

The pre-election meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Thomas Ferrell on Monday, August 1st, 2022 at 4:02 p.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, Diane Schaefer, and Caleb Stidham

Motion to approve the minutes from the June and July meetings was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

Lori Salyers, Director, presented the chargeback paperwork to the board for the May 2nd, 2022 Primary Election. She stated there would be no chargebacks for this August election because it is being covered by grant money, and there are no issues on the ballot. Motion to sign the chargeback paperwork for May was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Adrienne James, Deputy Director, reviewed early voting and absentee numbers. We had 541 people vote early, in office. We mailed 427 ballots and have received 288 back. Of those 288, 285 are countable and three are uncountable. The three uncountable ballots were due to incorrect ID information on the ID envelopes. We have mailed those voters a form 11-S for them to correct their information. We had 11 hand carries, and eight of those have been returned as countable. We had 32 nursing home voters, and 28 have been returned as countable. The other four refused to vote. We mailed four UOCAVA ballots and one has been returned. We emailed four UOCAVA ballots and one has been returned.

Ms. James also stated that at the last meeting, Mr. Smith inquired about Republican voters who live in the eastern part of the county, since those are the only voters in Erie County who have contested races. Of all our early and absentee voters, 126 of them have been Republicans with contested races.

Next on the agenda was a review of over-voted ballots. Ms. James stated there was only one ballot to review, and staff interpreted it to be not a true overvote, but a hesitation mark. Ms. Salyers stated that clerks Eliza Link and Kimberly Barnum scanned absentee ballots under Ms. James' supervision, so they are now cross trained on that. The board members took a few moments to review the ballot. Motion to concur with staff and count the remade ballot was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of a pay raise for poll workers. Mr. Ferrell stated that we spoke about this a couple meetings ago. Mr. Monaghan stated that when you look at what employers are paying in this county, it's \$15 an hour. He stated that we are underpaying our poll workers, and that if we want to keep the goods ones, we need to raise our pay to \$15 an hour.

Mr. Smith asked what we pay our poll workers now. Ms. Salyers stated we pay them \$110 a day. She agrees with Mr. Monaghan that we should raise the poll workers' pay, but according to the Elections Officials Manual, or EOM, we can't do that mid-cycle. According to page 181 of the EOM, which Ms. Salyers printed for each of the board members, we must put something in writing and submit it to the county commissioners by October 1st. We also cannot pay more than \$133.72 per day. Ms. James stated it was her understanding that the \$133.72 per day does not include pay for training or picking up and dropping off supplies.

Mr. Monaghan asked how many hours the poll workers work. Ms. Salyers stated they arrive at the polling location at 5:45 a.m. and work until about 7:45 p.m. or 8 p.m., so about 14 hours. Mr. Monaghan commented that he can't believe they're paying that little to the poll workers in Cuyahoga County.

Mr. Krabill stated he was happy to consider an increase in pay, but we need to do it in a timely manner by October 1st, then make it part of next year's budget. Mr. Ferrell suggested increasing drive time pay for this election. Ms. Salyers pointed out that it was only head VLMs or only VLMs who get drive time pay. Ms. James stated that ridebacks also receive an extra \$10.

Mr. Monaghan asked is there a reason we don't have legal counsel here. Mr. Smith stated that Sue Brown from the prosecutor's office retired. Ms. Salyers stated that we email the prosecutor's office to inform them when our meetings are, but we can't force them to come. Mr. Monaghan asked Ms. Salyers to email the prosecutor's office again to let them know we would like counsel at all our meetings. He also reiterated that he can't believe other counties, such as Lorain and Cuyahoga, pay their poll workers so little.

Ms. Salyers stated she knows Lorain County pays \$200 a day, but she's not sure how that works. Mr. Monaghan asked her to find out for the next meeting. Ms. Schaefer asked if we could use grant money to increase poll worker pay. Ms. Salyers stated she was not sure.

Mr. Ferrell asked, just as speculation, what would we like to raise poll worker pay to? Mr. Monaghan stated we ought to raise it to a minimum of \$15 an hour. Mr. Krabill stated that would be \$240 a day. Ms. Salyers stated it would be \$210 a day, but that is still over the limit of \$133.72 a day. Mr. Ferrell commented that people can go to Culver's and make more money than that. Mr. Krabill replied that he doesn't know how many of our workers are making the decision between working at Culver's versus one day of service. Mr. Monaghan stated that the poll workers are doing the county a service, and we ought to pay them for their service. Mr. Krabill replied, "I don't disagree."

Mr. Smith stated that we must follow what the law says. He also stated, based on the information in the EOM, he thinks the ceiling would be \$119.90 a day. Mr. Ferrell then asked how is Lorain County able to pay more? Ms. Salyers speculated that Lorain County pays their workers more for training. Mr. Ferrell asked how much we pay for training. Ms. James stated for VLMs it is \$30, for signature judges it is \$25, and for ballot judges and clerks it is \$20.

Mr. Smith then commented on the \$133.72 per day maximum per the EOM. He stated that based on what he's reading, we can't go to the maximum right away. He thinks that we must do that over the course of two or three years, and that we are only allowed to go up nine percent a year. Ms. Salyers asked where he was finding that. Mr. Smith stated it was in the third and fourth paragraphs of the page in the EOM that Ms. Salyers printed. Ms. Salyers stated she would ask for clarification from legal.

Motion to approve the tentative board meeting schedule for 2023 was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Ms. James stated she would send the schedule to Alicia upstairs.

Mr. Ferrell asked if there were any other matters to come before the board. Ms. Salyers stated that the auditor's office kicked back the bills for Mr. Ferrell's and Mr. Monaghan's meal reimbursement from summer conference. According to the auditor's office, they need either an itemized receipt or a signed affidavit. Mr. Ferrell stated they did not receive itemized receipts, and to just forget about his reimbursement, as it was not worth it.

Mr. Ferrell then asked if there were any questions from the audience. Ms. Grubbe stated she would like a copy of the section of the EOM where it talks about poll worker pay, and a copy of the tentative 2023 board meeting schedule.

Ms. Grubbe also stated she brought a visually impaired voter to vote early in the office today. She said the voter was helped by part-time worker P.T. Barnum, and that he did a good job. She also stated one suggestion from the voter was to have a template for signing on the topaz signature pad so that blind and visually impaired voters know where to sign. Ms. Salyers commented that she used to work for the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, or BVR, and they had templates there for blind and visually impaired people to sign documents. She stated she would contact someone at BVR to obtain a template.

Mr. Ferrell stated that Mr. Monaghan wanted to do an executive session. Mr. Smith stated we had to give 24 hours notice for that. Mr. Monaghan stated we could have executive session at the next meeting.

Motion to recess was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Mr. Krabill then asked Ms. Salyers about creating name badges for the board members if they need to go to the polling locations on election day. He stated he didn't think we would need them for tomorrow, but it would be nice for November. Ms. Salyers stated she could work on that. Ms. Grubbe stated that BOE office staff should wear nametags as well. The board members then voted on recessing, and the motion passed. Board recessed at 4:31 p.m.

On Tuesday, August 2nd, motion to reconvene was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board reconvened at 7:15 p.m. Ms. James stated there were no overvoted ballots for the board members to review.

At 7:30 p.m., a bipartisan team went outside to check the dropbox. Ms. Salyers and Ms. James tabulated and uploaded absentee results. They then tabulated and uploaded election day results as the poll workers returned thumb drives from the polling locations.

Motion to certify the unofficial results was made by Mr. Krabill, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. The board members then signed the paperwork to submit to the SOS office.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Monaghan. Motion carried. Board adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Lori J. Salyers, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman