

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024, 11:30 A.M., PUBLIC MEETING-GOLD ROOM, FOURTH FLOOR  
OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY COURTHOUSE, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA.

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**BOARD MEMBERS:** HONORABLE SARA INNAMORATO, CHAIR-present  
HONORABLE BETHANY HALLAM, MEMBER-present  
HONORABLE SAM DEMARCO, MEMBER-present

**IN ATTENDANCE:** JESSICA GAROFOLO-DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPT. OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
JAMES DAVIS-DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
SERVICES  
DAVID VOYE – MANAGER, DIVISION OF ELECTIONS  
ALLAN J. OPSITNICK – ASST. COUNTY SOLICITOR  
LISA G. MICHELE-ASST COUNTY SOLICITOR

- I. CALL TO ORDER** –Meeting called to order by Assistant Solicitor Opsitnick at 11:30 AM. Roll was taken by Mr. Opsitnick. All members present, in person.

Mr. Opsitnick noted that, as this is the first meeting of the Board of Elections under its current membership, there is no Chair and nominations for Chair are required.

Member Hallam nominates Chief Executive Innamorato. Seconded by Chief Executive Innamorato. No other nominations for Chair.

Vote taken. Member Hallam, yes. Chief Executive Innamorato, yes. Member DeMarco, abstain.

Point of order by Member Hallam asking Member DeMarco to explain abstention.  
Member DeMarco cited litigation as reason for his abstention.

- II. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 27, 2023, MEETING**

Mr. Opsitnick then requested approval of Minutes of November 27, 2023 Board meeting certifying the results of the November, 2023 Election, explaining that, while none of the current Board members we on the Board in November, their obligation is to review and approve prior meeting minutes.

Moved by Chair Innamorato. seconded by Member Hallam. Comment by Member DeMarco that at the November 2023 Election over 1,000 ballots were not able to be counted as they were delivered by the Post Office after the Election Day deadline. Vote to approve 3-0.

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Bob Howard, Marshall Twp. No reason for additional ballot return sites. Does not aid voter convenience and increase voter security.
2. Michelle Feingold, Pittsburgh. Supports additional ballot return sites. Requests expansion of sites.
3. Sue Berman Kress, Supports expansion of ballot return sites.
4. Jeremy Kazzaz, Pittsburgh. Supports expansion of ballot return sites. Supported plan to move April 23 primary. Commends Election staff.
5. Rabbi Chaim Yitzi Genack, Pittsburgh. Supports ballot return sites.
6. Matthew Van Bibber. Duplicate ballots counted in prior elections with some ballots not being counted. Attends central count location (Elections Warehouse.) Higher error rate with mail in ballots.
7. Erika Kreisman, Pittsburgh. Concerned that Member DeMarco did not certify 2020 Presidential Election and asks Member DeMarco note any issues so that they can be addressed.
8. Laura Chrener, Monroeville. Supports expansion of ballot return sites.
9. Heather Mallack, Pittsburgh. Is pro access, supports ballot return sites.
10. Patti Weaver. Election systems and standards fall short. Hundreds of duplicate ballots. Questions people on voter rolls that should be removed. Multiple ballots received. Supports hand counts of ballots.
11. Shirley Taylor, Penn Hills. Supports ballot return sites. Removes systemic barriers to voting. Questions reliability of mail service.
12. Ron Bandes, Pittsburgh. Supports ballot return site Resolution to full Board of Elections. Criticizes lack of transparency in logic and accuracy testing and in vote tabulation. Wants third party audit.
13. Todd McCullum, Pittsburgh. Supports ballot return site Resolution being addressed by full Board. Opposes ballot return sites.
14. Alex Creigo, Pittsburgh. Supports ballot return sites. Voter suppression issue therefore ballot return sites needed. Postal service employee and feels that Postal Service slows the mail down.
15. Roy Blankenship. Supports ballot return site expansion and Resolution.

16. Tanisha Long. Supports ballot return site expansion. Some people do not have mailboxes and homes and there are no ballot mules. Many people deserve expanded access, including incarcerated persons and unhoused. Expand ballot return sites in black communities.
17. Muhammad Ali Nasir (Man-E). Echoes Ms. Long's statement.
18. Brian Neft, Mt. Lebanon. Supports resolution to add ballot return sites.

Mr. Opsitnick then summarizes timely received emailed comments, indicated that late received comments will still be posted.

1. Miracle Jones. Supports NOTE TO KAIT, everywhere I say supports, the phrase is Supports ballot return sites.
2. Rep Dan Frankel. Supports ballot return sites.
3. Congress Member Chris DeLuzio. Supports ballot return sites.
4. Bryan Neft. Already spoke.
5. Julie K. Freeman. Supports ballot return sites.
6. Andrew Johnson. Supports ballot return sites.
7. Rachel Usdan. Supports ballot return sites.
8. Molly Miller. Supports ballot return sites.
9. Lisa Schwerdt. Supports ballot return sites.
10. Lauren Noorparvar Supports ballot return sites.
11. Wendy Levin Shaw. Supports ballot return sites.
12. Kira Sunshine. Supports ballot return sites.
13. Rebecca Goldwasser. Supports ballot return sites.
14. Cheryl Desure. Supports ballot return sites.
15. Melissa McCombs. Supports ballot return sites.
16. Marilyn Burke. Supports ballot return sites.
17. Joan Bruce. Supports ballot return sites.
18. Linda Esposto. Supports ballot return sites.
19. Sarah Flanders MD. Supports ballot return sites.
20. Lisa Plant. Supports ballot return sites.
21. Shelly Heigel. Supports ballot return sites.
22. Nancy Robinson. Supports ballot return sites.
23. Judith Traister. Supports ballot return sites.
24. Lauren Baldel. Supports ballot return sites.
25. Stefanie Small. Supports ballot return sites.
26. Dr. Rena Levy Supports ballot return sites.
27. Miriam Gelman. Supports ballot return sites.
28. Julia Meredith. Supports ballot return sites.
29. Chani Altein. Supports ballot return sites.
30. Nina Butler. Supports ballot return sites.
31. Dennis Ament. Supports ballot return sites.
32. Danielle Lavey. Supports ballot return sites.
33. Lynda Wrenn. Supports ballot return sites.
34. Michelle Goldwasser. Supports ballot return sites.
35. Jen Golovin. Supports ballot return sites.
36. Nancy Lapp. Supports ballot return sites.

37. Orly Aridor. Supports ballot return sites.
38. Lynda Wrenn. Supports ballot return sites.
39. Ronit & Harold W. Supports ballot return sites.
40. Howie Stein. Supports ballot return sites.
41. Diana Hull. Supports ballot return sites.
42. Marilyn Jenkins. Supports ballot return sites.
43. Susan Jablow. Supports ballot return sites.
44. Marjorie Manne. Supports ballot return sites.
45. Aidel Davidson. Supports ballot return sites.
46. Batsheva Barber. Supports ballot return sites.
47. Susan Safyan. Supports ballot return sites.
48. LaRue Angelici. Supports ballot return sites.
49. Eric Safyan. Supports ballot return sites.
50. Sister Agnes Raible, CDP. Supports ballot return sites.
51. Andrea Regan. Supports ballot return sites.
52. Amy Cohen. Supports ballot return sites.
53. Chris Zurawsky. Supports ballot return sites.
54. Veronica Mcandless. Supports ballot return sites.
55. Sally Wenzel. Supports ballot return sites.
56. Mike Regan. Supports ballot return sites.
57. Irv Freeman. Supports ballot return sites.
58. Jill Josophowitz. Supports ballot return sites.
59. Janet Lunde. Supports ballot return sites.
60. Dorit Sasson. Supports ballot return sites.
61. Gina Johnson. Supports ballot return sites.
62. LaSheva Barber. Supports ballot return sites.

#### **IV. GENERAL PRIMARY PREPARATIONS**

Question by Member DeMarco about modifying website to permit easier sign up to participate in BOE meetings. Ms. Garofolo, that will be done promptly.

Question by Member Hallam requesting to posting the legal procedures to remove voters from rolls and to canvass ballots. Ms. Garofolo, the FAQs can be updated.

Mr. Voye addressed Primary Election preparations:

1. Approx. 903,000 registered voters. Increase of approximately 3,000 from November;
2. Absentee and mail in ballot applications. 106,000. 88,000 Dem. 18,000 Rep.;
3. 57 polling places to be moved. 52 settled, 5 yet settled. 16 moved because of Passover;
4. Poll workers 6753 confirmed. Doing very well;
5. 2 Supreme Court cases pending affecting ability to print and mail ballots. Once cases are decided Logic and accuracy notice and testing can begin.

Member DeMarco commented to no ballot yet set and asked Mr. Voye to explain. Mr. Voye explains the testing, printing and mailing process and timeline. Elections prefers mailing 30 days beforehand. Law requires 14 days beforehand, so the legal requirement shall be met.

Member Hallam asked about whether the number of poll workers is actually confirmed. Mr. Voye said that poll worker number is confirmed. Indicated that poll worker lists change up until Election Day and Elections continues to recruit poll workers and has persons ready to step in at the last minute.

Ms. Garofolo said that poll workers are needed in Moon, Pittsburgh in certain areas, Baldwin and Brentwood.

All polls have at least 4 poll workers.

## **V. DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION REGARDING BALLOT RETURN SITES**

Mr. Opsitnick requests consideration of Resolution. Moved by Chair Innamorato. Seconded by Member DeMarco.

Comment by Ms. Hallam, that she favors ballot return sites and satellite voting locations, but big hole in the Mon Valley, so the Resolution adds a ballot return site in McKeesport, location to be determined and reads part of the Resolution. Urges to use ballot return sites at every location.

Discussion. Mr. DeMarco. Differentiates ballot return sites from drop boxes, with 3 county staff and county police officer present, with access to disable. Boxes shown to be open, then sealed and locked with custody before transmission to Elections Warehouse, by site supervisor and County Police officer. Ballots in locked cage under 24-hour surveillance. Mr. Voye confirms those arrangements.

Ms. Hallam inquired as to police officers present. Ms. Garofolo stated that police officers will be outside of the ballot return site to ensure access and safety. Police officer signs off on chain of custody form as well. Similar protocols as used in 2020.

Mr. DeMarco commented that people are torn regarding ballot return sites. But he votes by mail and the ballot return sites are open to all voters and as a result he supports the Resolution.

Chair Innamorato stated her appreciation for the various County offices and persons that helped prepare the ballot return site plan.

Resolution approved by 3-0 vote.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

Next meeting set for April 9, 3:00 PM.

Member Hallam does not feel that voter registration efforts at jail fall short and requests that someone go pod to pod at the jail.

Member DeMarco objects to County involvement in registration efforts and thinks that a third party need to conduct this effort and mentioned League of Women Voters.

Member Hallam would prefer a third party provide this effort.

Chair Innamorato pledges all tools available to assist in jail registration and voting.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn. Moved by Chair Innamorato, seconded by Member DeMarco passed 3-0.  
Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:45 P.