

# MINUTES

## MEETING OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

WEDNESDAY, August 10, 2022, 1:00 P.M., PUBLIC MEETING-GOLD ROOM, FOURTH FLOOR OF  
THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY COURTHOUSE, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA.

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**BOARD MEMBERS:** HONORABLE RICH FITZGERALD, CHAIR-present  
HONORABLE BETHANY HALLAM, MEMBER-present  
HONORABLE SAM DEMARCO, MEMBER-present

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Meeting called to order by Chair Fitzgerald at 1:00 PM. Roll was taken by Mr. Opsitnick. All members present, in person.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Marsha Caliendo from Wexford. Described an in-person voting experience as she spoiled her mail-in ballot and voted in person. Indicated wrong party ballot given. Prefers to vote by mail as it is safe and secure.

2. Erica Rocchi Brusselars, James Street, Pittsburgh, 15212. Is a Democratic Committee Chair. Addressed failure of potential poll workers to be able to connect to the Elections website. Also indicated that, regarding the City special election calendar, more publicity is needed and the online ballot lookup process requires improvement.

3. Christopher Brutt. Stated that he waived his right to speak.

4. Paul Heckman. Thanked the Board for its efforts indicating room for improvement. Understands that it is difficult to obtain poll workers given the length of the day.

Online Comments-Summarized by Mr. Opsitnick. Posted in their entirety on Board of Elections website.

1. William Towne regarding ballot secrecy and transparency as required by law and underhanded strategies for dismissing election concerns from the public and Board members.

2. Miracle Jones regarding pro-voter agenda.

3. Diana Parno regarding list of voters receiving mail-in ballots.

4. Ken Janowitz. Is a poll worker in Pine Township District 2 and suggests to split registration book into two sections for more efficient processing.

5. Ken Janowitz (#2). Suggests possible untapped poll workers, those being women with school aged children that could possibly work full time.

6. Laurie Apple. States no mail-in votes unless voter is military.

7. Allan Willinger. Commented about difficulty to hear speakers while monitoring BOE meetings by Zoom.

8. Brittany Linville Tonet. Encourages mail-in votings, making suggestion for better ballot drop off locations.

9. Daniel Rudy, Judge of Elections in Pittsburgh Ward 11, 11<sup>th</sup> District. Commented on ballot shortages in the primary.

10. Josie Fisher. Commented about informing voters of how/when/where to vote and requesting differentiation between absentee and mail-in ballots.

11. Susan Klixbull, Judge of Elections, Glen Osbourne Borough. Suggests consideration of splitting poll worker shifts into two eight-hour shifts.

12. Colin Dean, Judge of Elections, Wilksburg Ward 1, District 4. Suggests diagram/map to more easily locate polling places in locations where there are multiple polling places.

Regarding the comment from William Towne, Member DeMarco asked for an explanation of Mr. Towne's comments on the uniquely numbered mail-in ballots. This was discussed by Mr. Voye and Mr. Opsitnick, indicating that all four vendors that County has engaged since the institution of mail-in voting have used the same process.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION**

Regarding 2022 General Election planning, Director Garofolo addressed new poll worker software and indicated that August 16th was National Poll Worker Recruitment Day and indicated County efforts to be undertaken on that day. In addition, Ms. Garofolo indicated that County will be adding staff to the Elections call center.

In response to a question from Member Hallam about call center hours, Director Garofolo indicated that the call center phones begin to be answered at 6:00 AM. Mr. Voye also indicated that there will be additional call center workers during the call center period, i.e. 6:00 AM-9:00 PM.

Mr. Voye distributed an Independent candidates list and discussed Act 88 and 66, especially regarding the state mandated ballot formula which was, in essence, enacted by the Board of Elections in a June meeting. That formula is now state law.

Mr. Voye indicated that, as of the time of the meeting, 122,700 mail-in/absentee applications were processed and that voter registration stood at approximately 925,000, approximately 3,000 increased from the prior election.

Chair Fitzgerald asked Mr. Voye to discuss the partial funding of pre-canvas and other activities which, per Chair Fitzgerald, becomes a partial funding of an unfunded mandate.

Director Garofolo responded indicating the requirements for and limitations upon funding and indicating that County's mail-in ballot pre-canvas and canvas would not change.

Member Hallam asked whether or not the state funds would be available for satellite locations and drop boxes. Director Garofolo replied that the state funding is not applicable to satellite locations or drop boxes, further indicating that there are no plans for satellite locations and drop boxes for the November 8<sup>th</sup> election. Director Garofolo indicated that the ballot delivery

system along the Ross Street entrance to the County office building would continue and that it would begin earlier, that is, on Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.

Member Hallam inquired about manned drop boxes. Chair Fitzgerald replied it is not worth the cost as County would have to pay for postage and every mailbox functions as a ballot drop box.

Member Hallam inquired whether or not there are no plans for satellite sites unless there is a presidential election. Chair Fitzgerald indicated that County Elections currently has a system that works.

Member Hallam asked whether Elections can start the reporting and posting of mail-in ballot applications earlier than in the past. Chair Fitzgerald inquired whether or not that can be done. Mr. Voye indicated that that will be done in September. Chair Fitzgerald indicated that this posting will be done weekly beginning in September.

Member DeMarco inquired about the two referendum questions on the ballot, that is the County-wide charter amendment regarding County council members having to resign their office if they become candidates for another seat as well as the Wilkinsburg Borough Government Study Commission. Member DeMarco also commented on errors as to the Elections polling place locator dropdown schedule with municipal names misspelled. Director Garofolo indicated that Mr. Voye is working with the State to correct these errors and Mr. Voye confirmed that.

Member DeMarco stated that as Act 77 provided a centralized location manned by County employees at the Elections Warehouse to process, pre-canvas, and canvas mail-in votes is it legal to utilize 25 or so volunteers at the warehouse so as to build trust in the system. Mr. Opsitnick said he would check and respond.

Member Hallam expressed concerns about public involvement in the pre-canvas and canvas process. Member DeMarco replied he thought there was no problem. Chair Fitzgerald indicated that all activities at the warehouse are observable and on camera and Member DeMarco agreed, further indicating that IDs are checked in the warehouse as well.

Chair Fitzgerald indicated that the next meeting would be on September 20<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 PM.