

The regular meeting of the Erie County Board of Elections was called to order by Chairman Ferrell at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, October 23, 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: Gery Gross, Andy Ouriel, Mary Ann Groot

Motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried.

Ms. Salyers, Director, gave the board an update on absentee numbers. So far, 157 UOCAVA ballots have been sent out, and 86 have been received in. 9,718 regular absentee ballots have been received in, processed, and scanned within five days. 4,330 people have voted early, in-person. 14,170 ballots have been mailed to voters. 64 voters have had to vote provisionally, and 254 ballots have had to be remade, mostly due to tears and timing marks.

Ms. Salyers stated that she had signs to post on old polling locations on Election Day, informing anyone who goes there that their polling location has been moved, and asked for volunteers to post the signs. Mr. Ferrell asked if the office had received the sandwich board signs from the Secretary of State's office. Ms. James, Deputy Director, stated no, but that they had received posters from the SOS office. Ms. Link, Clerk, stated that a poster was hanging up outside the early voting room. Mr. Krabill stated that regarding the signs to be posted at the old polling locations, he would be happy to post those. Ms. Salyers stated that they would need to be posted the day before the election.

Ms. Salyers then asked the board about holidays. She stated that there are two holidays, Columbus Day and Veterans Day, which the county observes but that our office does not. She was wondering if it would be okay for the office to take two other days off in the same calendar year in order to make up for that. The board members agreed that that would be fine. Ms. Salyers stated that she would write a policy for that for the board to vote on in the next meeting.

Ms. Salyers then stated that Mr. Ferrell wanted to talk about the possibility of an outside dropbox. Ms. Salyers looked up some information on the internet about outside dropboxes and placed it in the board members' folders. She stated that any outside dropbox would need to be stood up on legs because if it is on the ground there is the possibility of the ballots getting wet. Mr. Ferrell stated that the problem now is getting a dropbox on time. Mr. Krabill stated that it would not be done before Election Day because there isn't enough time. There are also the issues of where we would place it, how we would secure it, and how we would get security cameras on it. Mr. Ferrell stated that it was something we could look into for the future, though.

Ms. Salyers stated that one problem of having an outdoor dropbox is the possibility of people dropping things off that don't belong to us. Ms. Link stated that the box would need to be wrapped so that people know it is specifically for the Board of Elections. Mr. Krabill stated that he owns a sign company and that he would be happy to do the wrapping for the dropbox when the time comes. Mr. Gross stated that the office would not be able to buy it from him. Mr. Krabill agreed, and stated that he wouldn't asked to be compensated for it.

Mr. Ferrell then stated that with the current traffic pattern, some voters waiting in line to vote were crowding the dropbox we currently have. Ms. Link stated that the facilities department moved the footprint signs on the floor to discourage voters from crowding around the dropbox.

Mr. Krabill then stated that thanks needs to go to the county on a couple of things. He thanked the county for the ability to accommodate the long line of people indoors. He stated that the voters waiting in line to vote appreciated being out of the rain on those days. He also thanked the county for sending several county employees down to the office to help during early and absentee voting.

Ms. Link then gave an update on nursing homes. She stated that all of them are done but one. The ones where we trained a bipartisan team of nursing home employees all did really well except Admiral's Pointe, who took it upon themselves not to use a bipartisan team. Only one person there took care of all ten voters. She spoke to the Secretary of State legal department about this, who gave her two options. The first option is to redo everything with Admiral's Pointe from start to finish. The second option is to take the paperwork back to Admiral's Pointe, let those ten residents look over their ballots and envelopes to make sure everything is how they want it, and then have the bipartisan team sign. Ms. Link stated she was concerned that going with the first option would confuse the residents, so she was leaning toward the second option. Mr. Ferrell stated that that makes sense, and the other board members agreed. Ms. Link stated that they would do this process on Monday, and that Mr. Krabill and a Democratic employee would go to Admiral's to drop off the paperwork.

Ms. Salyers then stated that she had received several complaints from voters that she wanted to bring to the board's attention. Some were complaining that it was taking too long to vote, and that only four people were allowed in the voting room at a time. Ms. Salyers explained to the voters that the reason only four people are permitted in the voting room is to allow for social distancing. Ms. Salyers also stated that one voter complained that there was only one person at the check-in window. However, it is likely that that person came up to the window at a time when the second worker was simply taking a break.

Mr. Krabill stated that someone suggested to him using a school gymnasium for early voting, which sounds good in theory, but how would you get all the equipment and computers that you need in there. Mr. Monaghan stated that he and Mr. Ferrell voted this morning, and that it didn't take very long. Mr. Krabill stated that when the line is out to the parking lot, it takes about 45 minutes. Mr. Smith asked when the best time to come was. Ms. Salyers stated that there isn't a best time because there is always a line. She also stated that voting this election has already surpassed what we did in the primary.

Mr. Krabill stated that he knows one concern is having enough ballots at the polling locations on Election Day, and asked how we were doing with that. Ms. Salyers explained there was a special formula she had to follow when ordering ballots for Election Day and that we had ordered plenty. Mr. Krabill stated that with the high numbers for early and absentee voting, he expected Election Day to go smoothly.

Mr. Ferrell asked if we were all set on equipment movers for the day before the election, and Mr. Salyers responded yes. Mr. Monaghan then asked if we were all set on poll workers. Ms. Salyers did say that she had one person quit yesterday, but that she is finding a replacement. Ms. Link also stated that Ms. Salyers is doing a last minute training class this weekend for backup VLMs. Mr. Monaghan asked how many backups we have, and Ms. Link stated that it varies. She has six or seven, while Ms. James stated that she has two or three backups per position.

Mr. Monaghan then asked how we were doing on PPE and cleaning supplies. Ms. Salyers stated that we have everything that we need except we are short on Clorox wipes, and asked if anyone could help her with that. Mr. Smith stated he would look into getting those.

Mr. Krabill then congratulated the staff on having all their poll workers lined up. He stated that a recent publication from the Secretary of State's office outlined poll worker needs by county, and that Erie County was one of only eight counties that had all their positions filled.

Ms. Salyers then stated as far as PPE and cleaning equipment, we have face shields, masks, gloves, and alcohol wipes. Mr. Monaghan asked if the poll workers were aware of this. Ms. James stated yes, and that we went over PPE and cleaning procedures in our training classes.

Mr. Monaghan then asked about the numbers of registered voters. Mr. Krabill stated that in November 2016, the number of registered votes was about 51,000 and that in the 2020 primary, it was about 52,000. Now, it is about 53,000. Ms. James stated that actually, it is now at about 54,000.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Monaghan, seconded by Mr. Krabill. Motion carried. Board adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Lori J. Salyers, Director

Attest:

Thomas M. Ferrell, Chairman