

## **March 12, 2019 Electoral Board Meeting Minutes**

Meeting called to order on March 12, 2019 at 8:30a by Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton, Chair. In attendance: Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton, Frank Lucente, Robert Horowitz and Lisa Jeffers, Director of Elections.

Minutes of the Electoral Board (henceforth EB) Meeting of 2/8/19 were presented. Ms. Bouldin-Clopton moved, and Mr. Horowitz seconded that the minutes be approved. There was no discussion and the minutes were approved and signed.

The Board discussed reorganization. Mr. Lucente's letter accepting the position of Vice Chair was presented. It was then proposed that Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton be Chair, Frank Lucente be Vice Chair and Robert Horowitz be Secretary. Ms. Bouldin-Clopton moved, and Mr. Lucente seconded the approval of the reorganization as stated. All approved.

Mr. Lucente was welcomed as the new member of the Electoral Board representing the Republican Party.

Mr. Burcaw's time service on the Electoral Board was recognized and his efforts honored .

The Chair requested that the message on the Registrar's Office and Electoral Board Office answering machine be changed to include both titles. It was approved and Ms. Jeffers, General Registrar/Director of Elections agreed and will see that it is done.

With permission from the Chair, Robert Horowitz reported on the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual VEBA meeting he attended over the past weekend. Mr. Horowitz's full report presented at the meeting is included below following the minutes.

Discussions pertaining to report took place during the reading on various subjects as follows:

Discussions about new laws that the Commonwealth Legislators have passed that are awaiting the Governor's signature were discussed. Special attention was made to the No-Excuse Early Voting that will probably take place during 2020. GIS maps are required for redistricting. Noted EB responsibility for maintenance of Federal and State guidelines ensuring populations, racial and ethnic fairness, respect for existing voter precincts, and district compactness. We agreed to minimize the number of voters to be impacted and make as economical changes that meet voters needs and integral voting, as possible. Discussed Benchmark reviews, rehiring and where necessary removal of GRs and Electoral Board Members. New voter registration regulations were also discussed.

Discussion on Security issues confronting the voting process and fielded ideas that the Board members must consider.

There was discussion on the EB's responsibilities and actions for redistricting in 2020 and 2021. It was agreed the Board will ask that the City Council permit the Board members and the Director of Elections to participate in any and all discussions, plans and actions pertaining to the redistricting. The Electoral Board, as the agency that is responsible for the efficient, integral operation of the election, and the Registrar/Director of Elections have experience and special training to coordinate the elections. Both have, information and extensive knowledge of the legal requirements and guidelines that the City Council and the City Manager should seriously consider before any redistricting changes are agreed upon.

The Board had a discussion of the Bipartisan and Nonpartisan efforts, actions and responsibilities of each of the Electoral Board Members. Ms. Bouldin-Clopton and Mr. Horowitz reiterated their gratification that Mr. Lucente has joined them and agrees that the integrity of the voting process is augmented by having all the Board Members working together.

A discussion concerning VEBA and how important it's training, communications, information and lobbying is for the maintenance of fair, integral, elections that ensure everyone who can legally votes has that opportunity.

The members of the Board scheduled next Electoral Board Meeting for May 1, 2019 at 8:30a.

Mr. Horowitz moved to close meeting; Mr. Lucente seconded. With approval Ms. Bouldin-Clopton closed the meeting at 11:30a.

## **Report on 46<sup>th</sup> VEBA Annual Meeting The Omni Homestead March 8-10, 2019**

Submitted by Robert Horowitz, representing the Waynesboro Electoral Board at Meeting

Legislative Updates presented by Barbara Tabb, et al

Of 2,000 bills 234 pertained to elections. VEBA largest impact in lobbying to date. Won more than lost. Still several laws that should (must) be challenged, from an EB position not viable, efficient, economical or, considering resources, feasible.

No excuse Absentee voting 9 days from 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday immediately preceding election through Saturday before election HB2790 & SB1026

In States having no excuse early voting, Voter-turn out increases range from 30-60%. Once this is signed into law by Governor, VEBA will assist each local to determine locality space, time requirements and staffing requirements.

Form of Ballot Uniformity of names of candidates' font size and format and ballot order change:

Candidates listed first then issues/amendments HB2148 then HB2046 & SB1577

Absentee voting after polls close HB1790

Redistricting will require GIS maps. Review by Dept. of Elections and local Boards. HB2760 SB1579

(standards and criteria). Equal population, racial and ethnic fairness, respect for existing incumbents' populations (?), compactness.

State Board of Elections membership and appointment of Commissioner of Elections reorganization HB1620 SB1455

Voter registration assisting with and collection HB2764. Voter registration notification of denial by GRs SB1042

Removal of EB members & Circuit Court, as well as GRs HB2034

Local attorney support or out of pocket protection EB members may be responsible form decisions. Also, for Improper closed sessions: no votes and required use special language when reopening.

Post-Election Audits presented by Monica Crane Childers of Democracy Works

Virginia Division of Risk Management: Risk Assessment Limiting Audits. Tabulation audit to prove or verify winner won in most efficient and effective manner.

Using prepared formulas, roll of dice for true randomness and data entry format, can choose just enough ballots and their location to do audit. Example: 900 votes cast may need only 26-50 ballots counted & verified.

System time consuming and intensive work.

JLARC Report by Jamie Bitz

Surveys and interviews (our Board members and Director of Elections participated). Found State Board of Elections and Commissioner of Elections office overall performance disappointing. The positive is job is done and little chance, if any, fraud. However, prior Commissioner and staff didn't always do their job well. VA. Voter registration list is good. VERIS format is wanting; performance, speed, crashing, security, efficiency disappointing. Under new Commissioner (Piper) noticeable improvements. Biggest problem was communication and updates. These are being addressed and improved. Too much political influence on Commissioner & staff choices. SBE? Make Commission elected or chosen in bipartisan/nonpartisan manner.

Commissioner's Update by Chris Piper, Commissioner of Elections

Worked on improved efficiency and effectiveness. Created Additional positions and simplified processes.

Improved Post-Election Reports; result reports. 2% new registrations noted

Chesterfield County issues Report; worked to fix

Working toward making precincts manageable and redistricting concerns so Precincts must be no larger than 5000 voters. Notice must be given when precinct reaches 4000 registered voters. Decision to create new or split precinct. Experience shows same cost for either choice.

Detail and improve communications; 24-hour return contact implemented.

Elections Security presented by Chris Piper, Commissioner of Elections

Threats growing more sophisticated. Spear-Phishing (fraudulent email seemingly from a known & trusted sender in order to induce targeted individuals to reveal confidential information and/or open computer access) increasing amongst election officials.

Strongly suggested (insisted?) we don't click on email links unless contact confirmed

Password issues also a concern. Best must have 24 characters.

HAVA providing funds. VA getting 9Mil in funds for security EAC (Election Assistance Commission)

We must know how local IT systems work, have them work with us on security issues; updating voter equipment certification standards.

HB2178 Security Standards passed awaiting Governor signature.

The ELECT to establish minimum security standards for all localities to meet.

Update Physical and info on technological needs.

Annual Security Plan will be more detailed and specific in future.

New standards set by April with November roll out.

Involves Elect, local government, local IT Directors and JLARC

Failure to comply with minimum security standards can lead to denial of access to ELECT (VERIS) systems. All must be in place by April 2020

Voluntary Voter System Guidelines (VVSG) and EAC. Public comment by May 25, 2019

Compliance Guidelines

Meeting with Local IT – what's in place.

Reach out & coordinate with local law enforcement, State Police, FBI & DHS.

Request Risk Vulnerability Assessment from Dept. of Homeland Security. A free service of Feds.

Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing & Analysis Center (EIIISAC): updates election specific threats

April 17 ELECT's Table, GRs must attend. Top exercise preparation for election day issues that may Arise.

DHS Webinar and website slides and information also available.

Benchmark Workgroup presented by Allison Robbins and Barbara Tabb

Benchmark definitions and goals stated.

Benchmark point of reference and evaluation against a standard

Indexes numbers

Baseline starting point

Determine if data sources on action are evaluated

Current progress on Virginia Townhall website

<http://townhall.virginia.gov/il/meetings.cfm>

Work group minimum standards being set. SBE top and final authority of Va. Elections. GRs/Directors of Elections are professional executives. EB members part time coordinators and supervisors of local election. Goal a fair, reliable process that has successful election with no news in papers or other media.

Determine how to measure effectiveness and performance of meeting constitutional and statutory duties: what is resource availability, effectiveness, fairness, uniformity, timelessness, and compliance of and to the election process. Be mindful to minimize the expense and effort at the local level, but still meet the demands, requirements, and laws to ensure fair, secure and safe elections.

But it is a work in progress. Who holds whom to standard? Example EB held itself responsible for its own actions. (Really?)

District Caucuses: Western

Robert Horowitz, Secretary of Waynesboro Electoral Board is new Director of Western District.

As per consensus of those attending, the Western attendees scheduled Meeting for November 16, 2019 to focus on security issues. RH already secured keynote speaker Chris Piper. Also, a DHS rep to speak as well. 10:30a at site to be announced.

Redistricting presented by Kate Hanley & Bill Bell

Keep it simple. Move as few people to new districts as possible. Some try to keep incumbents in same district as is, if possible; some do not attempt to have that as criteria. Respect for existing incumbents should be maintained to get votes. Schools, churches, government buildings with space a concern for precincts. Must meet standard criteria: Equal population, racial and ethnic fairness, compactness.

Election Expenses presented Michele White

Will copy and distribute information. Will need its own meeting to discuss, to be scheduled shortly.

VEBA Business Meeting indicated VEBA viable. Resource sources must be addressed. Seeking volunteers on legislature follow up and contacts.

Approved:

Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton, Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Frank Lucente, Vice-Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Robert Horowitz, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_