

Board of Elections Meeting

February 1, 2021 @ 4:30pm

Present: Robin Wood, Russell Creech, Judy Laning, Tamara Davis, Lizbeth Hernandez, Renee' Buehler, County Commissioner Douglas Albrecht

Agenda:

- Office Security
- Office staff requirements to meet additional skillsets and work volume added since 2018
- Current workload
- Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS)
- As per report, the continual review and processing per items defined
- Voter Registration rolls, cleanup
- Ballot layout, establish a team approach with Clerk
- Additional items

Russell Creech made a motion to call the meeting to order at 4:40pm, Judy Lanning seconded the motion. All were in favor.

1.0 Office Security.

1.1 NJDHS See Report 08.13.2019 FSAT Inspection Notes

Comments: In 2018, elections became critical infrastructure for the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP). With this designation, NJOHSP performed a physical facility assessment on 8/13/2019 and made security recommendations for our office. This information was included in our 2020 budget, but we did not receive any response from county government. Lizbeth Hernandez talked to Joe Haase from county IT dept. who estimated a cost of \$18,000 for badge readers for 3 doors (Front door, Rear door, and Warehouse interior) and 6 cameras (Front Ext., Rear Ext., Front Lobby, Warehouse, Rear Hall, Warehouse Ext.) Commissioner Douglas Albrecht asked for a copy of the report and mentioned that the county may have CARES grant funds that may cover the office security expenses.

1.2 CC Emergency Management

Comments: No comments required from Emergency Management

1.3 CC Health Dept

Comments: **No comments required from Health Dept.**

2.0 **Office Staff Requirements to meet additional skillsets and work volume added since ~2018 (1).**

Workload Report by L. Hernandez 01.21.2021. See Charts. **Workload reports attached**

2.1 Auto Voter Registration generated by MVC, ~1500/ week.

Comments: **MVC transactions are automatically transmitted through our Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) on a daily basis. We must follow a process that is explained on the workload report for every transaction received. Transactions have increased by 200 – 300 per day. Workload has increased but number of staff has remained the same. We are requesting additional staff to process the increase in workload to meet all of our statutory requirements.**

2.2 On-Line Voter Registration, ~1500/ week.

Comments: **Online Voter Registrations started in 2020. Many of the registrations received are duplicate registrations (voter information is exactly the same) but we still have to process the transaction in the same manner indicated on workload report. This is an increase to our workload but the number of staff has remained the same. We are requesting additional staff to process the increase in workload to meet all of our statutory requirements.**

2.3 Ballot Boxes.

Comments: **Currently we have 11 ballot boxes throughout the county. Due to current legislation, we will have to have a ballot box at Fairfield Municipal Building (municipality that has 5,000 or more residents), Cumberland County Courthouse (main office of the County Clerk), Rowan College of South Jersey (main college campus, the intent is to move the ballot box from the CCTEC and place it at RCSJ), and we will be installing a ballot box at the Board of Elections office (convenience to voter, voter can drop off ballot at the ballot box or come inside and show ID).**

2.4 Cure Forms.

Comments: Cure Forms became effective during the 2020 Election Year. Voters whose signature did not match or did not sign certificate were sent a Cure Form within 24 hours and phone call and/or email to voter to inform them of Cure Form. 775 Forms were sent for 2020 General Election and 304 were returned.

2.5. New SVRS Geocoding;

Comments: Geocoding refers to the longitude and latitude coordinates for each address. All addresses in SVRS must be geocoded in order to place voter in correct voting and legislative district. Should be an automatic process in SVRS but 1 in 50 transactions must be geocoded manually by administrative staff. Process includes researching address through tax records, google maps, google search, etc. which may take several minutes to hours to find location. If information cannot be found, Lizbeth Hernandez drives to location to find address.

3.0 Current Workload:

Review Work backlog and develop staffing and equipment required to solve bottlenecks.

Comments: Current workload has been included in this email which states the process that must be taken to complete each individual transaction. The increase in transactions has placed a huge burden on our staff. We are going to incur overtime expenses to process the work that is required by law to be completed the April Fire Election. If our statutory requirements are not completed due to staffing shortages, then that creates potential liability for the county.

4.0 Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS)

Review current operating performance step by step, and the impact on timely task processing.

Comments: SVRS is not working to its full potential. Necessary modules are not working. Staff must find workarounds to complete tasks. Reports are not functioning. Issues with SVRS are global for all county board of elections in the State. Complaints/tickets have been placed to correct the issues to KnowInk and the Division of Elections. Additional staff are requested because of the increase in workload not because of the inefficiencies of the system.

5.0 As per Report, the continual review and processing per items defined.

Comments: Two resource charts have been included. The first one shows the increase in Mail-In Ballots from 2004 – 2020 but the amount of staff has stayed the same. The other shows the increased workload from Online Voter Registrations, Cure Forms, and Automatic MVC transactions with the same amount of staff for all years.

6.0 Administrator Responsibilities and Duties. (RW)

Generate concise Statement and distribute to staff & c. Due to staff shortages, administrator and assistant administrator have to complete clerical work for elections. We do not have the time to work on our administrative tasks. Additional staff will lessen the burden from administrative staff to improve performance for the office.

7.0 Voter Registration Rolls, cleanup.

Removal of Voters who have moved, or are deceased, as per NJSA 19-31-15, 16, 16.1,16.2. With additional staff, we can dedicate staff to voter registration cleanup.

County Commissioner Doug Albrecht asked why there are people that have moved/deceased, still receiving ballots? Lizbeth went over the issues that we currently have with SVRS, the laws, and how we can go about getting this information corrected.

8.0 Ballot Layout, establish a team approach with Clerk. (RW)

Comments. The Board of Elections has never been invited by the County Clerk's office during ballot layout. Our office does not see the ballots until supplies are received from printer which is about 2 weeks prior to election. We would like to have the opportunity the check the ballot for technical specifications not candidate placement. Examples stated during meeting were the implications of having a 2 page ballot for every municipality for both mail-in and provisional ballots and a ballot where a candidate's oval on the front of the ballot corresponded to the oval of candidate that was on the back of the ballot causing an over vote.

County Commissioner Doug Albrecht suggested that we try to set up a meeting with the County Clerk to see if we could be invited to give some feedback so these issues do not happen in the future.

9.0 Additional items.

Proposed expenses for the Center for Civic Tech and Life grant were discussed. All proposed expenses are necessary to enhance the efficiency of the Board of Elections office. To improve

Election Day results, a building and ballot receiving/sorting equipment are essential. After a meeting with John Knoop, James Neher, and David Haaf, it was determined that an addition to our warehouse would be more cost effective than a new building. We are waiting to meet with CCIA to discuss the usage for the addition and receive a quote. On Thursday of this week, Lizbeth Hernandez and Renee Buehler will travel to Camden County Board of Elections to see the function and operation of the Tritek Vote by Mail System. The Tritek Vote by Mail System will open, date stamp, capture signature, and sort vote by mail ballots. Information along with a quote are attached.

The Board was informed that on Monday February 8, 2021 is a Finance Committee Meeting. They will be attending this meeting through Teams at 4:30 to go over staffing and budgetary needs.

Russell Creech made a motion to adjourn meeting at 7:20pm and Robin Wood seconded the motion. All were in favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee' Buehler

Board of Elections Reorganization Meeting

March 15, 2021 @ 4:30pm

Present: Russell Creech, Judy Laning, Tamara Davis, Lizbeth Hernandez, Renee' Buehler, County Commissioner Doug Albrecht (by phone), County Commissioner Darlene Barber (by phone), and Nancy Ridgway (public)

Agenda:

- Reorganization of members
- NJAEO Conference – Virtual
- Early Voting Showcase – March 30 or 31
- New Legislation – Early Voting
- Letter from NJAEO to Secretary of State
- Center for Civic Tech and Life Grant
- Executive Session (as needed)
- Miscellaneous

Lizbeth Hernandez called the meeting to order at 4:33pm.

Russell made a motion to do reorganization of members. Judy seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Judy made a motion for Russell to be Chairman of the Board and Tamara seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Judy made a motion for Robin to be Commissioner of Registration/Secretary of the Board and Russell seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The board discussed the upcoming NJAEO virtual conference that was to be held at the end of March is postponed until a later date. Instead the NJAEO will be holding a vendor showcase on March 30th or March 31st. The Board would like to attend on March 31st in the afternoon for the showcase. Commissioner Barber will let us know if she is available for the 31st and Commissioner Albrecht would like to see if we can get an in person demonstration at our office. Liz stated that is our goal.

Commissioner Albrecht asked if SVRS has become more user friendly, Liz state that it hasn't and we are trying to make do with what we have.

Commissioner Albrecht asked that when looking at new machines to see what the maintenance would be on the machines and how easy it would be to get parts for the machines. Liz stated that when we purchase machines we need at least two per district plus what is needed for early voting.

The Board discussed Early Voting Bill A4830, it will begin the 10th day before the General Election Monday – Saturday 10am – 8pm and Sunday 10am – 6pm. Liz states we will need at least 10 voting machines for three different locations, ballot on demand for Provisionals, laptops for voting lists, possible safe(s) will need to be purchased to hold all early voting ballots. The Board discussed possible locations to look into for early voting sites, the list is as follows:

CCIA Building in Millville
Cumberland Mall
Alms Center
Old Save-A-Lot on Broad and High in Millville
Old Acme – Upper Deerfield
Old National Freight – Vineland
Warehouses (15th St. Millville)

The Civic for Center Tech and Life Grant was briefly discussed, Liz informed the Board that the Ballot Sorting/Receiving Equipment and Transport Van had been purchased. The next priority is the ballot boxes that need to be purchased. The Board asked that we look into see if the County would purchase the security for the building and not use the Grant money for this or see if there is another Grant that we could use to purchase security for the building.

Russell made a motion to go into Executive Session at 5:40pm, Tamara seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Russell made a motion to close the Executive Session at 6:15pm, Judy seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Russell made a motion at 6:15pm to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Judy. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee' Buehler