

Roanoke County Electoral Board Meeting Minutes

Date: September 5 2023

Time: 10:00 AM

900 Chestnut St. Vinton, VA 24179

Chair: Ken Srpan

Vice Chair: Maurice McBride

Secretary: Jeff Krasnow

Attendees: Ken Srpan, Maurice McBride, Jeff Krasnow, Anna Cloeter

Visitors: John Young

I. **Welcome and Call to Order.** Chairman Ken Srpan called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed everyone.

II. **Approval of Agenda.** Secretary, Jeff Krasnow moved the adoption of the agenda for the meeting and it was unanimously approved by a vote of 3-0.

III. **Old Business.** The minutes of the prior meeting were reviewed, following which Secretary, Jeff Krasnow moved the adoption of the minutes, which motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 3-0. The minutes were then signed by all members of the Board.

IV. **New Business**

a. **Review of Early Voting Plans for 11/07/23 General Election.** Director of Elections Anna Cloeter reported that early voting starts on September 22, 2023. On September 15, 2023, L&A of early voting testing will occur and at least one, but preferably as many members of the Electoral Board as can make it, should be present. L&A of voting equipment to be used at the precincts on Election Day will be scheduled at a later date, potentially in mid-October.

b. **Polling Place Accessibility Surveys.** Ms. Cloeter reported that these must be completed by October 16 and that she has contacted the Assistant Director of Human Resources who is the ADA Coordinator for Roanoke County to see if they might be able to help.

V. **Chairman's Report**

a. **FOIA Update Request.** Chairman Srpan reported that we had received an FOIA request from a person in Fairfax requesting copies of all Official Advisories sent by the Virginia Department of Elections since 2020. It was reported that we are waiting to hear from ELECT regarding assistance in responding to this request. Mr. McBride suggested contacting the County Attorney for further guidance given that the vast majority of materials requested are not in the physical possession or under the control of the local elections office, rather are in a repository created and maintained by the Virginia Department of Elections that is simply accessible by local users with credentials.

b. **Request to Review Procedures regarding Write-In Candidate(s).** Upon request of Mr. Srpan, Ms. Cloeter reported that there appears to be an official write-in candidate for the Roanoke County School Board seat in the Catawba District named Samantha Newell. Write-in candidates must follow all applicable campaign finance rules, including filing a Statement of Organization and regular campaign finance reports. If a write-in gets more than 10% of the total votes cast in their race, then the Electoral Board will be required to review write-in votes during canvass to determine whether those votes were cast for a valid write-in candidate. In order to win, the write-in candidate must still earn more votes than any official candidate for the given race whose name was printed on the ballot.

c. **Revised Names for Precinct Leadership (Chief & Assistant Chief).** Mr. Srpan requested that the Roanoke County Electoral Board bring the official titles for Officers of Election who are in charge at each precinct into accordance with the Code of Virginia. Mr. McBride moved to change the names of the positions of Chief and Co-Chief to Chief and Assistant Chief beginning January 1, 2024, which motion was unanimously passed by a vote of 3-0.

VI. Directors Report

a. **Voting Equipment Update.** Ms. Cloeter reported on the new voting equipment which has been ordered. Forty scanners have been ordered, but only 19 are currently in stock. Furthermore, the tops for the new scanners that will allow continued use of existing ballot collection bins are still scheduled to be ready by mid-October, but there is no guarantee that we would have all of the equipment or the lids in time for the November election. Thus, as this timeframe would prevent us from adequately training all of our officers of election on the new equipment, we will use several of the new ballot scanners during early voting only and use our existing machines one last time for Election Day voting in the precincts. Finally, the capital budget award for replacement of Roanoke County's voting equipment only covered 40 of the new scanners and ballot-marking devices, so a request will be placed in the upcoming annual budget for 2 additional ballot scanners and marking devices so that the County will have the same number of machines going forward as it currently has, which provides additional machines for use in early voting at the Vinton and Satellite offices and back-ups that can be deployed on Election Day if necessary.

b. **Upcoming Items for Board of Supervisor Consideration.** Ms. Cloeter reported that Our Lady of Nazareth will not be able to host elections for the June 2024 primary due to the timing of their Vacation Bible School program and that the Board of Supervisors must approve the change and the request will then be submitted to ELECT and the Attorney General for approval. There is currently no accessible County owned-facility located within the bounds of the precinct. Christ the King Presbyterian Church, which is located next to Our Lady of Nazareth, is a possible alternative, as is the cafeteria or main lobby of Hidden Valley High School, which is located within a mile of the precinct's boundaries. The Board of Supervisors must also approve ongoing split precincts for Precincts 103 and 106 in Catawba. As the splits in these precincts were created by the State Senate boundaries approved by the Virginia Supreme Court following the 2020 Decennial Census, Roanoke County has no way to alleviate or cure them but must certify this fact on an annual basis under Virginia Code.

VII. Comments from the Electoral Board Vice-Chair and Secretary. Mr. McBride commented that a member of the press had expressed concern that press/poll-watchers wouldn't be able to observe the voting process due to the placement of the partitions in the voting room.. He asked if voting could occur elsewhere, but was informed that there are no other areas of the County's election office that are suitable or provide the amount of space needed and that movable partitions have been added to the voting room as early voting must also be permitted to continue unencumbered in the other half of the space. In terms of transparency, Ms. Cloeter reminded the Board that both local political parties are provided notice of voting dates and times and are permitted to send authorized representatives to observe the process on their behalf.

VIII. **Public Comment.** Mr. Young commented about a new process for the Risk Limiting Audits. Ms. Cloeter responded that these have not been applied to the field yet, but were piloted by a test in Northern Virginia.

IX. **Scheduling of Next Meeting**

- a. Canvas of Results - 11/8/23 at 1:00 PM, 11/13/23 at Noon and 11/14/23 at 3:00 PM.
- b. Review of November 7, 2023 General Election and Post-Election Meeting Regarding Reappointment of Officers of Election, Split Precinct Waiver Request for 2024, etc. – TBD.

X. **Adjournment.** Mr. Krasnow moved to adjourn, which Motion was seconded by Mr. McBride and passed unanimously by a vote of 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 AM.

Chairman _____

Vice-Chairman _____

Secretary _____