

BOTETOURT COUNTY ELECTORAL BOARD

August 29, 2023

On August 29, 2023, a regular meeting of the Botetourt County Electoral Board was held in the Registrar's Office in Fincastle. All members of the Electoral Board were present, as was Traci Clark, the GR/DOE. Chairman John Rader called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Vice-Chairman Ed Clark moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on July 25, 2023 which had been previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

Next, Traci gave the Board an update on the upcoming November 7th General Election. Rick Painter, an Independent candidate for the Blue Ridge Board of Supervisors seat, had withdrawn, leaving Republican, Walt Michael, as the only candidate for the seat.

There would be a total of 12 different ballot styles for the election, and Traci had ordered a total of 18,800 ballots. She pointed out that no ballots were ordered for in-person absentee voting (early voting) because, with the ballot on demand system now used in early voting, these ballots would be generated on site as each citizen checked in to vote.

Traci then added that almost all the PEO assignments had been confirmed, and there were only a few spots left to fill. She also provided the Board with the dates for the pre-election training sessions. Early

voting was to begin on September 22nd, and the last day to register is October 16th.

The Board next received a report from Traci on the new requirements from ELECT on ADA compliance at the polling places. The Registrar had been provided with a checklist, and other forms, with directions to confirm that all polling places meet ADA standards by no later than October 16, 2023. The Board agreed to inspect and report on each precinct, using the format required by ELECT. John said that he would check his calendar and provide the Board with two proposed dates on which it would conduct the inspections.

The Board was also required, Traci advised, to adopt a policy which would explain and control the payment of costs of meeting FOIA requests. Traci provided the board with policies adopted in other localities. The purpose of such policies is to provide uniformity and fairness in the assessment and collection of costs, and to make the terms of the policy known to the public. Following discussion, Traci said that she was working on a policy for Botetourt and that she would have it ready for the Board's consideration shortly.

Traci then brought the Board up to date on the resignation of a member of the Fincastle Town Council in July. The Circuit Court of Botetourt County had issued a writ of election requiring the Board to hold a special election to fill the vacancy. The special election would take place contemporaneously with the General Election scheduled for November 5, 2024.

At Traci's request, Secretary Buck Heartwell then made a motion pursuant to sec. 24.2-410.2(E) of the Code of Virginia to go into closed session to discuss amendments to the Board's security plan, as

discussion of the plan in open session would compromise the security of the Virginia voter registration system. The motion passed unanimously. After approximately 15 minutes, the Board and Traci returned to open session. A roll-call vote was taken certifying that (1) only public business lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and (2) only such matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session, were heard, discussed or considered. Each Board Member voted “yes”. Buck then made a motion that the amended security plan, which the Board had reviewed in closed session, be adopted. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board then set its next meeting for October 10th at 2:00 pm. There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Buck Heartwell, Secretary.