

Mecklenburg County Electoral Board

December 19, 2019

unadopted Minutes

Present were Jeanne M. Capello Chair, Robert P. Chadeayne Secretary, Yvonne Alexander Vice Chair, and Jason Corwin Registrar.

The meeting was called to order by Jeanne M. Capello at 12:59 PM.

A motion to adopt the amended agenda. Motion passed.

The minutes of October 10, 2019 were approved as presented.

Mr. Corwin provided a synopsis of things to come in the new year.

- Office relocation, Mr. Corwin will meet with the County Administrator in early January to finalize plans for our office move.
- Precinct 801 status, Mr. Corwin prepared a letter to determine who has ownership of the former Gator's store property and the status of our rental agreement. It was suggested that Mr. Corwin contact Mr. Norman Wagstaff via phone rather than sending a letter to inquire as to current ownership.
- 2020 Election activity, March primary, absentee voting to begin January 16th; May local elections; June primary; November presidential election.
- Pollbooks and voting machines, there is state activity underway to certify new pollbooks and voting machines. The state is reviewing possible cloud-based technology for pollbooks, however, no decisions have been made. Regarding voting machines, it appears that the machines we are currently using will remain certified. Mr. Corwin has advised the County Administrator that changes may be coming from the state, which could impact our budget.

Mr. Corwin reviewed the proposed ballot order for the march primary.

Motion was made to approve the proposed ballot order for the March 3, 2020 Democratic primary.
Motion Passed.

Page Program

Mr. Corwin reported that he has received feedback from several of the Precinct Chiefs regarding the use of pages in the November, 2019 election. The reaction has been positive. Chiefs indicated that they liked the program and the individual pages were very helpful. There was encouragement to have the program continue.

Mr. Corwin also surveyed some of the pages. A common theme from the pages was that they enjoyed the experience and came away with a better understanding of the election process. They were very happy with the reception they received from the officers of election, as the poll workers took time to reach out to them and engage them in conversation. The pages indicated that they would have liked more information from the training. Those juniors that participated indicated that they would like to return for a future election.

In discussion, there was consensus that we should involve the pages in the evolutionary design of our page training program.

Systems Security

Mr. Corwin advised that the state had required each entity to complete two surveys regarding system security. He will provide the results to the Electoral Board in March. Basically, he was asked a series of questions about our security practices and procedures. He was able to answer many of the questions relating to pollbooks and machines as well as our data network however, some questions dealing with ballot security he was unable to answer due to the fact that the questions pertained to the printing process of ballots. In completing the surveys Mr. Corwin did glean a few things that he made notes on and will address as we update our security plan. Our score on the survey was a 72 against a national average of 75.

Mailings

The Voter Registration Center located in Richmond will be sending out four mailings next year encouraging people to register to vote. This is a national organization who are active each year conducting voter registration drives. Mr. Corwin reported that these mailings have in the past created confusion among voters and increase call volume to the Registrar's office.

Chase City is conducting a Feed More program and Mr. Corwin has been invited to participate. He will have a computer there to create photo identification cards for people who need an ID. He will also have voter registration forms and will assist anyone with voting questions or in need of an absentee ballot.

Tanner

One of the Tanner brothers is making claims of campaign finance irregularities against his brother. Mr. Corwin indicated that he called the state, Ms. Alexander, to inquire as to our role or responsibility in such matters. He was advised that the proper response to the complainant is to have him contact the Commonwealth Attorney and state the case. It would be the attorney's responsibility to determine the appropriate response and/or remedy. This is outside the purview of the Electoral Board.

Emergency Plans

Mr. Corwin announced that he has put on hold the update of our emergency plan until March, 2020. The cyber security issues and policies have to be addressed before he can complete the emergency plans.

Early Voting

There was a meeting with the Registrar's association lobbyists and legislators to discuss House Bill #1 which deals with voting issues including no excuse absentee voting and the myriad of other bills being filed. It appears that the legislature will go for a full 45-day voting period. It also looks like there may be legislation to drop the photo ID requirement and create a new affirmation of identity process. It is anticipated that the legislation will pass and have an effective date of July, 1.

Ms. Alexander raised the issue of our problem voter who comes to the poll to vote at the last possible minute, usually dressed in some form of a disguise, and lingers for upwards of 30 minutes before completing her ballot. It is not uncommon for this individual to spoil several ballots in the process or otherwise create a disruption.

The board's recommendation is to request a Sherriff's Deputy be in the precinct about 15 minutes prior to the polls closing as a deterrent to this behavior.

Mr. Corwin reported that the state has issued new guidelines regarding appointing Officers of Elections. We will be required to send the list of Officers to the political parties to identify party affiliation.

The date for the next meeting will be February 11, 2020 at 1:00 PM.

As there is no further business before the board a motion to adjourn was passed.

Meeting adjourned at 1:54 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert P. Chadeayne

Secretary