were out of county, meaning the person was registered to vote in another Ohio county, but did not vote in the other county. Six were provisionals because the voter requested an absentee ballot be mailed to them, but then changed their mind and decided to vote on Election Day. They did not return their absentee ballots. 36 were address changes within the county or name changes. Three were provisionals because they did not have their ID on them, but they properly filled out the provisional ballot envelope. One was provisional because the voter was in provisional status due to an undeliverable acknowledgement notice. Finally, two were provisionals because of incorrect information in EVIS, but we have now fixed that. All 67 of these are eligible to be counted.

The third and final group was “not registered” and consisted of nine provisional ballots. These voters were not registered to vote anywhere in the state of Ohio. Ms. Link stated she had Ms. James double-check her on this. Because these voters were not registered, their ballots are not eligible to be counted.

Motion to count the 67 eligible provisional ballots and not count the 10 ineligible provisional ballots was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Ms. Link reminded the board that the nine that were not registered will now become registered in Erie County.

Ms. James stated that there was one 17-year-old ballot from Election Day that the board would need to review. The person voted for County Central Committee, which they are not allowed to do. Ms. James and Ms. Salyers remade the ballot and asked the board to review it. Motion to accept the remade ballot and count it as part of the official canvass was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Ms. James stated there were 16 absentee ballots received after the election that are eligible to be counted. Nine were postmarked May 2nd or earlier and received within 10 days of the election. Six were absentee ballots that included a timely return of the 11-S ID supplemental form. The last one was a UOCAVA overseas ballot that was returned on time. Motion to count these ballots was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Ms. James stated there were three absentee ballots received after the election that are not eligible to be counted. Two of them had a postmark of May 3rd or later. The third ballot did not have a postmark, but Rachel Mullen from the SOS office came in to scan it and it was indeed late. Motion to not count these ballots was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Motion to go into recess until 3 p.m. was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board went into recess at 10:30 a.m. While in recess, board staff opened and scanned eligible ballots.

Motion to resume regular session was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board returned to regular session at 12:30 p.m.

Ms. Salyers stated there was one provisional ballot where the person overvoted on the governor’s race. She and Ms. James remade the ballot without a vote for governor. The board members took a few moments to review the ballot. Motion to accept the remake was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Motion to go back in recess was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board returned to recess at 12:31 p.m.

Motion to come back into regular session was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board returned to regular session at 3:00 p.m.

Ms. James reviewed final numbers. Voter turnout this election was 20.97%. 11,222 ballots were cast. 9,041 were election day ballots, 2,114 were absentee, and 67 were provisional. There will be no recounts.

Motion to certify the results of the election was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. A roll call vote was taken.

**Mr. Ferrell- yes
Mr. Monaghan- yes
Mr. Smith- yes
Mr. Krabill- yes**

Motion carried. The board members took a few minutes to sign the certification paperwork.

Next, Ms. James stated the board members would need to choose which polling locations to include in the post-election audit, which will take place Wednesday, June 1st at 12:00 p.m. Per the SOS office, we must audit at least five percent of the total ballots cast. Five percent for Erie County is 562 ballots. The board members randomly picked thumb drives out of a box to determine which locations to audit. The locations chosen were Huron Presbyterian Church (Huron E & F) and Huron Memorial Stadium (Huron A & C.) This amounts to 850 ballots, which is above the five percent minimum.

Next, Ms. Salyers stated that from now on, we will be handling overvotes a little differently, per the suggestion of Heather Scott at ES&S. Ms. Scott stated that in most counties, when they have overvoted absentee ballots, they simply turn off the sorter on the high-speed scanner and run the ballots through. The scanner will then count all the races except the over-voted one. This way, Ms. Salyers and Ms. James will not have to remake so many ballots. Mr. Krabill confirmed that they would still present overvoted ballots to the board. Ms. James stated that they would, but they would not remake the ballots unless they believed the overvote to be a hesitation mark or if the board wanted them to remake the ballots.

Next, Ms. Grubbe asked when voter history would be uploaded. Ms. James stated they would look in the Directive to see what the timeline for that was. Ms. Grubbe also asked when certificates would be ready for people elected to central committee. Ms. James stated they would be ready in the next few days. Ms. Grubbe then stated that if someone calls the Board of Elections on Election Day and needs a ride to the polls, to please give them her cell phone number. She stated that someone called on Election Day and was given her home number, and she didn't receive the message until that evening after the polls had already closed.

Motion to go into executive session regarding compensation was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. A roll call vote was taken.

**Mr. Ferrell- yes
Mr. Monaghan- yes
Mr. Smith- yes
Mr. Krabill- yes**

Motion carried. Board went into executive session at 3:13 p.m.

Motion to return to regular session was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried. Board resumed regular session at 3:28 p.m.

Mr. Ferrell stated the reason the board went into executive session was that he was looking at the leave sheet balances for employees and noticed there was a lot of vacation and comp time on the books. The board would like to whittle that down. They would like to close the office Fridays at noon, starting on June 3rd. Motion to approve the office closure was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried.

Ms. Salyers stated this motion from the board would not usurp the SOS office if they state we have to be open more hours. Mr. Smith confirmed that was true. Mr. Ferrell asked about early voting for the August election. Ms. Salyers stated we would still have to conduct early voting as usual. She also stated that she thinks we will receive grant money from the state for the August election. If so, she will use the grant money to pay overtime so as not to accumulate comp time. She will also use the grant money to pay part-timers.

Ms. Link reminded the board members that early voting starts in July, so the office closure could only be in effect for June. Ms. Salyers asked if Clerk Kimberly Barnum does not have enough time accumulated if she could remain in the office by herself on Friday afternoons. The board members indicated that was fine.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Lori J. Salyers, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman