

BOARD OF ELECTIONS FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY
Carvel State Office Building
820 N. French Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 3, 2009

Members Present: Mr. Austin Mr. Brady
 Mr. Kuhrt Mr. Lanouette
 Mr. Steele Mr. Sterling

Staff Present: Mr. Albence, Administrative Director
 Mr. Sholl, Deputy Administrative Director
 Mrs. Manlove, State Election Commissioner

1. Mr. Steele called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Mr. Kuhrt moved and Mr. Austin seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2009, meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Mr. Albence reported that the Voter Registration Unit is current on all work at this time, He also informed the Board of recent updates on the number of registered voters in New Castle County by month, as detailed below:
 - 380,026 as of September 1, 2009
 - 380,739 as of October 1, 2009
 - 381,326 as of November 1, 2009

Mr. Sholl also reviewed a chart detailing voter registration transactions by type. Since the implementation of the e-signature program, the Department continues to note a significant increase in the volume of transactions processed.
4. Mr. Sholl provided an update on the ballot status of minor parties in the state, based on current registration totals.
5. Mr. Albence informed the Board of the following upcoming elections:
 - November 6 Downes Elementary School Student Government Election
 - November 7 Trustees of New Castle Common Election
 - November 18 Correctional Officers Association of DE (COAD) – Contract Ratification
 - December 8 Appoquinimink School District Referendum
 - May 11, 2010 School Board Elections
6. Mr. Albence informed the Board that the Department had received an award from the University of Delaware’s National Residence Hall Honorary (NRRH) organization chapter in recognition of the Department’s partnership with the University on UD’s recent Resident Hall Government elections. The local NRRH organization has submitted the award for possible regional and national recognition as well.

7. Mr. Sholl reported that the Department's website activity remains at expected non-election season usage levels.
8. Mr. Sholl informed the board that implementation of the "plain language" initiative to ensure maximum readability and comprehension of material on the agency's site and in agency manuals is ongoing, and demonstrated a sample of a page updated using "plain language" parameters.
9. Mr. Albence reported that he and Mr. Sholl will attend the Joint Election Officers Liaison Committee (JEOLC) meeting in Washington, DC, January 7-8, 2010.
10. Mr. Albence reported that the State's elections administrators will be meeting with representatives from ES&S to discuss a path forward regarding support of and service for absentee voting equipment in light of the company's recent purchase of Premier Election Solutions.
11. Mr. Albence reported that individual thermostat controls for the heater units at the Warehouse will be installed. The cost will be covered by the building owners.
12. Mr. Sholl provided the following updates regarding proposed Federal legislation:
 - The Defense Authorization Bill was signed by President Obama. This will impose expanded timeframes for mailing ballots to UOCAVA voters. These revised deadlines will require changes to Delaware Code to comply with these mandates. Legislation to update the Code will be drafted.
 - Other bills under consideration would mandate "no excuse" absentee voting and to establish additional/different policies regarding voter registration. These bills are in various stages of consideration at this time.
13. Mr. Albence updated the Board on the Department's initiatives to engage in the social networking realm. These efforts are being undertaken cautiously and in close consultation with the State's Government Information Center (GIC). Mr. Sterling expressed concern that the Department might not be able to respond in a timely manner to questions sent via Facebook or Twitter on Election Day.
14. Commissioner Manlove reported the following updates from the Office of the State Election Commissioner (SEC):
 - The vendor for the current absentee system (Premier Election Systems), as mentioned above, has been sold to competitor Election Systems & Software (ES&S). ES&S Representatives will meet with the elections team on November 16 to determine a path forward.
 - The Commissioner provided feedback to a U.S. Department of Justice inquiry related to pending legal action filed regarding the proposed ES&S purchase of Premier Election Systems.
 - The SEC has contracted with a grants management firm (Maximus) to manage HAVA funds.

- The e-signature initiative will be nominated for the Delaware Award for Commitment and Excellence in State Service.
 - Christopher Ramos, the programmer who primarily developed the e-signature system, is now housed in the SEC and is working 100% on elections-related projects.
 - A National Public Radio (NPR) reporter conducted an interview regarding the e-signature system in October.
 - The Commissioner testified before a Congressional subcommittee regarding Delaware's implementation of the e-signature program.
 - A statewide study is underway to streamline the felon screening process in the course of voter registration.
 - The Commissioner will be updating the Delaware House of Representatives Elections Committee on elections-related activities.
 - Efforts will resume in January to pass Title 14 and 15 revisions in the Senate, as well as initiative to establish a permanent absentee list.
 - The relocation of the SEC office is scheduled to occur in early December.
15. Old Business: None
16. New Business:
- A signup sheet was circulated for Board members to participate in the certification of voting machines for the upcoming Appoquinimink School District referendum. The certification is scheduled for December 1, 2009 at 10AM at the Warehouse.
 - Mr. Austin moved and Mr. Lanouette seconded the motion to approve the changes in polling places for the Appoquinimink School District referendum election on Tuesday, December 8, 2009. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Mr. Sterling moved and Mr. Brady seconded the motion to move the next meeting date to Thursday, December 10, 2009—which will permit the board to canvass the above-referenced referendum election. The motion passed unanimously.
17. Board Removals & Birth Date Corrections:
- Mr. Sterling moved and Mr. Lanouette seconded the motion to:
 - remove 51 names from the voter registration rolls due to a move out of state
 - remove 1 name from the voter registration rolls through the address verification process
 - remove 0 names from the voter registration rolls through personal requests
 - Make 5 corrections to birth years noted in voter registration records.The motion passed unanimously.
18. Mr. Sterling moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Brady seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
James A. Sterling, III
Secretary

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Next Meeting: Thursday December 10, 2009