

RICHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES 07-06-2021

Chairman Bill Freytag called the meeting to order at the Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Ave. in the lower-level classroom at 3:00 P.M. on Tuesday, July 6th, 2021. The Roll Call was as follows: Bill Freytag, present, Jonathon C. Elgin, present, Lydia Reid, present, and Megan Whatman, present. Also present at this meeting were Director Matt Finfgeld and Deputy Director Jane Zimmermann, and guests Betty Preston, Shari Hoeflich, Beth Boyd, and Tina Evans.

Chairman Freytag asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the 06-01-2021 meeting. Ms. Whatman made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elgin and passed by voice vote 4-0. Director Finfgeld next reviewed the bills for the month of June in the amount of \$44,119.34 from the General Fund, and two pay periods totaling \$29,333.96. A motion to approve the bills as presented was made by Mr. Elgin, seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0. Chairman Freytag next asked if there was any public comment from the guests present, there was no comments. The Board welcomed the guests present and thanked them for coming.

There were no items of old business to come before the board.

Chairman Freytag stated the first order of business was to enter into a contract to purchase Electronic Pollbooks from Tenex Software Solutions. Director Finfgeld stated the contract as presented has been signed off on by the County Prosecutor and a representative from Tenex Software Solutions. Ms. Reid made a motion to enter into the contract with Tenex for the purchase of Electronic Pollbooks. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0. The Board thanked Deputy Director Zimmermann for all the work for the last 8 months on this contract.

The next item of business was the Richland County and Bellville fairs, and the Mansfield Campus Involvement and Community fair. Director Finfgeld discussed possibly having a booth at both fairs for voter registration, pollworker recruitment, our voting machines, and possibly the new electronic pollbooks. The price for the Richland County fair is \$285 for a 10ft space for the week, and the price for the Bellville fair is \$200 for a 10ft space. The Mansfield Campus community fair does not have a cost and is on August 25th from 11:30-1:30. Mr. Elgin made a motion authorizing the Directors to enter into a contract for those 3 events. Ms. Reid made an amendment to the motion to bring in seasonal workers to help staff the booths as needed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman. In further discussion Ms. Whatman added that maybe we should consider bringing in some of our seasoned pollworkers to help staff the booth. Mr. Elgin added he thinks it is important to be public and transparent as ever and he appreciates people taking an interest in how elections are ran. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

Next on the agenda is to approve the Worthington Township polling location change. Director Finfgeld stated how Storyside Church in Butler could not commit to the election date in November or the elections in 2022. Director Finfgeld explained they have secured Three Crosses Church at 12 Cleveland St. In Butler which is .4 miles away from Storyside Church. The Directors Finfgeld, Zimmermann, and John Makley voting equipment supervisor visited the location last Tuesday and the location is a nice ADA accessible voting location, and they are very happy to have us use them as a voting location. We just received the signed contract from Three Crosses in the mail today. We will notify the voters affected in the 2 precincts by mail and also we will do press releases the closer it gets to election. Ms. Whatman made a motion to move the Worthington voting location to Three Crosses Church. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reid and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

The next item of business on the agenda was the chargebacks for the May 2021 Primary election. Deputy Director Zimmermann provided the Board a cover sheet with the breakdown by entity and a total amount of chargebacks for the Primary election. Mr. Elgin made a motion to approve the chargebacks as presented for the May 2021 Primary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

Next on the agenda was discussion of the Triad Voter registration system. Director Finfgeld explained how Triad had been in the end of May and gave a demonstration of the system to the office staff as well as Chairman Freytag attended. The information that we would be able to put on our website and make available to the public 24/7 would be great, such as walking list, labels, and campaign finance reports. The Directors Finfgeld and Zimmermann, and Jose Trejo from Triad met earlier today with the Commissioners to see if they had interest in supporting this change financially. The Commissioners did express interest but would like a firm price. Triad currently has 69 out of 88 Counties in Ohio. We have talked with our Prosecutor and we do not have to go out for bid on this because of ORC 307.86(B)(2) states if the proprietary and unique nature of Triad’s system allows that. The Directors have talked with multiple other Counties that have either been long time customers or just went through the conversion and have heard nothing but positive comments about Triad and the customer support they provide. Mr. Elgin made a motion to authorize the Directors to enter into negotiations with Triad without competitive bidding as long as it conforms to the exemption statute and report back to Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

The next item on the agenda was if the Board wants to create a policy for the public inspection of ballots and pollbooks. Everyone received an email from the Amanda Grandjean in June with 2 Attorney Generals opinions on the inspection of ballots and pollbooks. There was discussion on whether there is or would be a statewide policy regarding this. The Board expressed interest on pursuing this and or checking with other counties to see if anyone has a policy already.

Under other on the agenda Director Finfgeld informed the Board that Debbie Obenour Election Specialist V has verbally informed the Directors that she plans to retire effective 08/31/21. The next item under other was if the Board would allow 3-4 Republicans and Democrats each to be stand by PEO’s on Election Day for November. Director Finfgeld has seen on other County Board of Elections websites where they have PEO’s report to the Board on Election Day at 5:30 a.m. If they have PEO’s that call off or that don’t show up they send them to the location. If they are not needed by 7:00 a.m. they are sent home and paid \$30 plus training. The Board is allowing the Director’s to try it for this November and we will report back on how it works out. Deputy Director Zimmermann then updated the Board on the USEAC has picked Ohio to audit the HAVA grants in 2019 & 2020 and the CARES grant. The Directors are attending a webinar on Thursday 7/8/21 with the SOS. Everything has to be ready for those grants by 07/15/2021.

The last thing under other was Chairman Freytag wanted to make sure everyone is up to date on the clergy letter the Board received in May. Deputy Director Zimmermann informed the Board we have received a few request on documents and those request have been met with the items requested. One of the biggest concerns seems to how votes are tabulated on Election Night. Director Zimmermann explained how our employees are the only ones that open the election night bags, touch the memory sticks, and tabulate results for Richland County and it is always done as a Bipartisan team in front of our full Bipartisan Board. A lot of the concerns in the letter did not happen in Richland County nor the State of Oho for matter so we couldn’t respond. The State of Ohio initiated a very intense Security Directive in the summer of 2019 that had to be met by all County Board of Elections, and those standards are still in place today. Our voting units, scanners, and tabulators never have been connected to internet and never will be they are standalone systems. The Directors then recapped a conversation we had with Pastor Spencer, his biggest concern was how the votes are tabulated in Richland County. Once we explained it’s our own Bipartisan Board of Elections Richland County employees that perform this task he was pleased to hear this. Ms. Whatman stated how she seen Pastor Spencer after the phone call and he was very pleased with how Richland County conducts Elections.

With no further business to come before the board, Mr. Elgin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Whatman, and passed by voice vote 4-0. Chairman Freytag adjourned the meeting at 3:47 P.M.

Date approved _____

Bill Freytag, Chairman

Jonathon C. Elgin

Lydia J. Reid

Megan Whatman

Attest:

Matt Finfgeld

Jane Zimmermann