

RICHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES 09-07-2021

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, September 7th, 2021. The Roll Call was as follows: Bill Freytag, present, Jonathon C. Elgin, present, Megan Whatman, present, and Lydia Reid, present. Also present at this meeting were Director Matt Finfgeld and Deputy Director Jane Zimmermann, and guests Betty Preston, Tania Bartell, Tina Evans, Shari Hoeflich, Seth Byrd from WMFD and Rachel Mullen the Northern Ohio Regional Liaison from the SOS.

Chairman Freytag asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the 08-10-2021 meeting. Ms. Whatman made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reid and passed by voice vote 4-0. Director Finfgeld next reviewed the bills for the month of August in the amount of \$658.30 from the General Fund, \$912.00 from the voting equipment fund, and two pay periods totaling \$30,727.13. 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, at which time Tina Evans addressed the Board and Directors. Ms. Evans wanted to know what the ballot count process is from the precinct level to the County level then to the SOS. Director Finfgeld explained each precinct has an accountability sheet based on the number of votes cast on the voting units and the voter's processed on the EP's that they balance at the polls. All ballots including memory sticks are then brought back to the Board of Elections on Election night by a Bi-Partisan team of pollworkers. The ballots are then brought into a room here where another Bi-Partisan team verifies that they brought back the correct number of memory sticks and that all paper ballots are accounted for. They are then brought down to the tabulation room where a Bi-Partisan team uploads the memory sticks to a computer that is not hooked to any other server and the voted paper ballots are scanned. The results are put on a memory stick and we take it out to our main office on a different computer to send the results to the SOS and post the results on our website. Deputy Director Zimmermann explained the process of how paper ballots are accounted for unused, voted, and soiled ballots equal the number that was sent out to the polls. Ms. Evans next stated how someone analyzed our County data from the SOS and found 266 voters that voted in November 2020 but registered after the October 5th deadline for registration. Deputy Director Zimmermann explained the Provisional voting process and that those were more than likely Provisional voters. Ms. Zimmermann explained why a voter would vote Provisional and the process the Board goes through to verify if that ballot should count or not and that Provisional votes are included in the Official count only. Ms. Evans next commented on how 1 voter was registered at the UPS store on Lexington Ave. and 1 voter was registered at the Bellville Post Office. Ms. Evans last comment was how many voters that only voted in November 3rd 2020 Election, and that 65 of them were senior citizens that hadn't voted in the last 20 years. Deputy Director Zimmermann stated how last year brought out many first time voters of all ages, we heard many times during early voting that voters in their 60's and 70's comment on how this was their first time voting. Director Finfgeld added that just last month while working the fair he talked with a lady that was in her 50's that had never voted and showed her how easy it was to vote. Ms. Whatman also commented on when she worked at the Ontario polling location she experienced the same thing, a woman came to vote and made the comment she hasn't voted for 30 years but I am here to vote today.

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

Chairman Freytag stated the first order of business was the termination with ES&S for the Electronic Pollbooks. Director Finfgeld went over the termination notice that is needed to terminate the contract which is 60 days and needs to be done before the end of the year. Attorney Keller at the Prosecutor's Office did look over the contract and agrees that we need to provide 60 days written notice to terminate. Mr. Elgin made a motion to direct the Directors to execute the termination of the ES&S Electronic Pollbook contract. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reid and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

The next item of business was the Tenex additional contract for Election Response. Director Finfgeld went over the proposal from Tenex for \$8,500 a year for the annual license and maintenance fee in addition to manage the EP's on Election Day. As calls come into the Board Office on Election Day all employees will be able to log them in one system with a time stamp and log when the problem/issue is corrected and by who. Currently we do not have a centralized location for problems to be logged, and usually on Election Day those calls get sent to the Director's phones. Ms. Reid made a motion to enter into the Election Response contract for one year at \$8,500 a year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elgin and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

Next on the agenda was the review of the Pre-Zero Public test as performed by Republican Daniel O'Brien and Democrat John Makley. Director Finfgeld explained the report as follows: the first report was the zero report demonstrating that no totals were in the tabulating system computer. The next report showed the total test votes cast in MAN 5-A precinct, which has 3 school district splits Madison, Mansfield, and Crestview. The next report showed the total test votes cast in the JEFF A precinct which has 2 township splits Jefferson and Washington. The next report showed the total test votes for WASH C which has no splits. The next reports was a summary of all precincts and the final report was a zero report showing the tabulation computer had been set back to all zeros so that no test votes would be in the system when we start tabulating the Election night Unofficial results. A motion to approve the programming and tabulation of the Public test was made by Mr. Elgin. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

Next item of business was to review and approve the ICX and paper ballot schedules for the General Election. Director Finfgeld stated they have 375 ICX's to go to the polling locations on Election Day, and 22 ICX's for early voting. The number is comparable to 2019, there was 361 ICX's sent to the polls, and 2020 there was 391 sent to the polls. For paper ballots we have 4,955 that will be sent to the polling locations. Ms. Whatman made a motion to approve the ICX and paper ballot schedules for the November Election. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reid and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0.

The next item of business on the agenda was to approve the write-in candidates that filed by the August 23rd deadline and they are as follows: Samuel K. Sauder-Franklin Township Trustee, Amy Cuthbertson-Lucas School Board, and Chris Elswick-Mansfield School Board. Mr. Elgin made a motion to approve the write-ins. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed by voice vote 4-0.

Next on the agenda was the withdrawal of the Wishmaker liquor option question #1. Deputy Director Zimmermann explained how the petition that was filed had 2 questions. The 1st question being if they could sell beer, wine, mixed beverages, spirituous liquor at the Wishmaker B&B? Question 2 is for Sunday sales from 10 a.m. to midnight at the Wishmaker B&B? He already sells alcohol through the week which is why he wants to withdraw question 1. Ms. Whatman made a motion to approve the withdrawal of Wishmaker Liquor option #1. The motion was seconded by Ms. Reid and passed by voice vote 4-0.

The next item on the agenda is the Ohio SOS Safe at Home program. Currently if we have someone interested in being in the program we have to refer them to the Prosecutor's Office or the Domestic Violence Shelter. The Directors stated they would like to be able to help someone as opposed to sending them somewhere else. We know both agencies that handle it now are quite capable, however it is our voting records that are impacted where they want to have information removed from. The Board recommended both Director's go through the training and become certified.

Next on the agenda was allowing PEO's returning ballots to follow each other. There was discussion about making sure they seal the return bag properly and that the Board would rather error on the side of caution and allow them to follow each other if they wish when they are returning supplies on Election night.

Chairman Freytag asked for any other business to come before the Board. Director Finfgeld updated the Board on redistricting and that the Directors have had an initial meeting with Schneider GIS which is helping with the redistricting. We sent them a basic voter file with names, addresses and current precincts. The Directors next asked the Board to make 2 part time employees that are performing the same job to be paid the same wages. Currently Linda Westfield makes \$11.50 and Sharon Schulz makes \$10.75. These 2 employees are helping take on some of the work from us not filing Debbie Obenour's position and we are very lucky to have them. They are very dedicated, hardworking, detail oriented employees. Ms. Reid made a motion to increase Sharon Schulz's pay to \$11.50 an hour to match Linda Westfield's. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman and passed unanimously by voice vote 4-0. Director Finfgeld informed the Board the SOS winter conference will be held on January 12-14 in Columbus and to think about who is interested in attending.

With no further business to come before the board, Mr. Elgin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Whatman, and passed by voice vote 4-0. Chairman Freytag adjourned the meeting at 3:53 P.M.

Date approved _____

Bill Freytag, Chairman

Jonathon C. Elgin

Lydia J. Reid

Megan Whatman

Attest:

Matt Finfgeld

Jane Zimmermann