

The special meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Board Member William Monaghan on Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.

Roll Call:	(D) Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman	Absent (excused)
	(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 go into executive session was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. The purpose was to consider employment of a county employee. All board members voted yes. Motion carried. Board went into executive session at 8:31 a.m.

Motion to return to regular session was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried. Board returned to regular session at 8:43 a.m.

Motion to hire Kimberly Barnum as Democratic Clerk was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith stated it would be contingent on Ms. Barnum passing her background check and physical, and that there would be a six-month probationary period. All board members voted yes. Motion carried.

The next item on the agenda was to schedule a time when board members will meet with commissioners regarding final placement of dropbox. Adrienne James, Deputy Director, stated that a worker from the county facilities department came to the office last week and said that they would start wiring for the dropbox camera soon. However, it was Ms. James' understanding that the board members wanted to speak with the commissioners first, so she asked the facilities department if they could please hold off on that.

Lori Salyers, Director, stated that Gary Weilnau of the facilities department came in the office yesterday and asked if the absentee ballot envelopes fit inside the water department box, which is next to where the commissioners want to place the BOE dropbox. Staff informed Mr. Weilnau that yes, absentee ballot envelopes do fit in the water department box. Ms. Salyers stated it was her understanding that Mr. Weilnau was supposed to report that to someone upstairs in the commissioners' office.

Mr. Krabill stated that maybe there's some reconsideration going on, but his conversations with the commissioners have led to nothing. Eliza Link, Clerk, asked if that meant we shouldn't schedule a time to speak with the commissioners.

Mr. Monaghan explained that if the BOE dropbox is by the water department box, then someone could put their ballot in the water department box, and then their vote wouldn't count. Mr. Krabill replied that there is an argument to be made that people have to take responsibility for their actions. He also stated that we are going to decorate our box to make it obvious that it is a BOE dropbox. Mr. Monaghan stated that it doesn't make any difference how it's decorated. Mr. Krabill stated yes it does.

Mr. Smith stated that he looked at the box in Huron County. He stated that it was decorated as a Board of Elections box, and that it was next to a UPS box. He also stated that a person dropping off their ballot has to exercise a level of common sense. He said I know there is a preference for putting our box on the north end of the building, but the commissioners want it on the east side next to the water department box. Mr. Smith also stated that we are going to use county facility workers instead of outside contractors, so that should save some money. Mr. Monaghan replied that the money is not coming out of the commissioners' budget; it is coming out of our budget.

Ms. Salyers asked the board members who they would like her to go with for purchasing the cameras. Mr. Krabill asked who did our current cameras, and Ms. Salyers responded Accurate Business. The board members agreed that they would want the dropbox cameras from Accurate, as well.

Mr. Smith stated that he knows some members of the community have lobbied the commissioners to put the box at the north end. He said that if the other board members want to wait another month to allow more people to do that, that's up to them. Mr. Monaghan stated he would like to wait a month. Mr. Krabill stated that was fine with him. Mr. Monaghan stated that it makes no sense to him why the commissioners don't want to put the box on the north end. You get one ballot in the water department box, and that vote is no good, from what he understands. Ms. James then reminded the board members of a suggestion that Mr. Ferrell had several meetings ago, which was to train one Democratic and one Republican staff member of the water department so that they could move ballots from their box to the BOE box.

Mr. Krabill suggested asking about that idea at the conference next week. He also asked if we had gotten the new dropbox. Ms. Salyers stated that we had. Mr. Krabill reminded the other board members that he had volunteered to wrap the box cost free, and asked if it was okay to take the box off-site to get that done. He stated that he would take pictures of the Huron County BOE dropbox to get an idea of what ours should look like. Mr. Smith and Mr. Monaghan both stated that was fine.

Ms. Link asked in the meantime what was the plan, since the board members wanted to wait a month. She suggested maybe having Sue Daugherty of Serving our Seniors write a letter to the commissioners. Ms. James asked the board members if they wanted staff to write letters. Mr. Smith responded that he doesn't think it should come from this office. If other people in the public want to do that, then that's fine, but at a certain point, we're going to have to pull the trigger. Mr. Monaghan stated that at the next meeting, we should pull the trigger.

Ms. Grubbe stated that you guys need to go up there (to the commissioners' office) and put something on the record. She also stated that she would like to know the cost of putting the box at the north end versus putting it on the east end next to the water department box. She said she would like to see it in writing "as a taxpayer." Ms. Salyers stated she could get that information to her.

Mr. Monaghan remarked that the Democratic Party sent a letter to the commissioners regarding the placement of the dropbox. Ms. Grubbe asked if the Republicans were going to do the same thing. She stated it's a bipartisan issue of convenience, accessibility, and making sure that ballots count. She also said that having the box next to the water department box would be confusing to the voters, and a safety issue for staff. She also stated that putting the responsibility on the water department employees was ludicrous.

Mr. Monaghan suggested that since Ms. Grubbe is the Democratic Party chairperson, she could get together with her Republican counterpart and have a conversation. He said to explain what you just said here. Ms. Grubbe replied that she thinks the two Republicans on the board here could talk to the Republican Party chairman just as well. She suggested taking a copy of the letter that the Democrats wrote and giving it to him. Mr. Monaghan asked if Ms. Grubbe had anything else to add, and she stated no.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.
Board adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

Lori J. Salyers, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman