

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

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING OF MAY 13, 2010

Members Present:

Mr. Austin	Mr. Brady
Mr. Krzyzanowski	Mr. Kuhrt
Mr. Lanouette	Mrs. Pase
Mr. Sterling	Mrs. Whittington

Staff Present:

Mr. Albence, Director
Mr. Sholl, Deputy Director
Mrs. Manlove, State Election Commissioner

1. Mr. Kuhrt moved and Mr. Brady seconded the motion to appoint Mr. Sterling as Acting Chair. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Lanouette moved and Mr. Austin seconded the motion to appoint Mr. Brady as Acting Secretary. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Sterling called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Mr. Brady moved and Mrs. Pase seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2010, meeting with one correction. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Mr. Sholl reported on the May 11, 2010 School Board Elections. He stated that the election went well operationally, and recommended that the Board certify the election results. Mr. Sholl did note that a complaint was filed with the Department regarding a candidate's residency. The Department considered the evidence presented and determined that there was insufficient evidence to determine that the candidate in question did not live where he claimed to live.
4. Mr. Sholl provided an update on the Department's financial status. Expenditures are on track and the Department continues to monitor energy costs. So far this FY, expenditures on energy total \$10,065 less than in FY2009. Mr. Sholl also informed the Board that the Department transferred \$6,000 to the DoE for Kent County to cover a shortfall in their budget for school elections.
5. 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:
 - 384,951 as of May 1, 2010
 - 383,930 as of April 1, 2010
 - 380,877 as of November 1, 2008 (comparison purposes)

Mr. Sholl also reviewed a chart detailing voter registration transactions by type over time. Since the implementation of the e-signature program, the Department continues to note a significant increase in the volume of transactions processed.

6. Mr. Sholl provided an update on the ballot status of minor parties in the state, based on current registration totals and the provisions of recently enacted legislation changing the threshold for minority ballot status. As of May 1, 2010, the Independent Party of Delaware and the Libertarian Party meet the ballot status threshold (612 registered voters).
 7. Mr. Albence informed the Board of the following upcoming elections:
 - May 25: Christina SD Referendum
 - June 9: Our Lady of Fatima School Student Government
 - June 15: Ironworkers Local 451
 8. Mr. Sholl reported that the Department's website activity increased around the time of the School Board Elections, but that activity remains at expected non-election season usage levels.
 9. 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. Recent "plain language" enhancements have been made to the following website pages/Department documents:
 - School Election Absentee Voting Page
 - School Election Manual
 - School Election Checklists
 - Supplemental Instructions for the Christina Referendum
- Mr. Sholl also reported that this program was submitted to the Election Center Professional Practices Program as an initiative to be recognized.
10. Mr. Albence reported that Department (and statewide) staff attended a GEMS (absentee system) training in Annapolis, MD, from April 19-23. The training was offered by Election Systems & Software (ES&S), vendor for the absentee system, and proved to be very informative and beneficial. Staff who attended the training continues to practice the skills learned there.
 11. Mr. Albence reported that ES&S has replaced the problematic ballot printer, has returned ballot scanners after upgrading the units, and has installed a new version of GEMS (absentee voting software). System testing will take place after the system is fully operational.
 12. Mr. Albence reported that Phase II of the eSig implementation will be tested on May 17-18, and that staff will be trained on the new technology on June 21. This enhancement will automate the processing of paper voter registration applications. Mr. Albence also reported that the State Election Commissioner continues to work on extending the eSig program technology to other NVRA-mandated agencies.
 13. Mr. Albence reported that Commissioner Manlove, Stanley Anderson (SEC staff), and he attended a Pew Center on the States Voter Modernization Project meeting on April 29-30,

2010, in Portland, OR. This meeting was dedicated to setting ground rules for the project. (NOTE: meeting and travel costs were covered by the Pew Foundation.)

14. Mr. Sholl provided the following updates regarding proposed Federal legislation:
 - Bills under consideration in Congress 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, but none appear to be on a “fast track” for passage this year.

15. Mr. Sholl reported the following legislation passed by the General Assembly:
 - HB 236: Bill addressing issues related to Special Elections.
 - SB 154: Constitutional Amendment (voting age, absentee voting, etc)
 - SB 225: MOVE implementation (Related to UOCAVA [military & overseas] voters)
 - Bill has passed Senate and passed House today.
 - Other potential legislation under consideration:
 - “No excuse” absentee voting
 - Voter Registration “Modernization”
 - Mandate for on-line registration

16. Commissioner Manlove reported the following updates from the Office of the State Election Commissioner (SEC):
 - GEMS (absentee) system training was successful. Pending issues include the type of ballot paper to be used for the system, as well as the resolution of the anti-trust issues related to the ES&S purchase of Premier Election Systems.
 - Staff training by “affinity groups” (felon processing, absentee voting, voter registration & customer service, and inventory control) will take place in June, involving staff from the county offices and the SEC.
 - The office is working on streamlining felon processing procedures, with the goal of making the process paperless.
 - Maptitude software will be used for the redistricting process.
 - Representatives from the Oregon Secretary of State’s office will be visiting Delaware this summer to learn more about the eSig system.

17. Mr. Sholl reported that the Department is partnering with the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to implement a “ballot marking wizard” that will facilitate emailing absentee ballots to UOCAVA voters, and provide tools that will permit these voters to mark and return their ballots electronically.

18. Mr. Sholl reported that the Department will replace signature cards and poll list for the upcoming Primary and General Election with a poll list that the voter signs. This change will increase efficiency and save printing costs.

19. Old Business: None

20. New Business:

- Mr. Kuhrt moved and Mrs. Pase seconded the motion to certify the results of the May 11, 2010, School Board elections. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Next meeting: June 1, 2010
 - Agenda Item: Certification of May 25, 2010, Christina Referendum
 - Upcoming Activity: Voting Machine Certification for Christina Referendum: May 18, 2010 at 10 AM.
21. Board Removals & Birth Date Corrections:
- Mr. Brady moved and Mr. Lanouette seconded the motion to:
 - remove 92 names from the voter registration rolls due to a move out of state
 - remove 27 name from the voter registration rolls through the address verification process
 - Make 8 corrections to birth years noted in voter registration records.The motion passed unanimously.
22. Mr. Lanouette moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Austin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Acting Secretary
Robert Brady

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 1, 2010